



2013 Annual Report Cariboo Mountain Bike Consortium

Executive Summary

As part of the ongoing accountability to the Cariboo-Chilcotin Beetle Action Coalition, Northern Development Initiative Trust, the City of Williams Lake and the Cariboo Regional District, the Cariboo Mountain Bike Consortium is pleased to submit its 2013 Annual Report.

As has been the case since its inception, the Cariboo Mountain Bike Consortium initiative has maintained three program areas in marketing, partnerships and infrastructure. In 2013, activity in all of these programs in each of the Consortium communities of 100 Mile House, Williams Lake, Quesnel and Wells has been maintained.

2013 included some significant marketing successes including the Cariboo being selected for the Western Canada Mountain Bike Tourism Associations 7 Day Giveaway venue. The ridethecariboo.ca website continued to grow with a 98% increase in unique visits compared to 2012.

The Consortium continued to develop strategic partnerships through 2013. In Quesnel, a link between trail builders and BC Parks for the new Dragon Mountain Park has been initiated. In Williams Lake the Consortium entered into discussions on a long-term funding strategy in the Central Cariboo.

The Consortium undertook infrastructure projects in each Consortium community in 2013. These included signage on Dragon Mountain, trail improvements in Wells, a partnership with the Williams Lake Cycling Club and the development of a master trail plan in 100 Mile House.

The Consortium will be undertaking its second comprehensive economic assessment in 2014. Preliminary data from 2013 indicates strong growth, including an additional 38% growth in trail use in since 2012.

The Consortium will need to engage with regional governments on a sustainable fusing solution if the success achieved to date is to be sustained. A discussion with the Central Cariboo has been initiated in this regard, and plans to submit a third application to CCBAC in 2014 are being developed.

2013 Program Summary

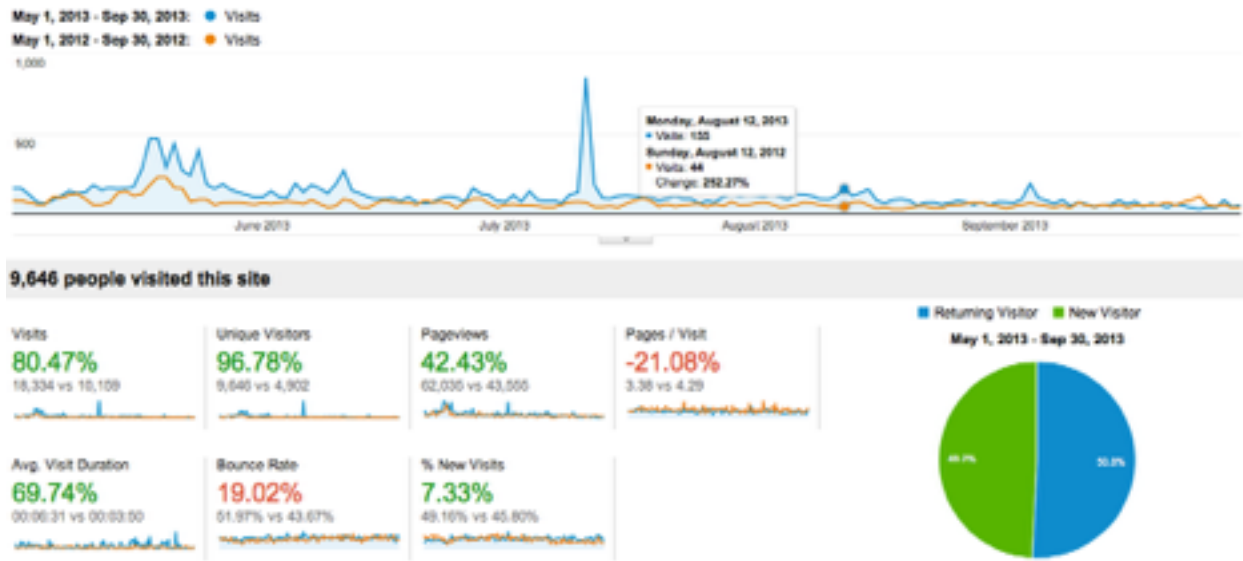
Marketing

The Ride The Cariboo website continues as the primary vehicle on which we base our regional marketing efforts. The site has grown in sophistication since its launch in 2010 and is now recognized as one of the premier regional mountain bike visitor sites in the Province. All functions of the site are fully operational including interactive trail maps, service directories and social media.

