

Alberta TrailTracker

Alberta TrailNet Newsletter

Issue Twelve Fall 2009



CANADA'S ECONOMIC ACTION PLAN FUNDS OVER 500 RECREATIONAL TRAIL PROJECTS

Work has begun across Canada on hundreds of outdoor trail projects, helping to create jobs while also enhancing the country's national trail system. The Honourable Gary Lunn, Minister of State (Sport), and Terry Norman, National Coordinator, National Trails Coalition (NTC) announced that over 500 trail projects will benefit from the Government's \$25 million investment in recreational trails, as part of the Government's Economic Action Plan.

"As part of Canada's Economic Action Plan, Canada is proud to provide the first payment of \$12.5 million to the National Trails Coalition to get construction underway," said Minister of State Lunn. "By partnering with the National Trails Coalition we are boosting local

economies, creating jobs, getting shovels in the ground and providing Canadians with better quality trails."

The funds are being used to create, upgrade and sustain recreational trails throughout Canada. For eligible projects, the Government of Canada's \$25 million commitment will be matched by the NTC and

their provincial, territorial, municipal, volunteer, or private funding partners. Applications for this funding were received between May 26, 2009 and June 26, 2009. With the intake for this funding now complete and projects approved, the National Trails Coalition has allowed work on trails to begin and generate economic activity in



Town of Banff - Bow Falls Trail upgrade work underway



Rocky Mountain Dirt Riders Association Project - Single track upgrades in progress.

mitigate erosion and connect two trail segments.

Lac Ste. Anne County – Multi-use Trail Expansion

90 km of snowmobile trail will be constructed.

McMurray Sno-Drifters Association

Thickwood Tower Trail Upgrade.

Olds Snowmobile Club – Yara Creek Trail realignment

Reclaim a former snowmobile trail ‘back’ to a snowmobile trail following exploration ‘reclamation’ work and washouts. Seeding, culverts, signage, geotextile installation.

Pembina Driftbusters Snowmobile Club – Long Island Lake Trail Upgrade

Snowmobile trail clearing and bridge construction.

Canada’s construction sector.

“This \$25 million funding initiative has, for the first time in trail development history, made it possible for a growing network of multiple-use trails to be built across Canada,” stated Terry Norman, National Coordinator for the NTC. Norman added, “with over 500 shovel-ready trail projects approved for completion by March 2010, the NTC believes this is the first step in providing trail infrastructure and tourism product that will be used by millions of Canadians and visitors to Canada.”

Alberta has benefitted from this national initiative with more than 34 trail projects (see below)receiving federal funding. The Province, Alberta TrailNet Society, Trans Canada Trail, provincial trail user associations, municipalities, local groups and regional associations have contributed matching dollars to allow these projects to proceed.

Athabasca River Runners – West Baptiste Trails

25 km of snowmobile trail will be cleared and picnic tables, fire pits, wood shelters, and signage at strategic corners and turns will be provided.

Crowsnest Snow Riders

Mechanical brushing and/or slashing of trails for winter access and trail relocation to restore natural/ original drainage patterns following a wildfire to

Smoky Lake Trail Twisters Snowmobile Club – Smoky Lake Trail System

Construction of a multi-purpose recreation trail that will tie in neighbouring communities via a loop with Alberta’s Iron Horse Trail.

Swan Hills Snow Goers – Ride the Grizzly Trail

105 km of snowmobile trail clearing and construction.

Trail Seekers Snowmobile Club – Trail Expansion

20 km of new snowmobile trail and 12 km of widening and clearing of existing snowmobile trails. Mulching of vegetative matter, signage, surveying.

Whitecourt Trailblazers Snowmobile Club – Six Trail Projects

Trail upgrades, improvements and new trail construction on five trail segments totaling a 159 km distance. Construction of a trailhead parking area.

Calgary ATV Riders’ Assoc. – Ghost and MacLean Creek ATV Trails

Upgrading of ATV trails in the Ghost, Burnt Timber and Maclean Creek areas. Bridge construction and installation. Trail erosion mitigation.

Crowsnest Quad Squad – 3 Bridges, Trail Repairs, Trailhead Construction.

Purchase and install three bridges, repair of 7 km of trail along York and Drum Creeks, construction of a trailhead staging area.



Calgary Mountain Bike Alliance Project - Mini Excavator at work on the Tom Snow Trail - west of Bragg Creek Park.

Redwater Riders Club – Redwater Natural Area Trail Upgrades

Trail stabilization, hardening, installation of culverts, trail straightening, minor realignments to prevent shortcutting and braiding issues, fencing / blockage of non-permissive trail segments.

Rocky Mountain Dirt Riders' Assoc – Ghost and Maclean Creek Single Track Trail Upgrades

Improvement, trail stabilization, erosion mitigation of the TransAlta loop trail, bridged water crossings, 'up and over' fenceline crossings, interpretative signage, trail reroutes. Similar work in Maclean Creek area.

Alberta's Iron Horse Trail – 45 km of Trail Resurfacing

Trail tread resurfacing of approximately 40 km of deep, loose rail ballast material.

Calling Lake Trails Association – Multi-Use Trail to Provincial Park

Bridges, culverts, plank float corduroy for trails linking the community to a provincial park and access trails. Connections to Trans Canada Trail.

Athabasca Recreational Trails Society – Redwater Bridge Project

Restoration of a bridge crossing the Redwater River serving as a vital link for the historic Peace River, the Athabasca Landing Trail and the Trans Canada Trail. Debris chipping along the Peace River Trail.

