

The Story of STARBUCK'S REVENGE

[00:00:00] From Talking Mouths.

[00:00:04] ANTHONY DELORENZO: Remember back in the day you used to drive the van up here like just to get the view and then we'd ride down the road.

[00:00:09] SYLVAIN TURCOTTE: That's right.

[00:00:12] SYLVAIN: That's right. I am Sylvain Turcotte. I co-own a company called Boreale Explorers. So we have a lodge, we do accommodation and then we also do bike tours in the summer. Right now we are at the top of the climb on Starbuck's Revenge, overlooking Fish Lake and amazing mountains. Most people are so happy to see those view that they usually don't complain too much about the climb.

Starbuck's has an amazing descent. It's like super loamy and nice turns and rooty and it's a bit technical. It's like the type of trail we don't really have on Grey Mountain or in the Lower Mount McIntyre. So it's kind of very unique. Blown Away kind of start the whole ride and then, yeah, connects with Starbuck's. Goat Trail Kid Vicious, potentially if they're like pretty good rider. And then we usually connect to the Mount Mac trails and then make all our way down to downtown. So it's quite a fun ride. It's a big adventure day.

[00:01:24] HOST: You're listening to Every Trail Tells a Story.

In this podcast, we explore the origins of our favorite Yukon trails.

In this episode, builders Anthony DeLorenzo, Alex Sokolon and Paul Burbidge recount their inspired and maybe slightly crazy effort to create new riding possibilities on Mount McIntyre.

This is the story of Starbuck's Revenge.

[00:02:19] SYLVAIN: We used to come up here just to ride Goat Trail, which is the next trail after Starbuck's. So we were pretty stoked when Paul, Tony and Alex started building Starbuck's because it made it worth it even more to come up here.

[00:02:33] ANTHONY: Goat is like a really natural trail. You know, it's just been over the years, it's just turned into this amazing sort of roller coaster.

[00:02:40] PAUL BURBIDGE: I love Goat. I really like the kind of like really rough, fast trails.

[00:02:44] TONY: Goat is like such a cool trail. Everyone loves Goat, but you know, it's...

[00:02:47] ALEX SOKOLON: This big commute to get up there for, I don't want to say minimal reward, but like it was a lot of effort for a relatively short ride.

[00:02:54] TONY: You gotta ride all the way up this crappy road, you gotta ride these ski trails, you get to do this amazing but short trail and then you gotta ride all these ski trails back to where you started. So I was like "There needs to be more to Goat."

Trails to me are just so important. I mean it's physical and mental health, really, more than anything, especially when you have young kids and a stressful job and, you know, for me to be able to just get out on the trails, especially living where I do, where I can just kind of go out my back door anytime I can find the time. I mean, I don't know what I would be doing if I wasn't out

on trails.

My name is Anthony DeLorenzo. I grew up in southwestern Ontario, and I moved to the Yukon in 1997. Originally, I was away for a couple years for some schooling, but otherwise I've been here since.

I was a cyclist growing up. I was a road racer. Mountain biking wasn't really a thing where I grew up. I didn't start mountain biking up here probably until, like, 2005. Bought a mountain bike, kind of started riding, like, double track and stuff. I didn't even know what, like, single track was. And as you know, anybody who rides here, once you start riding here, you realize how amazing it is and you just want to do more of it.

I don't even know how I got started, to be honest. I think I must have just gone out to trail nights and helped out. And then I did actually work for... I had a summer where I wasn't working, and I worked for the city trail crew for, like, six weeks. That was cool. I learned a lot on that.

I used to volunteer my time doing really annoying things like sitting on boards of directors. And it's like, I don't want to do that. I work in an office all day. I don't want to do office work in my spare time. So if I can contribute as a volunteer by building trails, which is something I find more rewarding and enjoyable and also helps people out, like, so that's kind of why I like doing it. I guess it's a cool way to contribute.

[00:05:09] SIDESHOW BOB: Listen to me, life is short. Don't spend it on foolish, empty revenge.

ALEX: You know, looking back with regards to Starbucks revenge.

I've done some dumb stuff in my life, but, you know, and this is probably in the top six. Like, how did I get to be building a trail up in the alpine, in the Yukon?

