

GEORGIAN BAY CYCLING ROUTE

PROPOSAL FOR THE HIGHWAY 69 GAPS

INTRODUCTION

In August 2012 Ontario Regulation 630 was amended to prohibit cyclists from using the new four lane Highway 69 near Sudbury from a point 1585 metres south of the Estaire Rd, to a point 1690 metres south of Hwy 637. In addition during 2013 the surface of the old two lane Hwy 69, south of the original Murdock River Road was removed by the MTO for a distance of some 2 km. These actions resulted in the creation of two gaps for touring cyclists; one extending for about 3.5 km from the south end of the Estaire Road to the Burwash entrance road on the old Hwy 69, and a second one cutting them off from Hwy 637 from the south. Killarney Provincial Park, which is accessed by secondary Hwy 637, is now cut off from the outside world for anyone wishing to travel by bicycle.

Further to the south the plans for building the four lane highway will create another gap for cyclists between a point about 2 km north of Hwy 522 adjacent to Grundy Lake Provincial Park, and the new Pickerel River Road interchange. Originally this gap appeared like it was going to be only about 700 metres in length, but recent information suggests a gap of slightly over 5 km will develop if the plans for the new four lane highway remain unchanged.

This document is a proposal for the solution of these gaps. Part 1 covers the two gaps which already exist between Estaire and Alban. Part 2 covers the future gap between the Pickerel River Road and Hwy 522.

PART 1 – NORTHERN GAPS

For the ease of understanding and estimating this part is broken down into sections numbered from north to south as follows:

1. Estaire Road to Hwy 69 Truck Inspection Area.
2. Hwy 69 Truck Inspection Area to Burwash Farm Road.
3. Burwash Farm Road and Murdock River Road.
4. Murdock River Road to Hwy 69.
5. Hwy 69 two lane to 640 metres south of Murdock River culvert.
6. 640 metres south of Murdock River Culvert to Ink Lake.
7. Crooked Lake Road Interchange.

8. CPR Access Road.
9. Dry Rapids Road West.
10. Dry Rapids Road (east of Murdock River).
11. Delamere Road.

PROPOSAL

1. ESTAIRE ROAD TO HWY 69 TRUCK INSPECTION AREA



This section begins at the most southerly point on the Estaire Road (former Hwy 69), and follows the alignment of an old trail to the vicinity of the new truck inspection area, on Hwy 69. The trail is believed to have been **part of the former Burwash access road built in 1915**. The route skirts the edge of a plantation of red pine trees before coming out into the open near the truck inspection area. Essential upgrading will involve cleaning out the area with a bulldozer, spreading of a granular fill and hard surfacing. This section is 2.5 km in length.

2. HWY 69 TRUCK INSPECTION AREA TO BURWASH FARM ROAD.



This section is for the most part within the area encompassed by the new truck inspection facility on Hwy 69 near the former Burwash Correctional Facility. The route will cross Hwy 69 at a location close to the north end of the northbound inspection lanes. A bridge will be required to provide a safe crossing. It will also simplify negotiating the moose fence which would otherwise require a gravity closing gate. The

bike path will continue along the west side of the highway property until the Burwash Farm Road is reached. If the MTO permits cyclists to ride along the extreme west edge of the southbound inspection area, then the amount of new bike path required will be only about 750 metres in this area.

The picture to the right shows the bicycle/pedestrian bridge on Hwy 11 a short distance north of Gravenhurst. This provides



cyclists and walkers with an alternative to the high speed interchange between Hwy 11, Bethune Drive and Doe Lake Road. A similar bridge for the Burwash Location will require approach ramps.

3. BURWASH FARM ROAD AND MURDOCK RIVER ROAD

The original Hwy 69 south of Burwash extending as far as Hwy 637, has been renamed the Burwash Farm Road. South of Hwy 637 it continues as the Murdock River Road until the original Murdock River Road is reached. Together these two former sections of Hwy 69 provide a continuous paved route some 7.2 km in length. Other than signage no new work is anticipated in this section.

This picture shows the north end of the old two lane Hwy 69, now known as the Burwash Farm Road. The new four lane highway is to the right of the trees. The truck inspection area is only a few hundred metres beyond the mound of earth in line with the road.