City of Airdrie – Veterans Boulevard Trail Construction

The project will build approximately 1.5 km of 2.5 m pathway. Construction will be of asphalt over a crushed rock sub base, and includes a seal coat on the asphalt as well as grading and planting of aprons.

Town of Banff – Bow Falls Trail Upgrades

600 m of trail stabilization on a section overlooking Bow Falls, a dramatic landmark visited by thousands in Canada's first national park. Drainage mitigations, stair repairs, hardening of bench seating areas, creation of three new viewpoints. This is a second phase of an on-going project and is part of the Trans Canada Trail.

Greater Bragg Creek Trails Association – Banded Peak School Trail

Build a 1.7 km long off-road pathway paralleling a secondary highway that safely connects the hamlet's centrally located community centre to the school and proposed seniors' residence. Trail will be 2.5 m wide with a granular (crusher fines) surface.

Calgary Mountain Bike Alliance - Tom Snow Trail and Area Trails

5.65 km reroute of a popular 'backbone' trail to avoid drainage problems. First phase of a larger project to address problem sections along the trail.

Canmore Nordic Centre via International Mountain Bike Assoc. (IMBA) – Summer Use Trail Rehabilitation

Execute a Summer Trail and Site Master Plan for the Canmore Nordic Centre Provincial Park. Site has been a focus for mountain bike activity (MTB) since 1992 but MTB specific trails have all 'happened' rather than been planned. Newly created trails will be open to all non-motorized users.



City of Airdrie Project - Veterans Boulevard Trail.

Town of Devon – Town trails, Washout Creek Boardwalk

Boardwalk with handrail construction within a municipal and regional trail system. Mitigate issues with perpetual erosion to enable this vital link through town.

Town of Drumheller – Trail System Expansion

Refurbishment of 500 m of hard surfaced non-motorized trail connecting the Town of Drumheller with the Royal Tyrrell Museum, Canada's greatest collection of dinosaur fossils and displays related to natural history.

Town of Edson – Town Trail Plan Implementation

Construction of a new 850 m long municipal trail segment, part of 14 municipal trail segments totaling approximately 22 km.

Friends of Fish Creek Provincial Park – Lafarge Meadows Trail

Construction of 700 m of hard surfaced multi-use non-motorized pathway enabling a residential area to access the Park's (and the City's) pathway system. Formalize use from current old road bed and grassed area.

Lacombe County – Blindman River Bridge and Trails

Bridge construction for a non-motorized trail connecting Red Deer and Blackfalds and forming a portion of the Trans Canada Trail. 52 m long bridge span.

Moose Mountain Bike Trail Society – Moose Mountain Trails

Rerouting, reclamation, mapping, signage, bridge and drainage work on approximately 1200 m of downhill mountain bike trails in the Moose Mountain area located west of Bragg Creek.

Parks Foundation Calgary – East Calgary Greenway

Construction of a portion of a 14.4 km long X 3.5 m wide hard surfaced multi-use non-motorized pathway within a Transportation Utility Corridor. Part of a Calgary Perimeter Greenway. A benefit to nearly 245,000 residents in area.

Town of Ponoka – Battle River Bridge

Bridge construction to facilitate non-motorized access between Towns of Ponoka, Lacombe and City of Wetaskiwin. Trans Canada Trail linkage. 50 m span.

Southern Alberta Regional Trail Riders – Grizzly Lake Equestrian Trail

Brushing, slashing and repairs to 12 km of existing trail. Upgrades to 3.5 km of trail for vegetation and water management on Grizzly and Ruby Lake trails.

Willmore Wilderness Preservation and Historical Foundation – “72 Days of Clearing”

Backcountry trail clearing and maintenance work on restoring historic (equestrian) pack trail connections through Willmore to Jasper National Park., and Kakwaw Provincial Parks in B.C. and Alberta. Prepare written and photographic records of work and create a GPS database of the trails.

Friends of Fish Creek Provincial Park - Single Track Trails

New trail construction and reclamation of inappropriate trails. Expedite work previously handled by volunteers through



Town of Drumheller Project - Laying down asphalt on the trail connecting the town of Drumheller with the Royal Tyrrell Museum

employment of a dedicated team of paid labourers to construct a single track trail system. Goal is for completion of 10 kilometers of trail between Bebo Grove to Bow Valley Ranch.

Lethbridge Motorcycle Club - Trail Map and Inventory Project

The project will map and inventory existing trails and trail conditions in the Bow Crow Forest, Porcupine Hills area south of Highway 520 and east of Highway 22. The information will help with future management and education materials for recreational users of the area.

The National Trails Coalition (NTC) is made up of the following non-profit organizations and their provincial/territorial affiliates: Canadian Trails Federation, Canadian Council of Snowmobile Organizations and the Canadian Off-Highway Vehicle Distributors Council.



For additional information, visit www.ntc-canada.ca. Alberta's provincial trail council, Alberta TrailNet represents Alberta on the Canadian Trails Federation. The Government of Canada's 2009 Economic Action Plan is accelerating and expanding the existing federal investment of \$33 billion in infrastructure across Canada with almost \$12 billion in new infrastructure stimulus funding over the next two years.

In June 2009, Prime Minister Stephen Harper was awarded the President's Award for Excellence in Leadership granted by the Canadian Council of Snowmobile Organizations (CCSO) for delivering on his commitment to expand and improve trail infrastructure through the Economic Action Plan.