[00:05:32] TONY: So it was really pretty simple. There wasn't a grand vision. There was just a need, I felt, to expand on what you could ride when you rode Goat. So I recruited one of my friends named Alex, but who will forever be known as Michael Bolton.

[00:05:49] ALEX: The Michael Bolton thing is so abstract. I don't really know how it stuck. But you never get to really pick your nickname.

My name is Alex Sokolon. I'm originally from Richmond, B.C. So, in the late 90s, I started riding and learning to ride on the North Shore, which was terrifying and also inspiring at the same time. And then moved to Squamish in 2006.

And then I did a lot of biking in Squamish. So when I moved up here, I was really excited to start getting out and seeing what this place had to offer. And actually, now that I think of it, that's where I first met Tony because Tony and I were connected through mutual friends. Armand Hurford, who used to be the Norco rep here in Whitehorse many moons ago. And Armand had told Tony that, "Yeah, you should look for a single speeder who just moved up." And one day I was out riding and came across Tony. He's like, "I don't know you. You're on a single speed. You must be Alex."

I started with the city trail crew. I guess it would have been the back half of 2010 because I moved up here Halloween 2009. I'd answered an advert that Jane Koepke had put in the newspaper, I think, looking for trail builders. And I had some trail building experience from my time in Squamish. I was really excited to continue and be more in depth with the level of trail building that I was able to get into the next year. So the summer of 2011, I actually was living

with Tony and his partner, Sierra Vandermeer. I was downstairs in their basement, or "breakup room," as they called it.

And so I believe it was the summer of 2011, which was my second season with the trail crew, first full on season with them. And it was during that time where, I don't quite remember the story, but we might have just been sitting out in the backyard or on a ride. And we were looking up at Mount Mac and being like, "Okay, well, Goat's there...." There was this pocket of what looked to be complete shit building between Goat and what is now Blown Away, that we were like, "Let's go up and check it out...."

[00:08:27] TONY: I like trails that are natural. That was kind of the vision with Starbuck's. At the time I said, "I want it to be like a bush trail." You know, I didn't want it to be like a flow trail or something like that.

[00:08:40] ALEX: Tony and I agreed on that right off the bat. We wanted it to be rough. Our priority was to figure out a line that worked, the best sustainable line that we could come up with, and to keep the trail as natural and almost as grassroots as possible.

[00:09:02] TONY: You'll never find a berm on Starbuck's Revenge, you know what I mean? The other thing is, I didn't want it to be a shuttle trail. Nothing against shuttling, but I didn't want it to be something where people were driving up there and unloading downhill bikes. I'm like, you know, you're gonna have to do some work to ride this trail.

[00:09:28] ALEX: I would say that we probably spent most of the 2011 season just trying to figure out whether it was even possible or viable.

[00:09:37] TONY: You know, trail scouting can be time consuming and especially up there. There's no real starting and ending point that are obvious there. Right? It's like, you know you want to link into the Fraser Loop somewhere to get to Goat and, you know you want to start somewhere off the Mount Mac Road. But that was all we had to work with. So, we just started, you know, wandering around the bush and finding old horse trails and game trails and getting lost and attacked by bears and yeah, I was like, that's kind of how it started.

[00:10:10] ALEX: When Tony and I were scouting, it was so easy to get lost and be like, "Where the fuck are we going?" Like, "Well, we can't go that way because we didn't know... Have we seen that tree before?" And WE would just get lost there for hours.

[00:10:26] TONY: There were some old horse trails up there that we sort of led us into where we started. And the first year we were kind of opening those up and adding to them to kind of get up to where the bench is now. But at the same time we still didn't know where we were going.

[00:10:43] ALEX: And Tony just being like, "Well, let's just follow the dog. Fuck, let's just follow the dog. Let's see where Starbuck wants to go."

Starbuck.

[00:10:52] CLIP: Starbuck.

[00:10:54] CLIP: Starbuck. Hey, everybody, it's Starbuck.

[00:10:56] CLIP: He's back.

[00:10:57] CLIP: Starbuck has such a well defined sense of what lies in waiting. That's what

makes him such a good advanced scout.

ALEX: The trail scouting lines that Starbuck would pick, they didn't help anyone. We gave him a chance. We said, "You're part of the crew. We want your involvement. We'd like to hear your input. What do you think, Starbuck? Where should the trail go?" We'd follow him and be like, "You're the dumbest dog."