4. MURDOCK RIVER ROAD TO HWY 69



During the summer and fall of 2013 the MTO removed the asphalt surface on the old two lane Hwy 69. This section extended from the original Murdock River Road to the point where the new temporary connecting link for Hwy 69 ties in south of the completed four lane highway. This section measures some 2.6 km in length. This will require the replacement of a paved surface some

2.5 metres in width. It is interesting to note that the removal of asphalt continued well after MICA had announced its advocacy for the Georgian Bay Cycling Route, including the desire to use this section of former highway.

5. HIGHWAY 69 TWO LANE TO A POINT 640 METRES SOUTH OF THE MURDOCK RIVER CULVERT.

This section of the old two lane Hwy 69 is still in use, although construction of the new four lane highway is well under way. In this picture (looking north) the new temporary connecting link can be seen in the distance (new asphalt) and the now closed section seen branching off to the left. This picture was taken basically at the Murdock River culvert, which has been used in this document as a reference point.

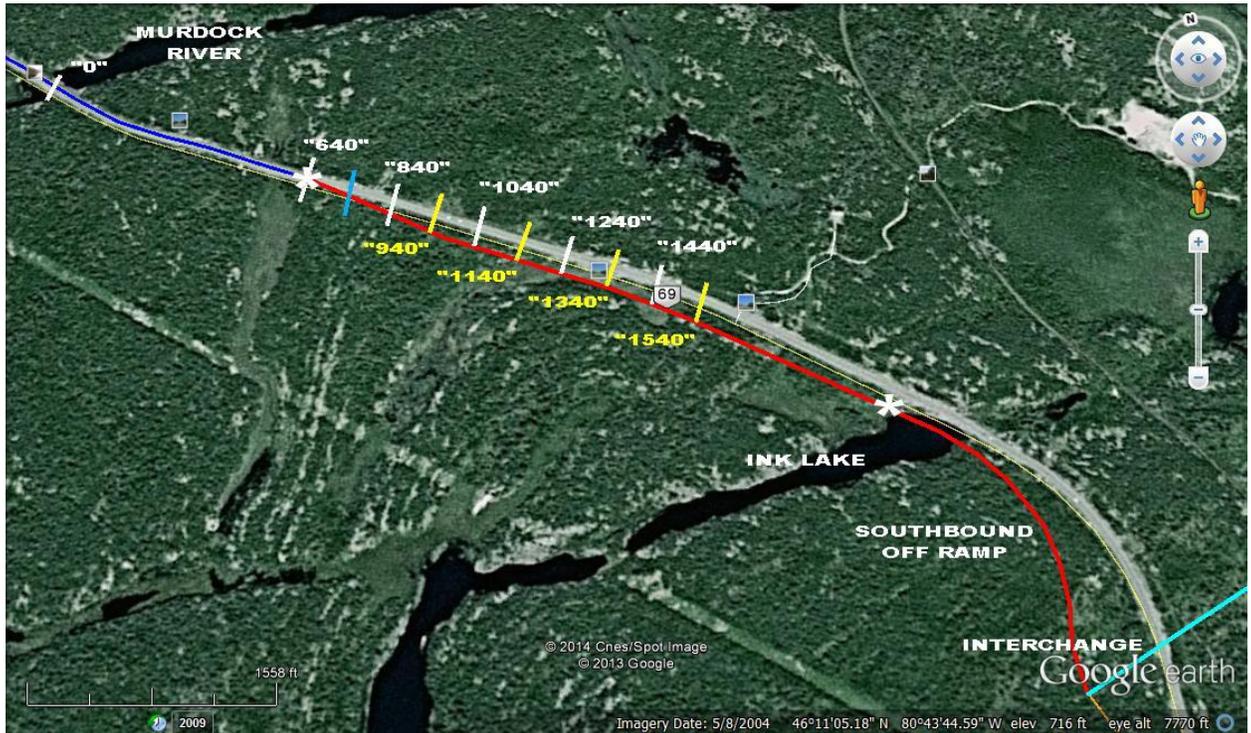


Stantec “Recommended Plans” indicate the old two lane highway remaining intact to a point 200 metres south of the culvert. Careful reference to these plans indicate that it should be possible to preserve an additional 440 metres of the old highway taking us to a point some 640 metres south of the culvert. The MTO should be requested to leave a suitable strip of asphalt in place, approximately 2.5 metres in width, extending to the 640 metre mark. This section is 1.5 km in length.

