

Husband of cyclist killed in PEI says gov't needs to create safer bike trails

Linda Hoang, CTV Edmonton
December 5, 2012

The husband of an Edmonton cyclist killed while on vacation in Prince Edward Island in the summer, says that province needs to create safer bike trails to ensure no one else dies the way his wife did.

Elizabeth Sovis and her husband Edmund Aunger were biking along a two-lane highway in the summer when she was struck by a van.

Clarence Moase pleaded guilty to impaired driving causing death.

PHOTOS



Edmund Aunger is lobbying for more bike trails across Canada. Aunger's wife Elizabeth Sovis died cycling, while on vacation in Prince Edward Island in the summer.



Edmund Aunger and his wife Elizabeth Sovis pose during a stop on July 13 in New Brunswick on their bicycle tour of the Maritimes. Supplied.

On Tuesday, he was sentenced to six years in prison.

It's a sentence Aunger says he has mixed feelings about.

"I'm not convinced that putting him in jail for a long period of time is going to solve the matter or make anything better," Aunger said.

Aunger says he believes Moase is a scapegoat and more needs to be done to ensure no one else dies the way his wife did.

“We have to do something more than just putting people in jail,” Aunger said.

“I think we have to think about what we can really do so other people don’t go through this kind of pain and suffering.”

Aunger is lobbying for more bike trails across Canada.

“I know too many people who have been hit by cars while they’re riding their bikes. We do not have the proper infrastructure for people to ride their bikes safely,” he said.

He is set to ride from Victoria to Edmonton next summer and then has plans to take the TransCanada trail in 2017 to Prince Edward Island.

He plans to spend the five anniversary of Sovis’ death where she died.

“I’m challenging the Prince Edward Island government to do something about the routes that are available for cyclists in that province so that when I get there, I can celebrate the fact that it is safe,” Aunger said.

Sovis was an experienced cyclist. She was wearing a reflective vest and helmet at the time of her death.

“We had gone to Prince Edward Island to cycle on the trail and when we finished our day of cycling and wanted to go to our accommodation, the only accommodation we could find was four kilometres off the trail so we followed the route that was recommended by the Minister of Tourism, for cyclists and it was a two-lane highway with no shoulders,” Aunger said.

“If we had known, my wife would never have gone on that vacation because she was adamant that she would never cycle on such a road and we had only gone two kilometres when she was hit.”

Sovis had been a year away from retirement before she was killed and had planned to spend her retired years working on the development of safe cycling trails in Alberta – a cause Aunger is now hoping to carry on.

Moase had four prior impaired-driving convictions.