Coast Salish peoples and their ancestors lived on these islands for millennia,

sustainably hunting, fishing, cultivating, and collecting edible plants and berries,

and living as one with their environment.

More recently, after European arrival, a sheep run was cleared by the Hudson's Bay Company and Coast Salish - the "Cowichan Road".

During the 12 years of joint military occupation of the island, which was known as the Pig War, British and American forces improved the route,

creating the first major cross-island road.

This road was used extensively for communication and socialization between the opposing forces, helping to keep peace on the ground.

Later still, the road supported local trade and continuing non-indigenous settlement.

IMAGINE

setting foot in this unique history,

exploring a new backbone trail across the island,

celebrating natural beauty,

a long, multi-cultural human presence,

and a unique natural history of this island in the Salish Sea.

IMAGINE

tracing ancient land routes,

witnessing conservation, restoration, and stewardship in action,

and appreciating the peaceful dispute resolution between nations that occurred here over a century and a half ago.

IMAGINE

a new connection with nature to share with family and friends,

for native flora and fauna viewing,

lakeside,

through forest reserves,

and all made possible by a grand coalition and a lasting spirit of cooperation.

IMAGINE

a trail for multi-use recreation,

connecting conserved lands for hikers, trail runners, cyclists and horseback riders,

traversing Garry Oak prairie in the National Park,

providing education and recreation for youth and families.

and a glimpse at the invaluable role of native American women,

An opportunity to showcase island agriculture,

historic preservation,

and pastoral views

along lightly traveled roads.

IMAGINE

a new opportunity for improved health and well-being,

enhanced safety for everyone along our island roads,

and the chance to leave a legacy for generations to come.