CLIP: No, no, no, let's not deprecate Starbuck's volunteering for what could be a long and dangerous mission.

[00:11:33] TONY: We knew we were going up, we didn't know where we were going down. So we were still, as we were building the first half of the trail, we were still trying to figure out where the rest of it went. And we were still figuring that out the next year. Basically, you kind of come over that ridge where the bench is and then you're heading towards Fraser Loop. But there's like nothing in there. Like there's no landmarks or features really.

[00:11:52] ALEX: There is a lot of God awful and wet and really bushy terrain. So even on the bluebird days, you make a wrong move and next thing you know, you're covered in probably the worst bugs I've ever experienced.

[00:12:06] TONY: We just wandered around up there getting eaten by bugs.

[00:12:08] ALEX: When there was no wind, there were bugs and when there was lots of wind there was bugs. When there was rain, there were bugs. There was a reason why nobody had built up there yet. If I recall correctly, we felt quite confident that it might have been just the two of us, just because of the bullshit terrain and the time involved. And like, I think it might have been an unspoken pact that we we're like, "Okay, if anyone's committed or perhaps, arguably, should be committed to doing this, it's going to be us."

[00:12:46] PAUL BURBIDGE: My name is Paul Burbidge. I'm a land surveyor. I was trail director of Contagious Mountain Bike Club for three or four years. I think, for me, that's a creative outlet. It replaced a part of my work that I kind of gave up say around 2010 or so.

So I had this hole in my life from that loss of a piece of my work and then I needed to fill it with something. So building kind of stepped in and took that over.

[00:13:10] ALEX: I can't remember how Paul got connected exactly. Like he might have just come out to help out a couple times. But Paul was really helpful because he was like that, you know, putting that nitrous in the tank where Tony and I were like, "Fuck, we gotta keep, like, let's keep going. We're not gonna abandon this. But we need some ... Burbidge."

[00:13:33] TONY: Yeah, we pulled Paul in pretty quick. It was basically the three of us. I would say we were the builders of record, I guess, if that's such a thing.

[00:13:40] ALEX: The three of us combined made a really good crew to kind of put our heads together and troubleshoot here and there. Both Paul and Tony had that energy and the drive to keep going. There's no way I think that the three of us either combined or individually could ever measure the amount of hours that we have put into that trail.

[00:14:05] TONY: Oh man, hundreds. Hundreds of hours over multiple years just to get the trail open. This was a labour-intensive trail. There was just no way around it.

[00:14:17] ALEX: Not only the trail itself, but just the commute to get there.

[00:14:26] TONY: Driving up there alone, just from Riverdale, it's like 40 minutes if you bomb the road in a 4x4, at least 45 minutes. Then it's about a 4 kilometer trail. So, as we got further and further in, even just hiking in to do the trail work, the mobilization cost, I guess you would say, was getting pretty high. By the end, we'd be up there at different times. I'd come up there and Michael or Paul would have done a whole bunch of work and I'd be like, "Oh cool, look what they did." And sometimes we'd be up there together trying to figure stuff out.

[00:15:02] ALEX: I was full time with the city trail crew and then when I finished up my day, I'd come meet up with Tony who was doing like the full Fred Flintstone. Like you know, he was in his office job, whistle would go "Yabba dabba doo." He'd come racing back, we'd have a bite to eat, and then head up to Starbuck's and keep working on that for another three, five, six hours, depending.

[00:15:25] TONY: A lot of this was built before we had kids. So you know, it wasn't such a big deal to disappear for five or six hours after work.

[00:15:31] ALEX: Also, there was a period in 2012 for about, I want to say six or eight weeks, maybe, where I was in between my city trail crew job and what my fall, like my non-trail type job was going to be. So for basically, let's just call it six weeks, I was up on Starbuck's Revenge working largely by myself for easily 8 hours a day, 7 days a week for all that time. And then Tony would come up after his work and then, you know, sometimes we'd keep working together, or it would be like almost like shift work.

I'd be like, "Okay Tony, like fuck, I got to this point, you know. Here's what I have planned out for the next." So, we would like trade the torch, so to speak.