(Source: Government of Canada/National Trails Coalition)

Community Development Trust Trail Projects In Progress

Trail groups have completed their second year of work on their third year Community Development Trust grant.



New access controls and signage at Sawdy entrance to Peace River Trail.



A view of the mighty Athabasca River from the Peace River Trail.



Trail upgrading Crowsnest Pass area



Crowsnest Pass Walking Trail Receives Federal Funding

The Crowsnest Pass has received \$184,400 from the Western Economic Diversification Canada, Recreation Infrastructure Canada Program towards developing a pedestrian trail that extends from the Leich Collieries Provincial Historical Site to the Alberta Tourism Information Centre on the west end of the Pass near Sentinel. \$240,000 has been received from the province as well as \$108,000 from sponsorship and with the recent federal funding, the municipality has reached its budget revenue goal of \$533,000. The grant makes it possible for the municipality to hire a trails coordinator to complete the project.

The Recreational Infrastructure Program Canada is investing \$500M over two years to the development of recreational facilities across the country as part of Canada's Economic Action Plan.

(Source: Crowsnest Pass Promoter)

There are a number of trail operator groups in Alberta who are actively involved in trail building and trail stewardship activities. The Crowsnest Pass Quad Squad and Calling Lake Trail Association are two of these volunteer organizations who are the often unseen and unacknowledged groups working to ensure continued public recreation access opportunities in our province. You can assist and support the work of these organizations by practicing responsible stewardship and safe behaviour while out on the trails.

Crowsnest Pass Quad Squad

By Debbie Reeves

"The mission of the Quad Squad is to promote responsible use of Alberta's Southern Rockies, and to ensure the conservation and preservation of our wilderness areas for the continued use by those who come after us."

The Crowsnest Pass Quad Squad is a family based southern Alberta ATV organization with members of all ages who enjoy exploring & recreating in the back country. They hold organized rides over the riding season, trying to ride in a different area each outing. Trail clean up and maintenance projects are ongoing as group or individual functions. The Quad Squad encourages members to be proactive when out on the trails and promote environmental stewardship. The Quad Squad Association was registered in 1997 under the Societies Act. Through its involvement in local and regional pursuits it has grown substantially, in both membership and recognition.

The Crowsnest Pass Quad Squad is actively involved with the Crowsnest Forest Stewardship Society and club members participate in their annual Ed Gregor Memorial Stewardship Day in June each year. Their members also work together with the Crow Snow Riders to groom and maintain trails in the Crowsnest forest area. Many of their members have been involved in the East slopes policies, various access issues and trail mitigation and repair programs. The Quad Squad is currently partnering with the Alberta Equestrian Federation, Southern Alberta Trail Riders Association, Southern Alberta Equestrian Council, Municipality of Crowsnest Pass, Alberta Snowmobile Association, Alberta Off-Highway Vehicle Association, Alberta Sustainable Resource Development, Alberta Tourism, Parks and Recreation, the Federal Government and other stakeholders on a number of trail development and upgrading projects.

The organization's riding areas include Alberta's Southern Rockies Region from Kananaskis country in the north to the U.S. border; and the British Columbia border to the Porcupine Hills. Trails include the Castle Special Management Area designated trail system and areas like (Allison is strictly non motorized), Dutch Creek, and the Livingstone and Old man River drainage areas. There are approximately 1200 kms of multi-purpose trail. The Municipality of the Crowsnest Pass, hikers, equestrians, mountain bikers, off road motorcycles as well as snowmobile and cross country skiers all enjoy the benefits of trail use either through recreational value or tourism.

Current Programs/Activities:

- Construction and maintenance of trails and over 40 engineered trail bridges. Over 40 engineered bridges and low level wood crossings have been installed so far.
- ATV education and training programs for adults and youth. A free school educational safety and environmental awareness program is offered to grades 4, 5 and 6 students throughout Alberta. 3146 students participated in the program in 2008. Program messages are to be respectful of all other trail users and give the right of way to non-motorized traffic, pack out what you pack in, and leave no trace messages.
- Family/novice trail day rides and other social events
- Promotion of the organization through local community events
- Advocacy to government for sustainable trails and trail enforcement

Please contact the Crowsnest Quad Squad at 403-562-8686 if you are interested in membership, volunteering or providing a donation. Trail maps of the Crowsnest Pass area (North of Hwy 3 and Castle Special Management area) can be found by visiting the Quad Squad's website at www.quadsquad.ca.



Calling Lake Trail Association: Making Tracks and Sharing the Trail

By Wilf Brooks

Background:

The **Calling Lake Trail Association** was founded in 2002 with a goal of supporting community development in this region through the five key pillars:

- Developing a sustainable trail system for recreation and communication
 - Outdoor education and stewardship
 - Safety and security within a trail plan
 - Economic development
 - History and celebration of the land and people of the area



Calling Lake Trail group members at berry patch fence.

The CLTA has been working to develop a plan to accomplish goals in each pillar. They linked with Alberta TrailNet early in this process to get a sense of direction of trail development within Alberta and identified key partners and stakeholders with common goals or needs.

By 2004 they had identified the area in which they would focus their attention from the County line between the M.D. of Opportunity and Athabasca on the South, bound by the Athabasca River on both the East and the West and extending to the 20th Baseline on the north. This largely crown land area includes many lakes, rivers and creeks but excludes the Hamlet of Calling Lake. The west boundary is part of the northern land route of the Trans Canada Trail (Peace River Trail) which is under the stewardship of the Athabasca Recreational Trails Association.

