



**Bison Butte Sub-Committee - Annual Report
Annual General Meeting
November 19, 2025**

Board/Staff	Volunteer Committee
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rob Patchell (past Chair; stepped down in fall 2025)Dave Ternier (interim Chair)Kevin BraunAlex ManDarcy BeerMike PareTwila Cruickshank (Manitoba Cycling Association rep)Ian Barnett (FortWhyte Alive rep)
Accomplishments	



- 2025 marked another banner year for Bison Butte with additional development at the sight, maintenance of the trails, increased engagement of the public through a second season of Dig Nights, and the first season of riding the new Woodlot Trail that was built and installed last October just before winter set in.
- Key accomplishments on the trails had to do with the refinishing of many features including jumps, berm reconstruction, installation of new wood-decked sections of trail, installation of new drainage features, and the construction of an all-new black skinny on the Woodlot Trail. Special thanks to FortWhyte Alive for contributing a tractor and operator that loaded multiple trailer loads so that material might more quickly be moved around the site for where it was needed.
- The Dig Nights enjoyed a robust second season with the addition of the Alter Ego Spots Dig Night in July. This created for a total of 6 Dig Nights in 2025, starting with the Kick Off Dig Night on April 23rd, followed by the Woodcock Cycle Works Dig Night (May 28), Olympia Cycle & Ski Dig Night (June 25), the aforementioned Alter Ego Sports Dig Night (July 16), Bikes & Beyond Dig Night (August 20), and the Wrap Party Dig Night (September 17). These dig nights activated over 500 volunteer hours that were put into the maintenance and development of Bison Butte. The sponsorship of these Dig Nights by the mentioned bike shops was a key component to their success in that the funding received allowed for additional material purchases and appropriate food and beverage support for the volunteers. The prizes these shops brought out to give away at each Dig Night was a benefit enjoyed by all of the volunteers and always added additional excitement to the wrap up of an evening of volunteer work. The sponsorship program of the Dig Nights also created great opportunities for the shop owners and managers to express their appreciation to the volunteers in-person and build deeper relationships with many of their customers and make new connections. The design of all promotional graphics and posters for each Dig Night was generously donated by committee member Kevin Braun of Element B Graphic Design.
- With funding support from Trails Manitoba, approximately 70' of wood decking was installed in two sections in the forest trail (labeled as "Chris's Corner" on Trailforks). This is meant to allow for an earlier riding start on this trail as it is typically very wet well into June on normal moisture years.

Challenges



- The primary challenge this year was in the implementation of the Green Team. MCA received a significant drop in funding for the Green Team and as such, was only able to hire three students (plus one that was able to only work occasionally due to having a full time job elsewhere). The team accomplished a lot of work relating to mowing the sight numerous times and later in the season with berm reconstruction and the removal of rutted trail. The challenge was primarily based around scheduling and ensuring the minimum number of students could make a shift. This was substantially easier in prior years when 6 or 10 students were hired as it was always easy to have the minimum 2-student requirement in place for safety reasons. Despite that challenge this year, the Green Team still brought a significant level of resources to Bison Butte that could not have been shouldered by the Dig Nights alone.
- With additional funding support from Trails Manitoba, the start of a site redevelopment plan was launched with trail designer/committee member Alex Man and the landscape architect team at Scatliff + Miller + Murray. Early draft concept ideas for various placement ideas of a formal trailhead (parking, bathrooms, pavilion/shelter, skills areas, etc.) have been explored and reviewed by the Bison Butte Committee. Work on this project is ongoing and it is hoped that project plans may be shared publicly in 2026 after discussions have been had with the various land managers surrounding Bison Butte, whose cooperation would be required to facilitate the installation of a formal trailhead and official public parking access.

Issues Resolved

- The primary issues resolved at Bison Butte this year continue to be the mitigation of drainage challenges. This was completed through the rebuilding of rutted trail and in a variety of test places, the installation of water bars (wooden structures installed at and embedded at the level of the trail surface that run perpendicular to the trail direction). Installing water bars as a level of erosion mitigation is new for Bison Butte but is used on downhill courses all over the world as a means of directing water flow off of steep downhill sections. The Bison Butte Committee will monitor the success of the newly installed water bars over the coming year and upon assessing their ability to divert water and preserve trail integrity, may make water bars a regular part of dealing with trails at Bison Butte that are prone to major rain event erosion.



Goals for Next Year

- Three primary goals exist for 2026 at Bison Butte:
 - The development of a broader management team through both the primary Bison Butte Committee along with new various subcommittees
 - Another great season of Dig Nights working in cooperation with sponsor partners, volunteers and a Green Team of hired students
 - The continued work on redevelopment plans for Bison Butte as a whole in conjunction with the landscape architect team at Scatliff + Miller + Murray, along with trail designer Alex Man.