CLIP: "Here comes Barney. Watch me have some fun."

[00:16:21] TONY: You know, I can remember one day, I think Michael Bolton might have gotten heat stroke or something because he'd gone out there for the whole day. And I came home from work and he had come down and I was going up that night and he was so excited. He's like, "Oh, I found this cool way to get up. There's like an old trail there. It's amazing." I'm like, "Oh cool, I'm gonna go check it out." So I went up there and checked it out and it just went straight through a swamp and it was over your ankles. Water just straight through a swamp. And I'm like, "I think he's actually maybe gotten heat stroke up here and just gone crazy." Because you can't build a trail in here.

[00:16:59] CLIP: What a sense of humor.

ALEX: Being up in the alpine for such a long time by myself was.... I really enjoyed it. No matter how God awful the bugs were, or how hot it would be, or how tired I would get, it was hardly a shitty office, right? Like you can sit there and be like, "I'm going to take a break and I'm going to turn this way and just hang out and look at Fish Lake." Or I'm going to turn this way and be like, "Oh, I can see all the way down to Marsh." Or "Oh, there's Laberge."

It certainly had its challenges. Like, when I was up there just by myself and even with Tony as well, but especially when I was up there by myself, you can get sketched out a little bit. You hear things rumbling or you don't hear things rumbling, but you think you hear things rumbling...

[00:17:45] TONY: So we were out on one of our lost scouting missions and it was myself and Michael Bolton and I had my dog with me, Starbuck, who's the namesake of the trail.

[00:17:56] ALEX: Classic case that we were bumbling around in the bush.

[00:17:59] TONY: And we started hearing like a crashing in the bush. And we're kind of like, "Oh, that's not good." And as we're kind of moving in one direction, this crashing is following us. And, of course, we can't see anything because we're in the bush. So we eventually get to this little, like, 10 meter clearing, maybe. So we stop there, we kind of put our backs to one side and this bear comes out the other side who's been following us.

[00:18:20] ALEX: It was a black bear. He was... Well, he or she, I'd say, was probably a couple years old. Definitely not a cub.

[00:18:29] TONY: He wasn't huge. He must have been a young male, I guess, because he was being sort of aggressive and, you know, maybe wanted to strut his stuff a bit. And we had a good old standoff. I had the bear spray. I think Michael Bolton had, like, some kind of an implement.

[00:18:46] ALEX: I had a pair of, like, Fiskars clippers, Kind of like hedge clippers. And at some point in the the advancement and standoff, somehow I dropped them. And so somewhere, there's a really nice pair of Fiskars clippers out there.

[00:19:04] TONY: I don't know how long we were actually squared off at each other, but it felt like a long time until we were finally able to just kind of back away slowly and basically get out of there. So we called him Walt.

[00:19:20] ALEX: Oh, Walt, that old soul of a bear.

[00:19:23] TONY: And we actually saw Walt quite often the rest of that year.

I don't know if one day particularly stands out up there because there were so many and there were so many laughs up there. You know what I mean?

[00:19:45] CLIP: "Unless I'm wrong, and I'm never wrong, they are headed dead into the Fire Swamp."

[00:19:55] ALEX: One key memory, which was a really good memory for myself and Burbidge, but probably a horrible memory for Tony and Ben Lockridge, who was helping us at the time.... There was a certain part of the trail that we came to know as the Fire Swamp.

[00:20:15] CLIP: "I'm not saying I'd like to build a summer home here, but the trees are actually quite lovely."

ALEX: If you haven't seen the Princess Bride, just think dank, wet, bugs, Just horrible vegetation. Kind of the worst place you really want to be working.

[00:20:31] CLIP: "The Fire Swamp certainly does keep you on your toes."

[00:20:34] ALEX: So we were working in groups of two, and Paul and I were working up on one of the benches, one of the gradient trails that came out of the Fire Swamp. And, you know, it was a fairly bluebird day, and there was a bit of a breeze. And surprisingly, Burbidge and I were just working away in the sun. There was a nice breeze. There were very few bugs at that point, which was a rarity. And we were just having a nice time just carving this trail. And we looked down below, and there's Tony and Ben just slaving away in the Fire Swamp. And you could just see the plumes of bugs that were around them.