The CLTA will undertake developing a trail system from Calling Lake Provincial Park west to the Trans Canada Trail. The east regional boundary is the Athabasca River heading to Ft. McMurray which is also the start of the Trans Canada Trail water route. This route has been scoped out and potential landings identified as well as a northerly destination of Pelican Rapids as the North end of CLTA's regional boundary. The area appears large but encompassing the entire region allowed our group to connect with other associations in adjacent areas. By working with The Athabasca Recreational Trails Association, The M.D. of Opportunity and Sustainable Resource Development, we believe that a sustainable trail plan can be developed and implemented in our region. With the M.D. having similar goals and the Alberta Job Corps close at hand, a good work force and partnership is in place.

The CLTA will work with the Calling Lake Community Development initiative to collect historical info of the area to assist with the development of routes and identification of special historical places. An historical land route followed the Calling River from the East into the Hamlet of Calling Lake and it will be a goal to follow this route wherever possible heading East to the Athabasca River.

In 2007 the CLTA partnered with the M.D. of Opportunity to work together in developing the trail and park plan within the Hamlet of Calling Lake. As of the summer of 2009, close to \$500,000 worth of development has been completed.



A day of quading on the scenic Calling River Trail.

This has been lead by the M.D. and is supported by an Alberta Lotteries Grant of \$150,000 awarded to the CLTA. In August of 2009 the CLTA also received a grant from the Federal Government under the National Trails Coalition Program. These funds (\$150,000) will be utilized to develop trails leading out of the community to the East and West.

Links have been established with Calling Lake Youth (which represent about 50% of the population) and a comprehensive outdoor education plan will be developed in partnership with the Search and Rescue and the Community Outreach program.

The CLTA also helped bring a safety and outdoor education program with the assistance of Active Creative Engaged Communities to assist with Calling Lake's Community Development Plan. Another key initiative was to partner with the Calling Lake Fire Brigade to help form the Calling Lake Search and Rescue. The CLTA has raised funds to help bring key pieces of equipment to the Search and Rescue program for their use.

After five years of Plan development the CLTA is now "Making Tracks". They have hired a part time Manager to lead projects and help keep things on track. The key labour will come from the M.D. and the Alberta Job Corps and a volunteer base to help lead and support. Because of the diversity of our planning goals, this will likely be a lifetime task for any who wish to participate.

The CLTA will be opening a web site with trail routes and community information in early 2010 and hope to help restore or build up to 100 km of trail by the end of 2010.

Provincial Trail Map and Database Project Update



Provincial Maps

With the overwhelming success of the North East AB pilot trail map project, the Provincial Trail Map Project Steering Committee has expanded the project to include the entire province. Work is currently underway on 3 new maps - Grande Alberta North, Grande Alberta South and the Northern Rockies regions.

Database

A new trails inventory manual has been developed to standardize and guide trail data collection approaches in the field. This standard is now being used by contractors hired by Alberta TrailNet to collect trail inventory information for the 3 map regions. This information provides the trails data for the new maps and will inform a new provincial trail database being developed under the Provincial Trail Map Project. The field contractors have been using handheld GPS computers (Trimble Recon units) with GIS software (Arc Pad) in the

field to collect data that is delivered straight into a GIS system being developed through supporting Sustainable Resource Development staff. This equipment allows for accurate consistent data collection. Trail data along with information gathered from trail stakeholders, municipalities, Travel Alberta Partners, Alberta Tourism Parks and Recreation, as well as from our contracted writer and photographer are provided to a cartographer who develops the final maps.

The Northern Rockies map will be the first map completed with a draft of the map to go out for stakeholder input in January 2010 with a trail map ready for public distribution soon afterwards. Plans are underway to next begin work on the Southern Alberta map.



Crimson Lake Trail Interpretive Signs



Data collection underway on Cardinal Falls Trail



Map contractor Tyler Pall collects trail information on hand held GPS computer

WESTERN CANADIAN WAGON TRAIN FT.SASKATCHEWAN TO ATHABASCA LANDING TRAIL DRIVE 2009

by George & Lorraine Wayne, Redwater, AB and Bert & Carol Davidson, Gibbons, AB

This wagon train drive commenced from the Kurtz Ranch near Fort Saskatchewan on Saturday Aug. 15/09. The trek was organized to draw attention to the old Landing Trail freight route, which was used by the homesteaders and fur traders of the late 1800's and early 1900's. Today most of the trail is on private land. We planned our wagon train drive to follow the trail as closely as possible on the country roads adjoining the old trail. We averaged 27 km a day, driving a variety of horse breeds, pulling covered wagons and some carts, as well as outriders. Our first day's drive took us to Bert & Carol Davidson's Bar D ranch north of Gibbons where the Landing Trail goes right through their property. The second day we travelled to George & Lorraine Wayne's near the Redwater Bridge, north of Lily Lake road. The next day we were able to travel approximately 12 miles on the actual old trail on our way to Tawatinaw. Tuesday our drive took us to Perryvale where we camped along the old trail



The Western Canada Wagon Train travels the Athabasca Landing Trail.