6. FROM 640 METRES SOUTH OF MURDOCK RIVER CULVERT TO INK LAKE

This section commencing 640 metres south of the Murdock River culvert extends some 1000 metres, until the location of the current “Tower and Quarry Access Road”, and then another 540 metres until Ink Lake is reached. The 1000 metre section includes various physical features. This section has been divided into 100 metre sections for descriptive purposes. Between the 740 metre mark and the 1540 metre mark, the new southbound traffic lanes will coincide in plan with the existing two lane highway. Between the 640 metre mark and the 840 metre mark there is a rock cut perhaps some

3 – 4 metres high at its highest point. South of the 940 metre mark and extending as far as the 1540 mark the surrounding land is lower than the present highway. Also south of the 1540 metre mark the old highway lies to the west of the course of the new southbound traffic lanes. The difference in elevation between the new southbound traffic lanes and the existing two lane highway is not entirely clear. However there is an excellent chance that some of the existing two lane highway will be able to be preserved for future bike route use.



The above satellite image shows the area along Hwy 69 between the Murdock River and Ink Lake. The numbered lines show the distances in metres from the centre of the Murdock River culvert, ("0") in order to locate Streetview images.



The existing road surface should be able to be left in place up to the 640 metre mark. A shallow rock cut extends south from this point until almost the 940 metre mark. In order to avoid the expense of blasting, the bike path may need to veer to the west until the top of the low ridge is attained.

After the 940 metre mark the adjoining land becomes lower than the existing highway surface providing little problems for the construction of a bike path separate to the highway.



After the 1540 mark the new four lane will veer away to the east of the current two lane highway. This may allow some of the western edge of the existing surface to be preserved for use as a bike path. This image is looking south.

7. CROOKED LAKE ROAD INTERCHANGE

Heading southwards Ink Lake marks the beginning of the southbound off ramp for the new interchange on Hwy 69. This interchange will provide connections to four virtually dead end gravel roads. MNR on line topographic maps indicate two roads west of the highway which access Crooked Lake. In turn there appears to be fourteen (14) separate lots on Crooked Lake. East of the highway a new road towards the north east will access a communications tower and an occasional use quarry. South east of the new interchange a new access road will connect to the existing CPR access road. The off ramp extends some 560 metres in a reverse curve until the alignment of the new overpass is reached. The straight section which crosses over the new four lane highway measures some 430 metres in length. From the east side the new access road will extend some 700 metres to the south, before connecting to the existing CPR access road. We will need to ensure that these three sections of new road are paved in order to ensure suitability for cyclists.

6.4 Interchanges

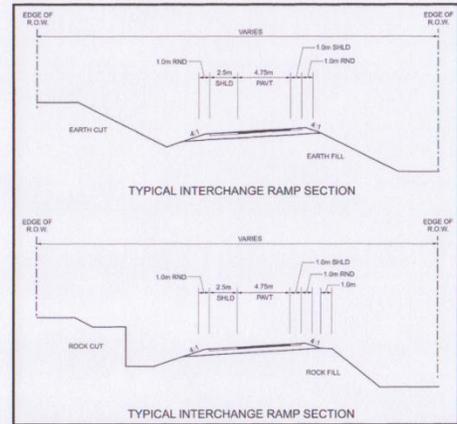
Highway 69 will be a fully-controlled access freeway or Controlled Access Highway (CAH). Interchanges will be provided at Magnetawan River, Bekanon Road and Highway 522. This will provide interchange spacing as summarized in Exhibit 6-6.

Exhibit 6-6: Interchange Spacing

Interchange	Spacing from Closest Southerly
Harris Lake Road Interchange (WP 5377-02-00 south section)	---
Magnetawan River Interchange	9.0km
Bekanon Road Interchange	11.0km
Highway 522 Interchange	7.0km
Pickens River Road Interchange (WP 5379-02-00)	7.4km

All interchange ramps are single lane ramps with a 4.75 m lane, 1.0 m wide fully paved left shoulder, a 2.5m wide fully paved right shoulder, and 1.0m rounding. Typical cross-sections for interchange ramps are shown in Exhibit 6-7.

Exhibit 6-7: Typical Interchange Ramp Sections



The grading of the interchange ramps will be designed to provide gentle and traversable slopes to minimize roadside hazards. Exhibit 6-8 summarizes the typical cross-section earth grading requirements for the interchange ramps.

The Crooked Lake Road interchange can only expect a very limited amount of traffic either exiting or entering Hwy 69. The above diagram typical for interchanges indicates a 2.5 metre paved shoulder on the right hand side of off ramps. An addition of one metre on the width of the southbound off ramp at the Crooked Lake Road interchange (on the west side), should allow enough room to accommodate bicycles until the new bike path extending north of Ink Lake is reached. A one metre strip of shoulder should be marked as a buffer between the off ramp proper and the bicycle path.