In our 2012 economic impact assessment we reported that the ridethecariboo.ca website had grown by over 207% in total visits between 2010 and 2012 and has peaked at over 43,000 page views by the end of the previous season. In 2013, we are pleased to report this growth trend has continued with total visits growing by an additional 80% from 2012 and page views increasing to over 62,000. Key to this success is the ongoing partnership with the City of Williams Lake and the Cariboo Regional District through the Community Tourism Opportunity (CTO) fund which we have focused on re-direct advertising on major MTB sites (i.e. pinkbike.com) and other strategic marketing tactics.

As we look forward to 2014, we are attempting to engage the other Consortium communities of Quesnel, Wells and 100 Mile House in a regional approach to the CTO fund that will increase our leverage capacity and continue to drive prospective MTB visitors to our region.

Figure 1 - Ridethecariboo.ca Activity in 2013



In addition to our online activity, we have also collaborated with the City of Williams Lake on a billboard advertisement along the Sea to Sky route during the height of the mountain bike season. We also attended to Vancouver Bike Show with the City in attempts to generate increased awareness in the largest bike marking in the Province.

Partnerships and Promotions

Through 2012, the Consortium has pursued a number of long-term partnerships across the relevant tourism sectors both in the Region and Province. These engagements are briefly outlined below.

Provincial Government

The Consortium has cemented its position as the regional coordination body between mountain bike clubs and the Provincial recreation trails authorities including Parks. It is able to provide capacity to bike organizations in a manner that advances trail development projects and other mountain bike infrastructure. Key deliverables in 2012 in this context are:

- Facilitated a master trail development plan for the 99 Mile area in the District of 100 Mile House. The plan is now a platform on which to apply for trail development funding in 2014/15.
- Worked with BC Parks and mountain bike clubs in Quesnel to install trail signage on the Dragon Mountain trail network and is working towards other long-term access projects for that area.
- Worked with Province to collaborate on the first paid trail maintenance crew in Williams Lake.

Provincial Tourism Associations

The Consortium has been an active member of the Western Canada Mountain Bike Tourism Association for three years, and continues its participation on the Board of Directors through 2013. Our membership facilitated the Cariboo Regions selection as the venue for the 7 Day Giveaway Tour the MTBA has hosted for the past three years.



Mountain Bike Tourism Association 7 Day Giveaway Tour in Wells, BC. See: [MTBA Tour](#) & [Tour Report](#)

Service Businesses

The Consortium continued to develop partnerships with service businesses in the Cariboo both in support of the broader mountain bike tourism experience and for specific marketing events (i.e. 7 Day Giveaway) where service partnerships are leveraged for support to offset campaign costs. We continue to maintain nine key partnerships with bike, accommodation and food services in the region.

Municipal and Regional Governments

The Consortium maintains an advanced relationship with the Governments of the Central Cariboo as the hub of the mountain bike economy. Through collaboration with the City of Williams Lake, we have leveraged significant marketing resources for the broader Cariboo Region. In 2013, the Consortium undertook to develop a parking lot to improve trail access and safety in Williams Lake in partnership with the Cariboo Regional District. The Consortium continues to work with the City of Williams Lake on collaborative marketing for 2014.

While the Consortium seeks to develop more advanced relationships with the other communities of 100 Mile House, Quesnel and Wells, it is limited in its capacity to do so. The Looking Ahead section at the end of this report explores this issue. In the interim however, the Consortium will continue to use the Cariboo-Chilcotin Beetle Action Coalition as a venue to engage with all Cariboo governments and seek collaborative opportunities.

