

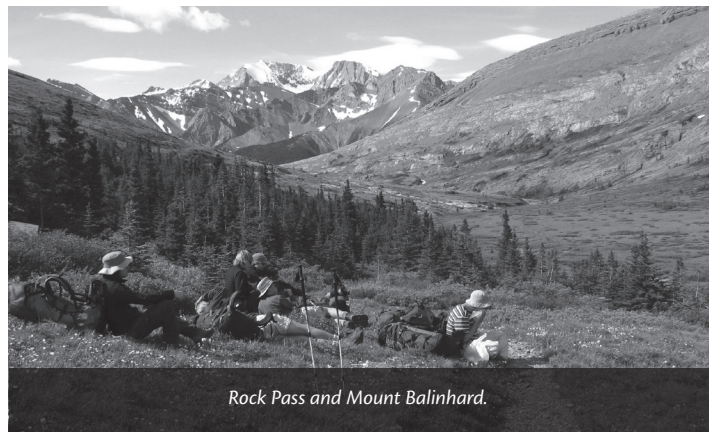
THE ALBERTA HIKING ASSOCIATION

The Alberta Hiking Association (AHA) has joined Alberta TrailNet and at its 2011 Annual General Meeting took on the role of appointing a representative to the ATN board to speak for the interests of hikers and snowshoers. AHA chair David Wasserman was selected as the first representative.

AHA, a provincially registered not-for-profit society, was formed in 2008 by representatives of several Alberta-based hiking clubs.

Its objectives are:


- To act as an advocate at provincial and regional levels for walking, hiking, and snowshoeing interests.
- To create an information network that facilitates sharing ideas, concerns, and actions needed to promote and preserve hiking and the natural environment on which it relies.
- To advance the development and maintenance of well-built hiking trails and to encourage trail-building initiatives in Alberta.
- To promote responsible, minimal-impact hiking that respects the natural environment and to educate through example.
- To increase awareness about the benefits to health and local economies of walking, hiking and snowshoeing.

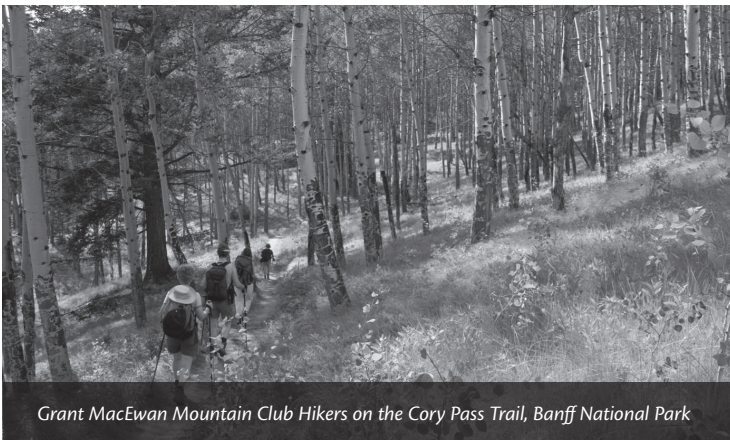


Rock Pass and Mount Balinhard.

AHA has both organizational and individual members. Currently, clubs based in Calgary, Red Deer, Edmonton, and Fort McMurray hold memberships, and AHA would particularly welcome organizations from other provincial centres.

Submissions have been made to Parks Canada and Alberta Tourism, Parks and Recreation in response to publicly announced plans for national and provincial parks, and AHA has assisted member organizations with their own submissions. The organization maintains a website (www.abhiking.ca) and also circulates information by e-mail.

AHA chair David Wasserman says, "The AHA operates on a very small budget, and has no permanent offices or paid staff, but we feel that hikers and snowshoers, whether AHA members or not, need a voice in Alberta. Probably more Albertans occasionally or regularly hike or snowshoe than participate in any other outdoor recreational activity, but since hiking does not require a large investment in equipment, they have no business groups advocating on their behalf. We are trying to fill that gap." Information on joining or sponsoring the organization is available on the AHA website or by e-mailing info@abhiking.ca. 



Grant MacEwan Mountain Club Hikers on the Cory Pass Trail, Banff National Park

BIOSECURITY – KEEPING YOUR HORSE HEALTHY

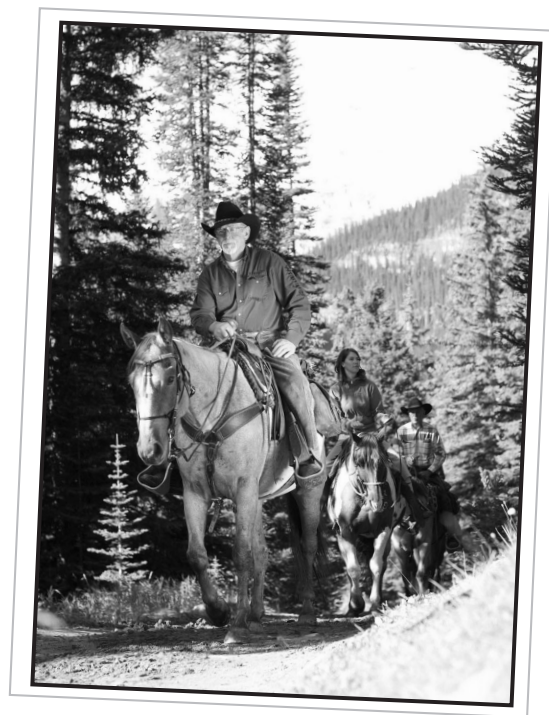
The Alberta Equestrian Federation (AEF) is a member of Alberta TrailNet's Board. The following information is provided on behalf of the equine community.