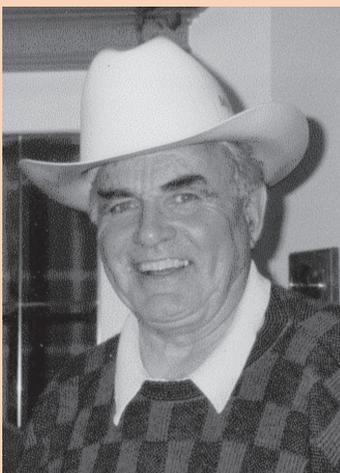
and took the next day off to rest. On Thursday we journeyed to Colinton. Friday, our final day, we arrived in Athabasca. We travelled the last four miles on the old CN rail line. Dignitaries from the Town of Athabasca joined us for a wagon ride into town. We were met at the trail head by the R.C.M.P., who escorted us into the River Front Park staging area to the cheers of many well wishers. The Chamber of Commerce of Athabasca had a much appreciated BBQ waiting for us.

The experiences we encountered along the way will provide us with visual memories and stories for many years to come. We had many visitors to our nightly bon fires & sing songs. Those visitors often had stories and historic pictures of the old freighting days. We know our trek made us all more knowledgeable of the history of that era.

Many of the small country newspapers published articles of our journey, as well as the Edmonton Journal. Radio station CFCW kept a daily check on our progress. We all sincerely hope the Athabasca Landing Trail, from Fort Saskatchewan to Athabasca, will become a much used recreation trail in the future.

Note: A conceptual master trail plan for the Athabasca Landing Trail is currently being developed that will lead trail upgrading and new trail development over the coming years.

Bill Pratt and Dr. Pierre Camu Honoured at Rideau Hall Ceremony



Bill Pratt

The Trans Canada Trail Board and Her Excellency the Right Honourable Michaëlle Jean, Governor General of Canada, honoured the late William (Bill) Pratt of Calgary and Dr. Pierre Camu of Quebec, founders of the Trans Canada Trail, at a ceremony at Rideau Hall in Ottawa on September 24th.

The Governor General and Trans Canada Trail Chair, Valerie Pringle, announced the naming of the Trail's pavilion in Calgary, Alberta, after the late William (Bill) Pratt. Pratt was a builder (e.g. Heritage Park and Stampede Park), project manager, and president and COO of the 1988 Winter Olympics. The Trail pavilion in Gatineau, Quebec was named after Dr. Pierre Camu. These two remarkable Canadians shared a vision of building a recreational trail stretching from coast to coast to coast, linking Canadians in every province and territory. They launched the Trans Canada Trail in 1992, a legacy project of Canada's 125th Anniversary celebrations. Today more than 70 percent of the Trail's 22,000-km route is complete. It is being used by millions of Canadians and international visitors to explore and discover Canada's diverse landscapes and rich history.

The event at Rideau Hall was attended by Dr. Camu and Mrs. Milli Pratt along with trail patrons and supporters, Board members, representatives of provincial/territorial trail organizations, volunteers and trail users who were in Ottawa for the Trans Canada Trail's 2009 Annual General Meeting.

Olympic Torch Relay Visits Trans Canada Trail Pavilions

The Olympic Torch relay visited 25 Trans Canada Trail pavilions along its relay route.



PAVILIONS ON THE OLYMPIC TORCH RELAY ROUTE

DATE	TIME	LOCATION
Oct 31, 2009	19:20:00	Nanaimo, BC
Nov 3	17:33:00	Whitehorse, YT
Nov 5	18:27:00	Yellowknife, NT
Nov 13	17:10:08	St John's, NL
Nov 15	12:12:14	Pasadena /Corner Brook, NL
Nov 17	10:52:01	Port Hastings, NS
Nov 18	07:16:18	Truro, NS
Nov 21	17:24:43	Charlottetown, PEI
Nov 23	07:32:03	Summerside, PEI
Nov 23	17:33:25	Moncton/Dieppe, NB
Nov 25	18:39:00	Fredericton, NB
Dec 10	18:58:00	Montreal, QC
Dec 16	07:00:00	Peterborough, ON
Dec 19	18:14:29	Burlington, ON
Dec 29	18:30:08	Barrie, ON
Jan 5, 2010	08:28:00	ON/MB border
Jan 9	12:46:00	Yorkton, SK
Jan 10	08:28:00	Regina, SK
Jan 20	16:21:00	Canmore, AB
Jan 22	18:50:00	Cranbrook, BC
Jan 24	11:08:00	Trail, BC
Jan 24	15:04:00	Grand Forks, BC
Jan 25	13:12:00	Penticton, BC
Feb 8	10:34:00	Fort Langley, BC
Feb 10	08:36:00	North Vancouver, BC

Is Your Business Ready for Tourists?

Imagine yourself as a customer stopping to eat at a local restaurant for the first time. You are hungry after a great hike on the trail and can't wait to try the local cuisine. You enter the establishment and no one is there to greet you or take you to your table. While you are waiting you decide to pay a visit to the washroom. To your dismay the washroom lacks soap or other essentials, and is rundown and dirty. You decide that this is not the best place to eat after all. You leave the restaurant and decide to get a recommendation from the nearby visitor center. You'll never visit that restaurant again!

www.powderroom.ca is a website that rates the best and worst bathrooms across the country – a sure indication that customers are concerned and want to have a voice regarding safe healthy conditions for guests, customers and staff.

When a tourist stops by your business, first impressions do matter. They can make or break your business and keep visitors from returning or recommending you to others.