8. CPR ACCESS ROAD

Only some 300 metres of this existing gravel road will remain in service when the new four lane highway is completed. Currently this provides the CPR with access to its Delamere location. The level crossing at this location is used by the CPR for positioning hi-railer equipment on their tracks. This road will need inspection and upgrading to a chip seal surface.

9. DRY RAPIDS ROAD WEST



The satellite image above shows the area between the CPR tracks and the Murdock River. The Dry Rapids Road West may be seen extending from the RR track below the power line break as far as the north bay on the small lake, where a camp is located. The road continues along the N.E. side of the lake and then on to the bridge at the narrows. This section of road needs inspecting and will need upgrading to a hard surface. The length of this section is 1.5 km.

10. DRY RAPIDS ROAD



This picture shows the former snowmobile bridge at the Dry Rapids, and marks the beginning of the Municipality of French River.

This picture taken in wet weather indicates that this section of the Dry Rapids Road is prone to flooding, probably due to water backing up from the French River. Investigation indicates that this flood is approximately 100 metres in length. The bridge in the previous picture is just beyond the hydro pole. Several loads of granular fill will be required to raise the road level above the water level.



East of the Murdock River the Dry Rapids Road appears to have a good solid base, and is navigable by an ordinary motor car. Chip sealing will turn this into an excellent bike route.

A last picture of the Dry Rapids Road was taken on a wet day, as it heads east towards the Delamere Road. This section would suit many cyclists even without a hard surface.

The length of the Dry Rapids Road east of the Murdock River is 5.6 km.