First Nations Partnerships

The Consortium Board of Director President, Mark Savard continues to engage with the Williams Lake Indian Band in the development of a connecting trail that links the Chief William Camp Ground with the Fox Mountain Trail network. There is an intention to apply for funding to construct this trail in 2014-2015. The Board continues to engage in other communities (Esketemc, Xat'sull and Xeni Gwet'in and others) in the development of bike parks.

Regional Signature Trail Marketing

In 2013, the Consortium and its partners completed the Snakes and Ladders trail in Williams Lake. This progressive trail contains 22,000 board feet of Cariboo lumber and has been marketed aggressively throughout the season. In the Spring the Consortium released a video on pinkbike.com of the trail, which was viewed by over 37,000 riders from around the world. Trail counter information indicates that rider traffic on the Westsyde increased by over 47% between 2010 and 2012. In 2013, that level has increased to over 70%.

Other Partnership and Promotion Outcomes

The Consortium has continued to support local mountain bike talent through its limited Ambassador Program. This program supported James Doerfling, professional Freerider, who appeared in *Where The Trail Ends*, a Redbull sponsored major mountain bike film that features areas near Williams Lake. The Consortium also supported Cory Brunelle on a limited basis who provided valuable promotional media for use in various marketing tactics. Dependent on funding, this program will continue in 2014.

Infrastructure

The Consortium undertook a number of infrastructure projects in 2013 in each community in the region. Also in 2013, the Consortium, in partnership with the Williams Lake Cycling Club, Northern Development Trust and the Province of British Columbia, completed and opened the new Snakes and Ladders Regional Signature Trail. The infrastructure highlights in each Consortium community are highlighted below.

100 Mile House

In collaboration with the Province of BC and members of the Hun City Mountain Bike Club, a Master Trail Plan for the 99 Mile network was completed in the summer of 2013. The plan identifies three additional trails to complete the network and is the basis for a funding request to the Province for a trail construction project planned for 2014/15.

Williams Lake

In addition to completing the Snakes and Ladders trail, the Consortium partnered with the Williams Lake Cycling Club to support the first full time trail maintenance crew in the Cariboo. The partnerships covered materials costs for safety upgrades to over 30 wood features throughout the City's trails. The Consortium also funded a specific signage project for the Box, Booga Wooga and Ravin trails on the Westsyde Trail network, which have been historically difficult to access for visiting riders, but are trail types that are growing in popularity with visiting riders.

Quesnel

In 2013 the Consortium undertook two projects in the Quesnel-Dragon Mountain area. It supported a user group called the Quesnel Gravity Club with material to sign the entire trail network, which will improve access for out-of-region riders. It also engaged with BC Parks, who now manage the Dragon Mountain area, on long-term trail strategy and development discussions which will provide lasting stability for the riding assets there.

Wells

In 2013, Wells was a central component of the MTBA 7 Day Giveaway contest, which served to increase the exposure of the riding near Barkerville. In advance of the contest, the Consortium extended a contract to a local trail builder to improve the Powderhouse trail, a key component in an alpine trail loop that is unique to the Interior. Building on its strong relationships with the District and key service businesses, Wells is a growing part of the market profile of trails in the Cariboo.

Economic Assessment Program

A key accountability the Consortium continues to focus on is the measurement and tracking of its efforts in relation to the regional mountain bike economy. In its 2010 initial project plan, the Consortium established a baseline value of the Cariboo mountain bike economy which estimated the total economic impact from the sector at \$1.9 million annually¹. Since that time, the Consortium has refined its assessment with new data and improved accuracy. A number of data sources have been drawn upon to assemble this assessment. In 2010 three components were used to build the baseline assessment (data from bike businesses, data from regional events, estimates on ridership). Since the 2010 assessment, trail counting devices, specific surveys of regional event impacts, comprehensive web monitoring and updated economic impact information generated through the Western Canada Mountain Bike Tourism Association have been utilized to improve the accuracy of the assessment.