Consider if you are providing the following:

- Friendly and available staff and a staff training/incentive program
- Great customer service and sales
- Safe environment
- Welcoming atmosphere
- Cleanliness (Washrooms etc.).
- Acceptable facility condition
- Unique and quality product
- Convenient parking
- Helpful signs
- Access to local information



Boreal Bird Experience and Lesser Slave Lake Provincial Park

By Cory Kulczycki

Lesser Slave Lake Provincial Park is confined to a narrow section of land between Martin Mountain and the eastern shoreline of Lesser Slave Lake (second longest lake in Alberta). The Park is considered to be significant because of its geography including white sand beaches and 1500-year-old sand dune complex. The park's geography is an example of the Foothills Natural Region of Alberta even though the park is nowhere near the foothills. Furthermore, Martin Mountain, which towers approximately 450 metres above the lake and park, has vegetation typically found in the Rocky Mountains. The varying geography (i.e., forests, mountain, and sand dunes) is home to various plant and animal species, but it also attracts approximately 254 different migratory bird species.

Visitors to Lesser Slave Lake Provincial Park might be interested in the park's various facilities, which include a golf course, picnic areas, campgrounds (including group use areas), hiking trails, the Boreal Centre for Bird Conservation

(BCBC) and the Lesser Slave Lake Bird Observatory (LSLBO). The trails include the Walk Through Time Trail, Lily Lake Trail, Sara Scobie Songbird Trail, and three different trails that comprise a section of the Trans Canada Trail through the park, the Jack Pine



Boreal Centre for Bird Conservation

Trail, the Whispering Sands Trail, and the Freighter Lakeshore Trail. The BCBC is a very unique building, apart from being full of interesting interpretive displays, a craft area, and a gift shop; it is also an environmentally friendly building that collects rainwater, is using geothermal energy for heating and cooling, and has composting toilets. The BCBC will be a highlight for anyone coming to the park that has an interest in birds and the environment.

On Sunday, April 26, 2009 members of Alberta TrailNet had the opportunity to join Chris Dodds, a Boreal Centre Interpreter from the BCBC, for a guided hike along the Trans Canada Trail. While it is possible to access the trail in the town of Slave



TrailNet's Board and staff enjoy a walk along the TCT.

Lake and hike through the entire park, on this day the group accessed the trail from the BCBC. The group hiked from the BCBC to the LSLBO. The Trans Canada Trail, which is also the Freighter Lake Trail, travels along the shoreline of Lesser Slave Lake and into sections of mixed forest crossing many creeks including Lily Creek. Along the trail there are plenty of opportunities to stop and view the lake and spot wildlife.

Sunday was not only an opportunity for our group to hike a portion of the Trans Canada Trail, it was also a chance to learn about the LSLBO's research and monitoring programs within the park; this opportunity is available to all visitors. At the observatory the group met with Richard Krikun, a researcher, who led our group on a tour of the observatory. Inside there were many interpretive displays that would be of interest to people of all ages. Richard shared a few stories about bird banding and told about the process of how birds are captured, recorded, banded, and released. Since the opening of the observatory in 1994 the LSLBO's staff have counted 254 different species and banded approximately 47,000 birds from 90 different species. Every now and then the staff discovers a bird in the park for which the park is not its typical habitat or on its migration route. For interested birders, the observatory is constantly looking for individuals interested in volunteering with the bird counting and watching projects.

Due to the fresh snow on the morning of April 26, 2009, the songbirds were not out in large numbers, but we were able to see a flock of robins, a large bald eagle, and a few warblers. We also saw what looked to be an American Kestrel, but it did not stay around long enough for a confirmation.

Many of the migrant birds begin arriving in the park in May and pass through the park on their southern migration between July and October. The LSLBO Annual Songbird Festival is the first weekend of June each year.

If you go:

