



NEWS RELEASE

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Alberta TrailNet Wins “Friends of Tourism” ALTO Award

A pilot project to map recreational trails in Northeast Alberta has won a major award for the Alberta TrailNet Society at the Alberta Tourism Awards (ALTO) event held October 27, 2008 in Banff.

The NE Alberta Trail Map showcases approved trails in the region, providing trail location and type of use information that will enable Albertans to make responsible choices and access a variety of trail experiences. Diverse natural areas, points of interest (natural and historic) and unique tourism opportunities are featured in one easy-to-follow publication. The map project also provides helpful information for land-use planning and decision-making, and recreational access planning and design.

Alberta TrailNet won the Friends of Tourism Award which recognizes an organization that, through its activities, has made a significant contribution to the provincial tourism industry. “We are delighted to have won this award,” said Linda Strong-Watson, executive director of Alberta TrailNet. “It recognizes our work, but the award belongs to our steering committee partners as well. On behalf of our steering committee, I’d like to thank our project funders and everyone who contributed to the success of this project.”

The map was developed through an initiative led by Alberta TrailNet with funding provided by Alberta Tourism, Parks and Recreation and Alberta Sustainable Resource Development. The steering committee, formed in 2006, had representation from both these government departments, Alberta TrailNet, Alberta Snowmobile Association and the Alberta Off-Highway Vehicle Association. Regional tourism associations (Alberta’s Lakeland, Kalyna Country, Athabasca Country), municipalities, trail associations and clubs, local businesses and individuals provided assistance that was critical to the project.

The map was first released at a community celebration in St. Paul on January 19, 2008. The first run of 15,000 maps was distributed by May and an additional 15,000 maps were printed. Positive feedback from the public and tourism groups has demonstrated the public’s interest in trail maps. “The success of this pilot project has led to a commitment to develop similar trail maps for other regions of Alberta, which will in turn boost tourism to those areas,” said Strong-Watson. The partnership approach taken on this initiative proved that a public-private team is an effective and efficient way to deliver a much needed public resource.

Alberta TrailNet promotes and supports the establishment of a provincial trail network in Alberta, including the Trans Canada Trail, for the multiple benefits trails provide. For further information about TrailNet and the Northeast Alberta Trail Map, call 1-877-9-TRAILS or visit www.albertatrailnet.com.

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