In 2012, the Consortium released its first Regional Economic Impact Assessment which showed that the Consortium initiative produced an 11.5% increase in the economic impact of mountain biking within the Cariboo region since assessment began in 2010. The 2012 indicated:

- An average 30% increase trail system usage;
- Direct mountain bike visitor spending are estimated at \$294,538 annually;
- Indirect mountain bike visitor spending impact is estimated at \$427,081 annually;
- A 21% increase in mountain bike visitor spending impact since 2010;
- Regional mountain bike businesses activity increased by 8% to \$1.61 million/year;
- Total FTE associated with direct mountain bike activity increased by 20% to 21.8 FTE;
- New infrastructure projects have resulted in an additional \$140,000 of new activity.

In 2012, the total value of the mountain bike sector in the Cariboo region was estimated at over \$2.2 million annually. The assessment has continued through 2013 and now includes a greater number of intercept survey points to track more specific data from users. The Consortium is planning its next full assessment in 2014 as part of its final report to the Cariboo-Chilcotin Beetle Action Coalition, but we have reported trail counter data from 2013 below.

Trail counter data is a primary indicator of economic growth, and combined with rider intercept surveys, can provide a reasonable assessment of total economic growth from mountain biking. Based on similar multipliers used in the 2012 assessment, trail use has increased by 44% from 2012 which has increased the total value of regional and out-of-region mountain bike visits an additional 48% to over \$823,938/year². This is one component of the assessment the Consortium will be undertaking in 2014, but indicates a continued growth trend in mountain biking.

¹ Cariboo Tourism Strategy, 2010 Cariboo Mountain Bike Consortium

² This value is based on the indirect impact multipliers used in the 2012 report. (See: <http://ridethecariboo.ca/news/multiple-regions/mountain-bike-economy-grows-115-2010>)

Table 1 - 2010-2013 Trail Use Trends in Cariboo Region (Source: Province of BC and Consortium)

Trail Network	2010	2011	2012	2013	% Change from 2010
Fox Mountain	2,650	3,540	3,700	8,252	68%
Westsyde	1,460	1,750	2,750	5,170	72%
Southside	1,980	1,960	2,140	3,940	95%
Desous	370	520	545	680	46%
108 Mile	75	80	310	470	84%
Dragon Mountain	440	475	510	709	38%
Wells	130	140	205	380	66%
Total	7,105	8,465	10,160	19,601	64%

The Consortium will be assembling a full assessment in 2014, but based on this data, the growth trend in the Cariboo mountain bike sector is continuing.

2013 Financial Report

The Consortium continues to maintain a high degree of accountability in the management of its funding, and has aggressively pursued leveraged funds off its base provided through the Cariboo-Chilcotin Beetle Action Coalition. In 2011, CCBAC provided \$50,000 for implementation, and through its partners the Consortium has leveraged that into over \$120,000.

This leveraged funding includes the following projects:

- Partnership projects with the Province of BC and NDIIT for the construction of Snakes and Ladders;
- Ongoing partnerships with the City of Williams Lake through the Community Tourism Opportunity Program;
- Partnership with the Cariboo Regional District on infrastructure (i.e. Trailhead parking);
- Partnerships with the Williams Lake Cycling Club on events;
- Sale of promotional material.

The table below provides a report on the 2013 budget year, and a forecasted budget for the 2014 operating year. As you'll note the carry over funds at the end of 2014 will not allow the Consortium to continue operating into 2015, which is the subject of discussions with the Cariboo Regional District, and planned discussions with CCBAC in 2014.

Table 2 - 2013 Budget

Project Element	2013 Project Budget	2013 Actual	2014 Budget
Trail Guides	-	\$1,234	\$4,000
Website	\$7,000	\$4,848	\$4,000
Infrastructure	\$8,000	\$3,518	\$4,000
Partnerships and Promotion	\$8,000	\$10,950	\$10,000
Events	\$4,000	\$3,876	\$4,000
Project Management	\$5,600	\$5,600	\$1,200
Operations	\$2,000	\$2,307	\$1,000
Budget Sub-Total	\$34,600	\$32,333	\$28,200
Carry Forward	\$26,271	\$28,538	\$5,000
Total	\$60,871	\$60,871	\$61,400

Looking Ahead

The Consortium initiative is at a cross-roads. To date it has been supported through project-based funding primarily from the Cariboo-Chilcotin Beetle Action Coalition. This funding has supported three program areas and a limited amount of administrative capacity through the retention of a part-time Executive Director. The Consortium has leveraged this base funding aggressively which has enabled it to maintain a \$35,000 annual budget since 2010 and catalyzed a 12-15% increase in the value of the Cariboo mountain bike economy. Across its funding partners, the Consortium is characterized as the preferred model of economic diversification and non-profit accountability.