Lesser Slave Lake Provincial Park

<http://gateway.cd.gov.ab.ca/siteinformation.aspx?id=68>

Boreal Centre for Bird Conservation

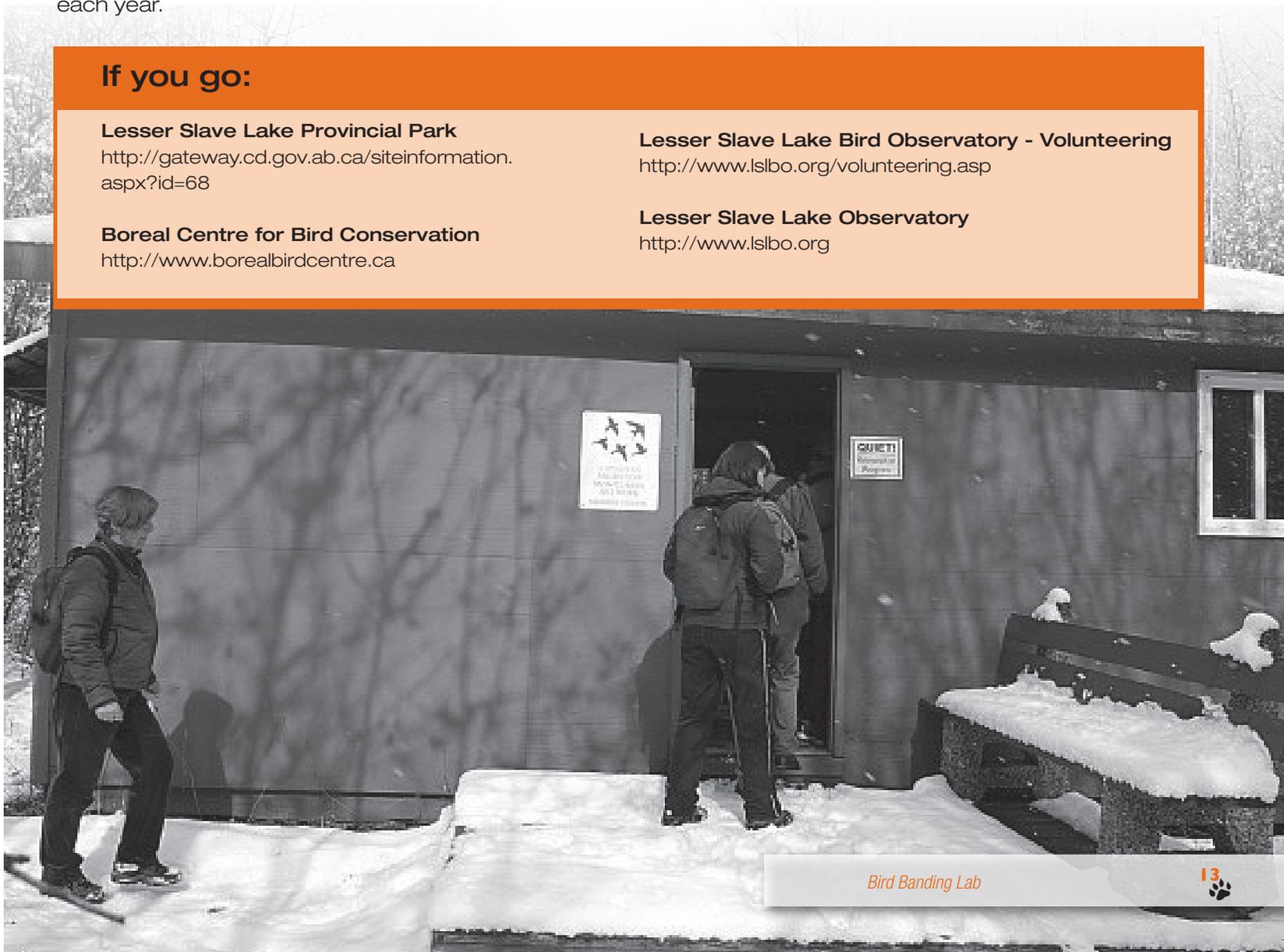
<http://www.borealbirdcentre.ca>

Lesser Slave Lake Bird Observatory - Volunteering

<http://www.lslbo.org/volunteering.asp>

Lesser Slave Lake Observatory

<http://www.lslbo.org>



Bicycles and Trails in Spain

By Tom Cameron

THE ROUTE OF DON QUIXOTE OF LA MANCHA



Windmills for Don Quixote

Our home exchange to Spain last fall landed us in Mascaraque, a small village south of Madrid and close to Toledo. This is in La Mancha which is the arid, elevated plain of central Spain. It seemed that everywhere we went we intersected the Ruta de Don Quixote. The development of this network of trails originated as part of the celebration of the 4th Centenary of the publication of *El Ingenioso Hidalgo Don Quijote de La Mancha*. The trails explore the natural settings where Cervantes sited the adventures of his fictional knight and faithful squire. The Ruta de Don Quixote is billed as the longest ecotourism corridor in Europe. The total itinerary is divided into 10 sections composed of 60 day-long outings. It touches 144 towns and covers a total of 2500 km. From Mascaraque we rode one small leg on bikes to visit a medieval fortress, a hermitage and a ridge with a series of modern windmills. On another day we visited the historic windmills at Consuegra. These routes might prove a challenge at midday in the heat of summer. For more information consult the website at: <http://www.donquijotedelamancha2005.com/>

CYCLING IN SEVILLE

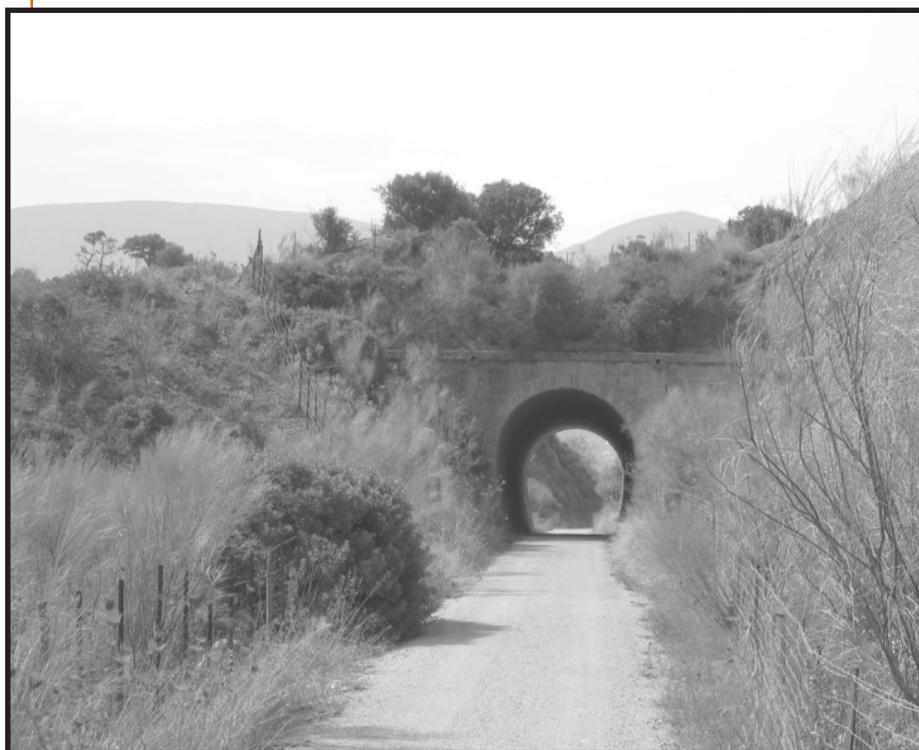
We never did get into the great cultural sites of Seville, not only because of Monday closings and the siesta schedule but because really it was just too enjoyable being outside wandering and pedaling through this beautiful Andalusian city. What a treat to hop on and off the modern tramcar that snakes through the no-traffic zone of the Avenue of the Constitution.

