

Into the Mystic/Lord of the Squirrels – Rider Information Sheet

The Whistler Off-Road Cycling Association (WORCA) and the Resort Municipality of Whistler (RMOW) are excited to welcome locals and visitors alike to enjoy our new alpine mountain biking and hiking trail network on Mount Sproatt. This new trail system represents 5 years of planning and building work, with much more planned over the long term. This information sheet is meant to help answer questions and prepare riders for what to expect to safely complete this epic backcountry ride.

DO NOT UNDERESTIMATE THIS RIDE!

For many intermediate riders, this route is potentially the longest distance, largest elevation gain, and most sustained descending that you're likely to have experienced in your riding life. If you are not experienced in remote backcountry mountain biking, please take the time to adequately train your body, and prepare your bike, for a ride of this magnitude. Less experienced riders should treat this ride as a long term goal to achieve over a season rather than a bucket list item to get done as soon as possible. This ride is something to train for and work towards to ensure that your training will set you up to successfully and safely finish the ride, while being able to really enjoy the riding experience and environment.

Route

Whistler Trail Rating – Blue

["Challenging riding with steep slopes and/or obstacles, possibly on narrow trail with poor traction. Requires riding experience"](#)

Into the Mystic dist/elv gain/avg grade – 8.6km/+928m/7.5%

On the Rocks dist/elv gain/avg grade – 3.6km/+194m/

Lord of the Squirrels dist/elv gain loss/avg grade – 6.9km/+207mUp -906mDown/-10%

Time – 3 to 10 hours from valley bottom, return.

Exertion/Physicality Rating – Hard

Long distances, large elevation gains, and sustained climbing with many steep sections. The climb is machine built, and wide enough in many places for passing or riding beside friends and chatting. Smooth, but not without frequent steep pitches that get the heart rate up. The descent travels through varied terrain from the rocky open, alpine terrain, to the forested old growth featuring roots, rocks and some rock slabs with options around them. Keep your eyes on the trail while riding, with plenty of look outs, there are lots of opportunities to stop and rest and shake out the hands while taking in the amazing views.

Exposure Rating – High

Mount Sproatt may seem close to civilization, but this ride is a true backcountry experience and needs to be treated with the respect it deserves as it is remote with few options for rescue or bailout. Riders should treat this endeavour as any other remote ride and come well prepared for any and all eventualities as this is a big mountain with alpine terrain subject to fast changing weather conditions. It is not uncommon for Mount Sproatt to become quickly engulfed in fast moving cloud and fog and/or rain, reducing the temperature and visibility with little warning. A night out without the proper safety gear or spare clothing, could be extremely uncomfortable, or even deadly. These dangers can be more compounded later in the season when colder

temperatures and earlier darkness can catch people out. Do not discount the importance of extra clothing, gloves, and a waterproof jacket.

Terrain

Users will experience a full range of coastal mountain geography and topography when completing this ride. From the valleys lower elevation denser 2nd growth forest, the mid-elevation towering old growth Fir, Hemlock, and Cedar, to the open meadows and bluffy rocky sub-alpine and alpine terrain on the top of Mount Sproatt, you will experience it all.

[Into the Mystic](#) is a machine built climbing primary trail that winds its way, sometimes rather steeply, up the mountain. While it does feature short flat or slightly downhill sections to recover slightly, the fact remains that it's still ~12 km (7.5 miles) of distance and 1110 m (3608 ft) of climbing.

On the Rocks is a similar, two-way, machine built trail that winds its way through the alpine on top of Mount Sproatt, it's 3.6 km (2.2 miles) long with ~200 m (656 feet) of climbing.

[Lord of the Squirrels](#) is a hand built descent primary trail approximately 7 km (4.3 miles) long, with 200 m (656 feet) of climbing along the way, while descending 900 m (2952 feet). The descent features a wide variety of terrain and features including open alpine areas, rock slabs, and many sections with roots and rocks. During dry conditions you should expect loose rocks and dust with challenging traction.

Equipment

A well-maintained cross country/all-mountain bike with front suspension and disc brakes is strongly recommended. Helmet, gloves, eye protection, sturdy footwear should also be a priority. Be sure to also have a well-stocked backpack with at least 3l of water, food, energy gels, in addition to spare parts for repairs and a full first aid kit including a head lamp and whistle. A spare jersey and/or gloves and jacket should also be a part of your kit for fast changing alpine weather.

Safety

Riders must ride accordingly and well within their limits as this is a remote area with limited access for rescue. Ride with a trusted group, wait for your partners, be prepared to self-rescue. While we all appreciate Whistler Search and Rescue for the amazing work they do taking care of us when we need it most, they should only be called in the most serious of cases. Be prepared, ride smart, take your time not chances. We want everyone to make it back to the bottom in one piece.