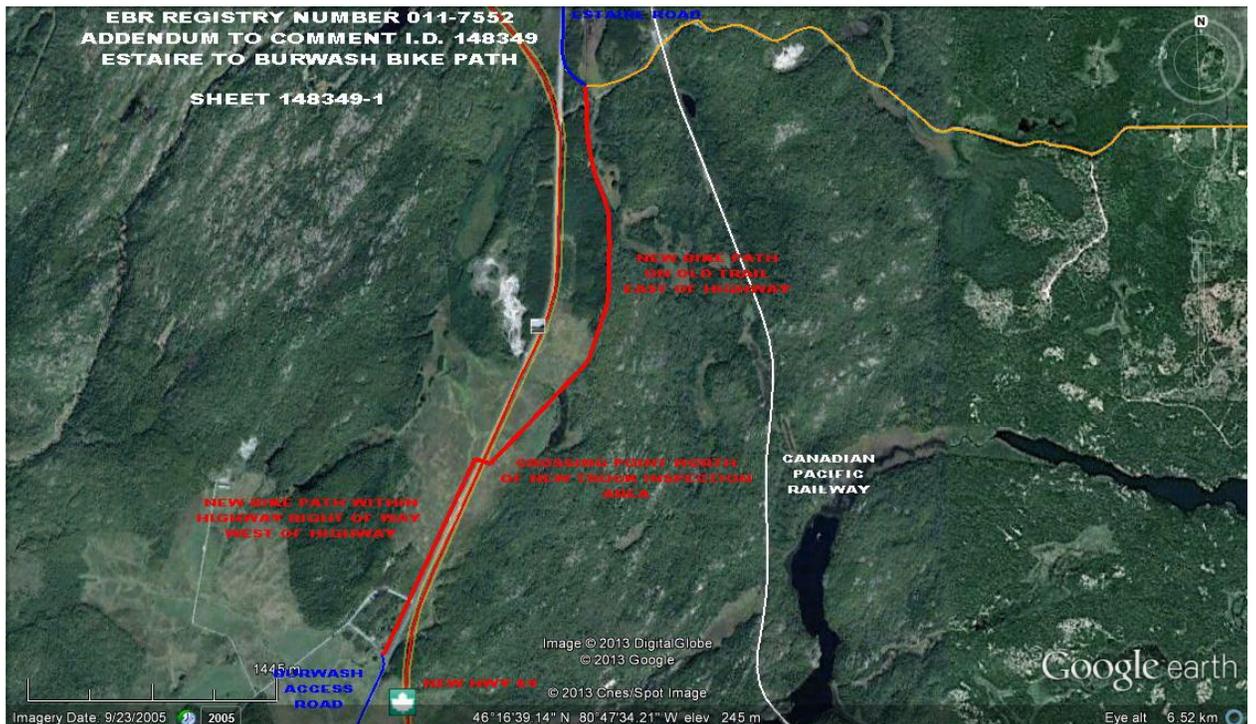


11. DELAMERE ROAD

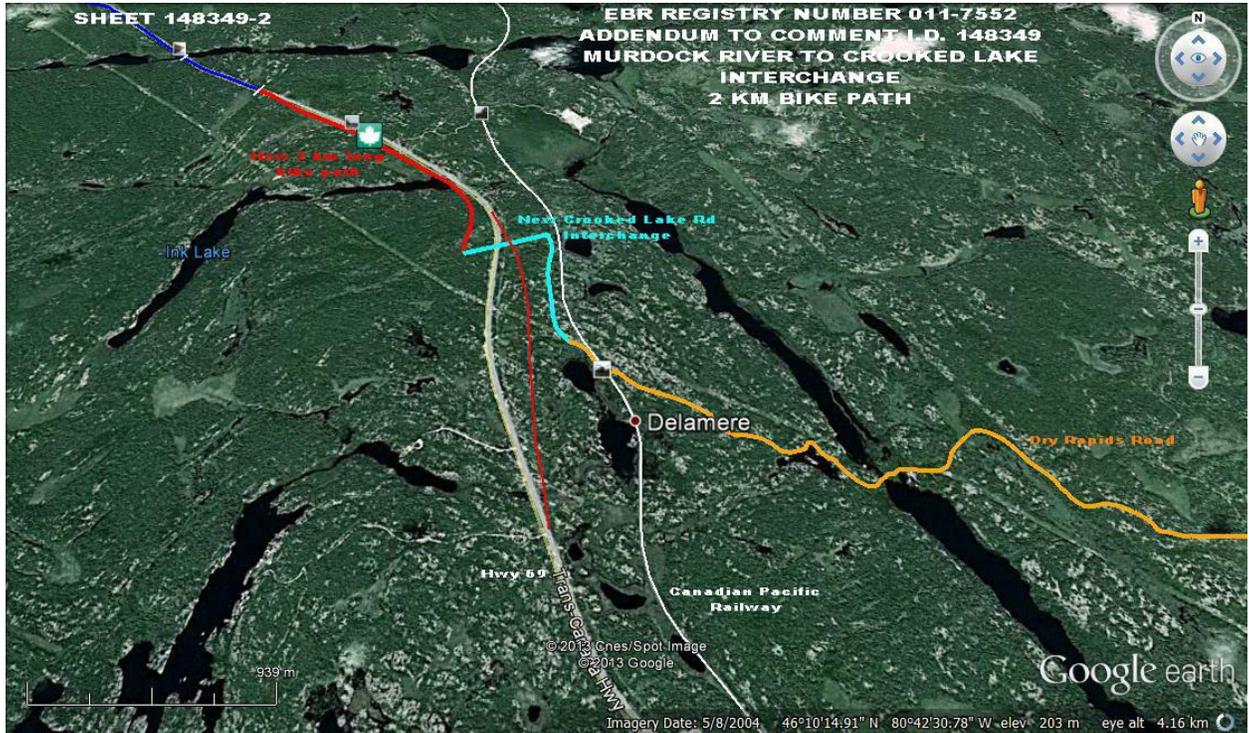


The Delamere Road continues south from the Dry Rapids Road as a maintained two lane width gravel road for 3.4 km before a paved surface is reached. The last 3 km to Hwy 64 at Alban are paved.

ADDITIONAL IMAGES



The above plan shows the area between the Trout Lake Road and the Burwash Farm Road (Old Hwy 69). The section east of the highway follows the alignment of an old trail, which at one time was probably the original road to Burwash.



This picture shows the area adjacent to the new Crooked Lake Road interchange currently under construction for the new four lane Hwy 69. The light blue indicates the new roads under construction which the cycling route will follow.