Much of this success has been the result of endless passion amongst the Executive Director and the Board of Directors who have dedicated countless volunteer hours to the Consortium's vision. However, as we approach the end of the current funding horizon in 2014, the Consortium has begun to contemplate a sustainable future. The proceeding will inform both deliberations amongst the Board of Directors and its funding partners with respect to its governance and funding, two areas that will need attention if the Consortium is to continue operations past 2014.

Consortium Relationship with Municipal Governments

The City of Williams Lake, the Central Cariboo Regional District and the Williams Lake Cycling Club have formed a strong partnerships with the Consortium through the implementation of the initiative. As pointed out in other research by Resilient Land Systems, this linkage is critical to the function and growth of a mountain bike economy.

The Consortium was originally constituted with representation in each of the four communities. While this model has been maintained, either through Board representation or business partnerships, it has resulted in varying levels of implementation across the region. Part of this variance are the differences in the levels of integration between the Consortium and municipal governments, which is driven in part by the volunteer nature of Board representation and the limits on the capacity of the Executive Director.

It was acknowledged at the time of incorporation that Williams Lake was the strongest Consortium community and would both catalyze growth and help distribute that growth to other parts of the region. As demonstrated by the performance of the Consortium in the Central Cariboo as compared with the other parts of the region, we see the advantage of a strong relationship between the Consortium and the municipal government.

The volunteer nature of the Consortium representation in these communities will always limit the extent of the time and energy spent that can be put into implementation. A reasonable level of capacity in each community that is supported with resources and funding, or a more fulsomely supported Executive Director that can allocate capacity in each Consortium community will be critical to ensuring a strong regional initiative that creates the economic diversification opportunities through mountain biking across the whole Cariboo.

This concept will need to be addressed at the governance level and formalizing the role of municipalities in the organization.

Sustainable Funding

To date the Consortium has been supported entirely with project specific funding that is time bound. The source of its funding includes the Cariboo-Chilcotin Beetle Action Coalition (CCBAC), which has provided a total of \$100,000 since 2010. The CCBAC funding is tied to the three program areas as well as ongoing administrative capacity in the Executive Director and has provided a high degree of flexibility to the Director to implement the initiative. The Northern Development Initiative Trust has provided specific project funding for marketing and infrastructure, but it is one time, and does not include any substantial capacity for the Consortium. There have been other funds that have benefited the Consortium, for example those from the City of Williams Lake through the Community Tourism Opportunity funds offered by Destination BC, none of which provide any capacity for operations.

Much of the Consortium efforts is undertaken through the Executive Directors office, who is responsible for coordinating every aspect of operations. As is often the case is non-profits, there is a limited amount of funding to support capacity and humans resources. To continue its success however, both the program areas as well as the implementation capacity will need to be supported. As committed to in earlier discussions with CCBAC, the Consortium has engaged its other partners in an investigation of a sustainable funding model that will sustain the initiative.

In 2013, the Consortium made a presentation to the Central Cariboo Joint Committee and recommended a subcommittee be struck to investigate the potential to fund the entirety of the

Consortium operations through the existing recreational and economic development budgets currently managed through the Cariboo Regional District. This discussion is planned for the winter of 2013/14.

If the Central Cariboo adopts the Consortium as a pilot project and funds its current structure, the Consortium will still need to leverage funds to manage the balance of the region. Its may do so on a project basis (i.e. Infrastructure) but would prefer to secure funding for the region on a more comprehensive basis. To that end, the Consortium will be looking to CCBAC to support ongoing implementation in 2015 and will be engaging with that Board in 2014.