[00:21:13] TONY: It's like 30 degrees, and I'm just getting eaten alive by bugs, and I'm just sweating, and I'm just digging in this horrible organic earth that will never end.

[00:21:24] PAUL: There's a really great photo of Anthony when we were building Starbuck's Revenge. We were going through... there's a bridge there now, but there was this terrible swamp with a bunch of permafrost under it. And he pulled out this huge piece of organics and threw it on his head. It looked just exactly like Sideshow Bob. It was hilarious. Being swarmed by mosquitoes.

[00:21:44] ALEX: I usually choose not to laugh at somebody else's expense, but I will in this case.

[00:21:55] CLIP: "That man is so rude."

[00:21:57] CLIP: "Yeah."

[00:21:58] TONY: Sometimes we were just laughing at what a ridiculous situation we were in. You just kind of had to, because otherwise it would get kind of dark.

The first year, we kind of got the climb put in, and then I think was another year, or might have even been two years, to get kind of the lower part roughed in, especially on the descent. There's a lot of flat ground down there and a lot of really not great ground. So just getting something that worked down there just took forever. And then we had to do major upgrades. There was a year where we just did huge upgrades on it. So I think it was like a three or four year build just to get it kind of, you know, sort of complete.

[00:22:49] ALEX: We wanted to keep our visible footprint on Starbuck's Revenge as minimal as we could. And that also translated into being really meticulous about how we moved brush or trees that we had cleared or soil that we had had to gather. That's definitely one of the pieces that I feel that I brought to the crew.

[00:23:10] TONY: I think the most I bring to anything is just enthusiasm. I think as far as being a trail builder goes, I mean, I built some trail. I think I do all right at it, but I think just the gumption or the enthusiasm to actually just do that, that's maybe what I brought.

[00:23:35] ALEX: I would say that probably the town crier for Starbuck's Revenge would be Tony. A Pied Piper trying to, you know, get the people to follow him through the streets and come up to the magical trail. And now I'm picturing Tony, like with a flute and Peter Pan hat.

[00:23:54] PAUL: Me and Alex had a big part in it, but Tony had the vision.

[00:23:57] ALEX: Tony was a huge motivator. There was that motivating and almost constant excitement that came from Tony about wanting to work towards building this. And he had so much determination.

[00:24:20] TONY: We had a ton of help. I mean, that trail was a lot of work. Youth Achievement Center, Rob Horne and his crew, they came up and helped us build those bridges. Cool fact: We actually sledged the materials in for those bridges in the winter with snowmobiles and then came back in the summer and built them.

[00:24:40] PAUL: We loaded up my kind of modern sled and Sky Pearson donated his sled for it as well. The thing has to be 40 years old. So we got out there, we had all this bridging material,

weighed several hundred pounds, and we pulled it up the Mount Mac Road. Skye's sled, as it turned out, couldn't even climb the hill by itself basically. So we ended up, after spending the whole day grunting and sledding all this material in as far as we could, we ended up having to like take Skye's sled and put it on the sleigh I was pulling in order to get it back down the hill. And once we were up there with just my sled pulling it, it was kind of like standard sled messing around, too heavy a load. So I ended up going back later with just my sled and spent the day banging around in there, but got the material as close as I could.

And then there was like all this snow in the Fire Swamp. There was so much snow in there. I was like, "I'm going to rally around in there." Immediately blew my belt. And I'm standing up on top of this mountain and you don't actually have cell service there with a blown belt. I felt pretty smart at the time.

[00:25:49] TONY: You know, CMBC did trail nights up there. The city crew pitched in. We had Boreale mountain biking.

[00:25:57] SYLVAIN TURCOTTE: So I think we came once or twice on Starbuck's, tried to bring a crew with the van...

TONY: And then just roping friends in constantly. I mean, all of my friends worked on that trail. People put a lot of work in on that trail. I mean, there's probably other people I've missed too, but.

CLIP: "Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah."

[00:26:17] CLIP: "Fred, stop being so thick headed."

[00:26:23] TONY: Sierra definitely came up and put in her time. I think Sierra is also responsible for the trail name.

[00:26:29] ALEX: Whenever I think about Starbuck's Revenge, and whenever I'm up on it, I always remember Starbuck and always will.