Etiquette

- Familiarise yourself with [WORCA's Trail Etiquette Guide](#)
- Pack It In – Pack It Out.
- Take a photo if you need a memento of your adventure.
- Stay on the trail, don't cut corners, it takes a long time for vegetation to grow back.
- Obey signs and don't destroy the environment you are there to enjoy.
- Report vandalism.

Be considerate of the environment and local trail management plans. If you ride in the wet, ride trails that are appropriate. Consider the impact of riding in wet and rainy conditions.

In early season during snowmelt or in October once the fall rain comes certain areas may be deemed closed due to impact and erosion. The erosion problem arises when the ground is supersaturated, this is a time when the water content is very high – it often only takes a few days to dry and it's good to go. During spring melt most of the snow needs to be gone to reach this drying trend or you will damage the trail dramatically. Be patient.

In Alpine terrain, if a trail is open with a few snow patches, it is very important to stay on the snow on the trail. Braiding a new trail causes extensive damage to an area. The newly developed Sproatt network, for example, will only be opened once the snow is gone in the Alpine (once we can see the trail and stick to it). Other areas in the valley may be closed by builders because considerable snow melt keeps the trail supersaturated.

Please refer to the Whistler region on Trailforks.com for up to date conditions reporting.

Parking/Staging Areas

Rainbow Park is the primary staging area on the Westside and features washrooms, water fountains, and in the summer, swimming and food concessions. Primary access to Into the Mystic is via Hot Dog Alley, Scotia Creek, Sirloin/Darwin's, and the Flank trail. Please avoid parking in the Stonebridge subdivision.

Function Junction staging out of the Interpretive Forest parking lot adjacent to the stop lights. Function Junction features many shops and options for food and beverage. Access to Into the Mystic is via the South Flank.

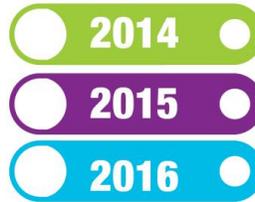
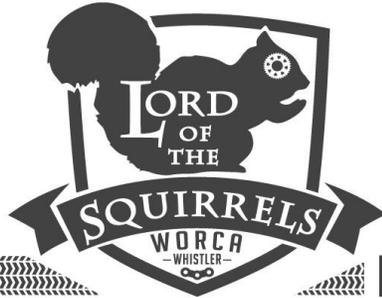
Support/Donations

WORCA is proud of its comprehensive and successful trail building and maintenance program, if you ride a trail in the Whistler area and love it, consider donating some [Trail Karma dollars via Trail Forks](#). All funds donated are sent directly to the organisation responsible for maintaining the trail, WORCA invests these dollars back into the trail network. WORCA also offers a [Trail Supporter](#) option with its annual memberships and hosts [Trail Days](#) for volunteers to attend.

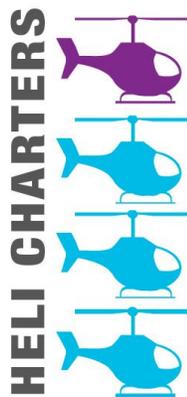


To celebrate the opening of Lord of the Squirrels (LOTS), WORCA launched the Lord of the Squirrels T-Shirts for sale! Thanks to: Comor, Fanatyko, Whistler Village Sports, Whistler Bike Co, Whistler Sports Rentals, and Arbutus Routes for their support in retailing the new Lord of the Squirrels fundraising shirt for future alpine maintenance and development. For every shirts sold, almost \$10 goes back to WORCA for ongoing alpine trail support. The shirts were a far bigger success than expected and are sold out for 2017. T-shirt sales will commence again in 2018.

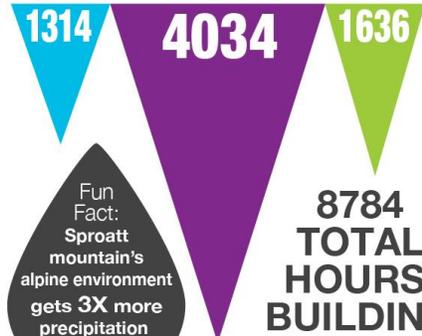
5 years
planning
3 years
building



LOTS



HOURS OF TRAIL BUILDING



Fun Fact:
Sproatt mountain's alpine environment gets 3X more precipitation than the valley!

17 Armoured Drain Crossings



9 AMAZING VIEWPOINTS + 3 SECRET ONES!

ELEVATION
Mt. Sproatt 1834m
Flank Trail 1000m
Start of LOTS 1700m
LOTS Climb 207m
LOTS Descent 906m



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