SUMMARY BY SECTION

Sec (1) – Upgrade old trail	2.5 km
Sec (2) – Install new lightweight bridge	
Build new trail on open ground	0.75 km
Sec (3) – Burwash Farm Rd and Murdock River Road	
No anticipated work	7.2 km
Sec (4) – Murdock River Road to Hwy 69	
Replace hard surface to width of 2.5 m	2.6 km
Sec (5) - Hwy 69 two lane to 640 metres south of Murdock River culvert. MTO to be requested To leave a 2.5 metre wide strip of asphalt in Place. No new construction required.	1.5 km

Sec (6) - 640 metres south of culvert to Ink Lake.	
Build new bike path.	1.54 km (max)
Sec (7) - Crooked Lake Road Interchange.	
Widen southbound off ramp to accommodate contra flow bike lane.	0.56 km
Pave new S.E. forest access road.	0.7 km
Sec (8) - CPR access road	
Upgrade to chip seal surface	0.3 km
Sec (9) - Dry Rapids Road West	
Upgrade to chip seal surface.	1.5 km
Sec (10) – Dry Rapids Road	
Add granular fill to prevent flooding.	0.1 km
Upgrade to chip seal surface.	5.6 km
Sec (11) – Delamere Road	
Upgrade gravel section to chip seal surface.	3.4 km
Total new trails	4.8 km
Total gravel roads requiring upgrade	14.1 km
Existing asphalt – no work anticipated	8.7 km

NOTES

The items shown in bold are the only true new sections. This included Sec (1) which is an old abandoned trail or road.

The cost of chip sealing existing gravel roads will vary from section to section depending on the prevailing conditions.

Sections (2) and (6) will require engineered plans to determine exact location.

Completion of Sections (1) and (2) will re-establish a bicycle route between Sudbury and Killarney.

REFERENCES

MTO Project 5379-02-00

Stantec Plates 1-10, 11-20, 21-30, 31-40, 41-50, 51-60, 61-69, 70-89 and
Report 08.

PART 2 – FUTURE SOUTHERN GAP

Currently cyclists are still allowed to cycle along the existing two lane Highway 69 north of the junction with Hwy 522 at Cranberry to a point 1690 metres south of Hwy 637.

The initial Recommended Plan for the section of four lane highway, which will extend from north of Nobel, to north of Hwy 522, numbered G.W.P. 5377-02-00, prepared by MRC, indicated an access road extending north alongside the highway as far as the

project limit. The project limit was indicated at a point approximately 3.8 km north of the Hwy 69/522 junction. Similar plans for the section extending from this point to a point 4.5 km north of Hwy 64 were prepared by Stantec. The Stantec section was assigned the no. G.W.P. 5378-02-00. These plans indicated an access road extending south from the proposed Pickerel River Road interchange to a forest access road located on the west side of the highway. MNR topographic maps for the area identify this forest access road as the Muskrat Bay Road. This continues for several kilometres beyond the highway. The gap between this road and the project limit where the other access road from the south was originally going to terminate was only about 700 metres. As noted in the introductory paragraph, changes in the MTO plans for this area will increase the gap for cyclists to over 5 km.



A careful review of satellite imagery of the area between Hwy 522 and the Pickerel River Road does not indicate the existence of any alternative secondary road or upgradeable trail, which could form the basis of a separate bicycle route. Therefore the only solution will require that the four lane plans be modified to provide a multi use trail

or pathway near to the new four lane. This would need to be at least 2.5 metres in width, separated from the highway by a median of reasonable width.

UPDATES (As of 9th Sept, 2016)

Since this document was originally prepared the MTO has made substantial progress with the new four lane highway, which now reaches to a point approximately 1 km north of the junction with Hwy 607. Some other minor changes are worth noting :

- Page 2 - The bridge shown crossing Hwy 11 north of Gravenhurst is almost certainly a snowmobile bridge.
- Page 4 – (Section 5) The old Hwy 69 including the temporary connecting link shown in the distance has been de-commissioned and the surface removed to a point about 640 metres south of the centreline of the Murdock River culvert. South of that point to Ink Lake any redundant sections of the old two lane Hwy 69 have been landscaped over with granular fill. Pictures “640”, “940” and “1540” are at least somewhat redundant. The “landscaping” can be seen on the latest satellite imagery.
- Pages 6 and 7 - The Crooked Lake Road interchange has been completed. There are now slight discrepancies regarding the location of the bike route in this area now that new satellite imagery has been made available by Google. The new CPR access road ends only 300 metres from the railway crossing.

- Page 9 - Dry Rapids Road. The flood east of the former snowmobile bridge at the Murdock River appears to be the result of local beaver activity involving the damming of a small creek east of the river and up-river from the bridge. Raising the road [over a length of](#) about 100 metres [by about 1 metre in elevation](#), may be more effective than fighting the beavers.

Prepared by

Denis Baldwin
2014/04/25

[Revised 2015/02/22](#)
Updated 2016/10/24
[Revised 2016/10/26](#)