[00:26:38] TONY: We didn't have a trail name, but we just kind of started calling it that. And then you know how that goes: they tend to stick. There's a lot of like layers of meaning there, you know, especially if you're into Moby Dick. But yeah, it just seemed catchy at the time.

[00:26:53] ALEX: There was hardly any discussion. It was like, "Yeah, that's bang on. Yep. It's called that: Starbuck's Revenge. Done. Put it in ink somewhere.

[00:27:03] PAUL: It seems like when a name comes it just, it's just the right name.

[00:27:07] ALEX: He was a black, short-haired lab. Great dog. The Ross River Special.

[00:27:15] TONY: He is actually a real pain in the ass to build trail with. If you cut a stick and you throw it off the trail, he brings it back. He forever had a big scar in his nose from running into the back of my Pulaski while I was hiking along the trail.

He was a good Walt alarm system and just, you know, have a little bit of company and especially when you're going up there by yourself, it's great to go up building with your dog even if he is a royal pain in the ass.

CLIP: "Starbuck is on a long range patrol. I just thought you should know."

TONY: Starbuck passed away a few years ago. So we scattered his ashes up on the trail, which was great. We took him on his last ride basically, and we all rode up together and scattered his ashes. And now we have the little plaque there on the rock.

[00:27:59] ALEX: It said "Starbuck: He was a good dog, and when he wasn't, we loved him anyway."

[00:28:04] TONY: He's part of that trail now and I'm really glad that that's kind of his legacy because certainly he put his time in up there, that's for sure.

[00:28:13] CLIP: "Starbuck? Yeah? Take care of yourself. You know me, pal, I always look out for number one. Tell them not to sit around waiting."

[00:28:28] ALEX: Once Starbuck's Revenge was completed, the three of us would have done our inaugural ride where we went up there with no tools, just bikes.

[00:28:37] TONY: We didn't have really an opening event because, like I said, it was I think three years to get the trail open and then it still needed a lot of work. We went back the next year and basically put in another full season of building. Never really felt like we were just ready to cut a ribbon on it.

[00:28:53] ALEX: No fireworks, no fanfare. I think it was just like, "Thank fuck, we're done."

[00:28:58] TONY: I got together with Bolton and Paul the other day and we were just kind of laughing. Like, if we'd known what we were getting into, I don't know if we would have built that trail, you know what I mean? There were some tough times. It turned out to be a lot of work.

[00:29:12] PAUL: Starbuck's Revenge. We learned a big lesson about choosing suitable ground. That was just a terrible idea. It was, like, multiple kilometers just through swamp, basically. But it turned into something amazing.

[00:29:22] ALEX: But...

[00:29:23] PAUL: But it takes quite a bit of upkeep still. You still got to go up there a day or two of summer to fix things.

[00:29:27] TONY: The trail holds water in the spring and people want to ride it a little earlier than they should, probably. So that's one of the big challenges over the years. Like, I'll go up there every year, and it's not glamorous work. You know, you put, like, 50 buckets of dirt into one section of trail and then that section's okay. And then the next year, it's like, okay, "What other section of trail needs us to just mine dirt?" For me, personally, it's at least 8 or 10 hours a year of maintenance.

[00:29:57] ALEX: I don't get up to do a lot of maintenance on Starbuck's. Life changes, definitely. In the fresh years of Starbuck's Revenge. I felt... I don't want to really say "ownership," but I definitely felt really attached to it. As time has gone by, it fades, right?

[00:30:16] TONY: I've built other trails. We built Kid Vicious, you know, I've helped Paul with Rehab and Gnar-wall and I've worked on other trails. But Starbucks has always been the trail that I kind of care the most about.

[00:30:30] PAUL: I guess, for sure, that's Tony's baby, primarily.

[00:30:32] TONY: It was certainly a partnership, I think, between the three of us.

[00:30:40] ALEX: I think all three of us were really, really good at providing the support that we all needed just to drag each other through it.

It's not a part of my life that I necessarily really reflect on anymore, because it's been a number of years since those majorly focused days. I wouldn't say that, looking back at it, that I wish I'd never built it. I certainly wouldn't say that in any seriousness, that's for sure.