This was the first city we visited in Spain that was obviously



physically active. There were joggers on the boulevards, kayaks on the Rio Guadalquivir, and cyclists everywhere. The high tech municipal bike system is impressive. There are 2500 bikes

at stations spread out across the city at about 300 meter intervals. Each station has an access terminal to purchase short or long term subscriptions and has parking points to dock the bikes. I must say I was a little nervous plugging my VISA card into the terminal to make a deposit to get an interactive subscription ticket. One way or another, it never cost us a cent. We had a lot of fun riding the marked bike routes along the sidewalks of the city and cycling by the Expo 92 site on the Isla de la Cartuja. To find out more about the system and take a look at the very practical bikes visit the website at <http://en.sevici.es/>. Connected to this site there is a great article on the benefits of cycling titled, "The Bicycle: A Medicine Wheel."



A Tunnel on the Via Verde de la Sierra



Cycling in Seville

RAILS-TO-TRAILS IN SPAIN

Vias Verde refers to the more than 70 greenways totaling more than 1000 km that have been developed on the unused railways. Shortly into our planned week in Olvera, a white town by Ronda in southern Spain, we decided to book another week through Russell Kilde our Gabriolan host. The easy access to the Via Verde de la Sierra from Olvera was part of our decision to extend our visit. Along its 36 km course, this greenway boasts 30 tunnels, 4 trestles, and 5 railway stations. Some stations have been restored as hotels with services related to trail use. One day we walked west from Olvera along the greenway through the largely agricultural landscape, and on another day we rented bicycles at Coripe and further explored the busy trail and associated facilities. One station has an interpretative centre focused on the nature preserve surrounding the Penon de Zaframagon (a gigantic rocky crag) that has a large nesting colony of griffon vultures. The on-demand tunnel lighting is sometimes powered by solar panels and mini wind turbines. Once again we were amazed at the high quality of Spanish infrastructure and the emphasis given to heritage conservation and interpretation. <http://www.grazalemaguide.com/places-to-visit/111-via-verde-de-la-sierra.html>

Carole Garnick (1940 – 2009)

Carole Garnick of Rocky Mountain House passed away on July 4, 2009 after an eight month battle with cancer. Carole represented hiking interests on Alberta TrailNet Society's Board from 2006-2009. She was an active hiker, cyclist and skier and participated in related trail organizations/



Carole Garnick

projects such as Skyline Hikers of the Canadian Rockies, Rocky Mountain House Wednesday Hikers, Ski for Light/Sons of Norway (Blind Skiers) and the Clearwater Recreational Trails Initiative. Carole obtained her Mountain Parks Heritage Interpretation Association Professional Interpreter Certification which allowed her to guide Elderhostel and Routes to Learning hiking programs and travel study programs throughout the summer months in the Rockies. Carole enjoyed sharing her knowledge of trails of the Rocky Mountains and Alberta with others and made important and knowledgeable contributions to trail stakeholder and land access consultation initiatives underway in this province. Other activities included teaching adult literacy and English as a second language, serving with the Royal Canadian Legion Ladies Auxillary

and being secretary and driver for the Over 60 Club.

Carole is survived by her son Zane, his wife Denise, and their children Coleman, Dayne, Kelcie and Keefer of Rimby. She is also survived by her one sister Marie Biswanger of Withrow, one brother Calvin (Doris) Evans of Calgary, Brother-in-law John (Margaret) Garnick of Valemont, BC as well as numerous nieces and nephews. Our deepest sympathies to Carole's family and friends. Carole's vibrant footprints and vision for Alberta's trails will be greatly missed.

PHOTO CREDITS

Town of Banff
Town of Devon
Linda Strong-Watson
Town of Drumheller
Crowsnest Quad Squad

Rob White
Trans Canada Trail
Calling Lake Trail Association
Cory Kulczycki
Tom Cameron

Betty Anne Graves
Cal Rakach, Community
Futures
Tyler Pell
Derry Armstrong

DESIGN & PRODUCTION

Chelsea Huebert
Red Door Photographic
& Design
www.reddoorphoto.com

WRITING & EDITING

Linda Strong-Watson
Shannon Maliteare
Debbie Reeves
Government of
Canada/ National
Trails Coalition
James Clark

Wilf Brooks
George & Lorraine
Wayne
Bert & Carol
Davidson
Cory Kulczycki
Tom Cameron

PRINTING

Emerson • Clarke
Printing Corporation

**Alberta
TRAILNET**
11759 Groat Road
Edmonton, AB T5M 3K6
Tel: (780) 422-7150
Fax: (780) 427-4229
Toll Free: 1-877-987-2457
www.albertatrailnet.com

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