

Refurbished Kinsol Trestle likely to be open in July

By SANDRA McCULLOCH, Timescolonist.com
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Finishing touches are being made to the historic Kinsol trestle and the refurbished span should be open to pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders in July.

"I'm very happy with how the project has gone so far," said Brian Farquhar of the Cowichan Valley Regional District parks department.

The 187 metre-long trestle has been off-limits for 22 years.

In 2008, the Cowichan Valley Regional District voted to rehabilitate the trestle with funding from the federal government, the province and the Island Coastal Economic Trust.

The trestle is expected to be a highlight of the Trans-Canada Trail.

A date for an official opening ceremony will be announced in a month or so, Farquhar said.

Another project in the works is a 20-kilometre extension of the Trans-Canada Trail from its current terminus south of Shawnigan Lake to an intersection with the Galloping Goose Trail.

"There are still some segments of corridor we need to secure, both on our side and the Capital Regional District side," said Farquhar.

Once the Kinsol trestle opens up, the pressure will be on for the trail to connect to similar trails in Greater Victoria, said Farquhar.

"The whole intent is this will be an entirely off-road route from Shawnigan down to Langford," he said.

"I've actually bushwhacked and walked every last foot of it so I am really excited knowing what's in store here."

The trail will follow Shawnigan Creek at the south end of Shawnigan Lake and then head up into the Goldstream heights and it ties into the north end of the Sooke Hills Regional Park.

From there, the trail will follow an existing logging road and come out at the Sooke Lake reservoir.

Farquhar hopes that the E&N train will one day bring Victoria residents and their bicycles north to discover Cowichan Valley.

A starting date for the trail's construction has not been set.