[00:31:14] TONY: I don't really have any regrets. I'm really happy with the trail, really proud of it, really enjoy it. I never get sick of that view. You know, you climb up to that bench and you sit there, and you can look out over Fish Lake and Mount Granger. And, you know, fun fact about Starbuck's: the bench is an old truck tailgate. We found it up there, packed it off the mountain. Skye Pearson welded up some legs that we could bolt onto it and then we packed everything back in on our backs. So I thought that was kind of cool.

[00:31:52] ALEX: I admit that I don't do a lot of mountain bike riding, but when I do go up there, whether it's on a bike or whether I'm walking, I really appreciate taking time to remember this corner. Or, like, there's a handful of trees that I know really well. I can picture them. I know where they are on the trail, and I know what was happening when we were, you know, whether they were landmarks for scouting or whether I remember those pieces. And to be honest, I think I actually enjoy walking it better than biking it, just because of my own experience, my own process of going through and thinking about all those memories and all of the people.

[00:32:37] TONY: I just enjoy riding Starbuck's, you know. It's the kind of trail I would build if I was going to build a trail, because, hey, I built it, right. It's fast. It's kind of rough.

It's getting rougher. When you first drop into that first little pitch of descent, that might be my favorite part. You can boost some of those little corners and kind of bounce around, and I don't know, that's just kind of the barometer of how you're going to do on the trail, you know what I mean? When you drop into that first downhill section and you just kind of see how it goes and if you can link everything up right. Or not.

And then things get rowdier as you go down, too, which is kind of cool. And there's so many options, right? Like, if you don't want to do Goat or Kid Vicious, you can skip them.

You know, the other thing I like about that trail, too, is, I mean, the horseback riders use parts of it, which I think is cool. It's a good trail for running or hiking. I don't believe trails should just be for one user group, right?

[00:33:42] ALEX: Yeah. We initially built it with the thought of it being a mountain biking trail. But even through the process of building it, my own perspective of what that trail was going to be really changed.

[00:33:58] TONY: The horses, I think, are kind of cool. Over the years, we would see that would not like a section of trail, basically. So we'd kind of rebuild it and see if they would use it. It was kind of a fun game. There's a couple of trails they've connected from Fish Lake up to Starbuck's now, which are pretty cool trails of their own. So now those are kind of available to us as mountain bikers. So that's kind of cool. I like that. I mean, that's how trails grow, right? It's kind of an organic thing. You build something and someone else adds onto it. And people start using it in a different way than you expected.

[00:34:43] ALEX: We knew that the trail would become what it needed to become. That trail will evolve just as any other trail will evolve long after I'm gone. And part of that evolution is for me, it's to be able to be "Okay, just let it live."

[00:35:41] HOST: Every Trail Tells a Story is made by Talking Mouths. The theme music is Blue Ska by Kevin McCleod.

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Thanks for listening.

[00:36:19] SIDESHOW BOB: I began by removing Walt's face.

ALEX: Yeah, yeah, yeah. I can. I can picture Walt's face because he was about the same distance that you and I are sitting. So what are we, like six feet? Yeah, well, of course we're six feet. Yes. Two meters. One caribou. It's a full Burbidge. Yeah.

You know, I was in preparing for this chat, I was thinking about the clippers, you know, the pair of Fiskars. Maybe I'll get a sponsorship. The pair of clippers that are out there.

[00:36:53] HOST: Maybe mention the beer.

[00:36:54] ALEX: Maybe. That's true. Yeah. It's a Jagged Pilsner, Winterlong. It's fantastic.

[00:36:59] HOST: We can get a sponsor there too.

[00:37:01] ALEX: Yeah. I have no idea where they are, but maybe someday. Maybe someday someone will find them.

[00:37:06] HOST: I don't know how you're going to... Ffnd a pair of clippers that are on the ground.

[00:37:09] ALEX: Yeah. No, I'm just wishful thinking.

[00:37:11] HOST: Yeah. Were you going to threaten to castrate the bear? How would you have employed those if it came down to it?

[00:37:19] ALEX: I don't know. If it had come down to it, I would probably like, maybe like bonked Walt over the head. I felt holding the Fiskars in front of me was probably more respectful than trying to hold Tony in front of me.

[00:37:35] HOST: I'm sure Tony would agree.

[00:37:37] ALEX: I think Tony would agree.