The Alberta Equestrian Federation (AEF) and the Alberta Veterinary Medical Association (ABVMA) have joined forces on a proactive approach to biosecurity in the horse industry. A manual has been developed to address biosecurity principles and best practices for horse owners and caregivers. The interactive manual, entitled *Equine Biosecurity Principles and Best Practices* was designed to inform horse owners and caregivers about biosecurity practices and to encourage consultation and discussion with veterinarians on disease control and prevention.

The *Equine Biosecurity Principles and Best Practices* manual will be used and distributed as the basis for equine biosecurity workshops that AEF is organizing and delivering throughout the province of Alberta.

Biosecurity includes the principles, actions, precautions and protocols that protect the health of livestock by preventing the transmission of disease through physical barriers, and hygiene practices. Biosecurity is protecting your animals, the farm community and the animal agriculture industry against disease causing agents. It is a strategy of disease prevention; preventing introduction of disease and controlling and preventing recycling of disease within a herd, region, facility or community.

The AEF workshops are intended to bring biosecurity to a grassroots level. The workshops will provide owners with necessary information and tools to develop a biosecurity program unique to their individual needs and risks in consultation with their veterinarian. These resources were developed for all horse owners and custodians including AEF members, stable owners, users, recreational riders, serious competitors, show officials, administrators, and facility operators. The intention is to affect incremental change in the equine industry, one horse at a time.



Check the AEF web site (www.albertaequestrian.com) for information on biosecurity and details on the workshops.

As a horse owner or custodian, you are responsible for the care of your animal's health and well-being. Disease risks and health hazards such as the recent EH-V1 outbreak indicate that we require effective risk and disease management strategies that should be an equal priority to riding in a safe and responsible manner. This obligation extends to the equine community that surrounds your horse's home, but also encompasses any event or venue your horse may journey to. Your actions or conversely lack of actions may have positive or negative effects - the choice is yours.

Funding for this project was made available through Growing Forward, a federal-provincial-territorial initiative. Together, the governments of Canada and Alberta are investing \$273 million over five years (2009-2013) for flexible and innovative programs for Alberta's agriculture industry. 🐾

TRANS CANADA TRAIL SEEKS VOLUNTEER NAMES

Have you assisted in developing the Trans Canada Trail? If so, the Trans Canada Trail would like to hear from you! As it approaches its 20th Anniversary, the Trans Canada Trail plans on creating an online honor roll recognizing all the volunteers that have helped build, maintain or clean up the Trail through the years. If you would like to be featured on this list, please contact Julie Brouard, Director, Communications at 1-800-465-3636 (ext. 4350) or email communications@tcctrail.ca. 🐾



Trans Canada Trail
Sentier Transcanadien

ACTIVE ALBERTA CHALLENGES US TO GET UP AND GET MOVING 🐾

The Alberta government's new policy for active living challenges Albertans to become more active in recreation and sport throughout their communities. The Active Alberta policy is a 10-year blueprint that will guide direction for recreation, active living and sport.

"We need to tackle the issues we see stemming from physical inactivity through a collaborative and integrated approach," explained Cindy Ady, then Minister of Tourism, Parks and Recreation. "Active Alberta is the starting point which builds on existing programs and resources throughout our communities and aims to provide improved results on the activity levels, health and quality of life of Albertans."

Ten Alberta government ministries were involved in developing the Active Alberta policy in consultation with nearly 130 stakeholder groups. The policy's six outcomes will guide the Government of Alberta and partners in the design, delivery and funding of programs related to recreation, active living and sport.

To ensure widespread participation and engagement, the strategies rely upon coordination and collaboration among all government ministries involved in the sector along with other partners, including other governments, educational institutions, non-profit agencies and the private sector. Over the next 10 years, the policy will provide direction to achieve realistic and measureable outcomes that will see increased physical activity levels throughout Alberta.



Initial stages will see government, recreational and other key partners collaborating on new and existing programs and resources to provide wider opportunities for Albertans.

Examples could include more collaborative after-school programs and community recreation initiatives.

To view the Active Alberta website, please visit:

www.active.alberta.ca

Source: Government of Alberta 🐾

NEW GRANT GUIDELINES FOR THE TRANS CANADA TRAIL NOW AVAILABLE

With the 2017 Connection Plan completed and funding from Parks Canada, the Trans Canada Trail has developed a new funding process. The specific tools and guidelines groups who are involved in building sections of Trans Canada Trail will need are available by accessing **www.tctrail.ca/funding.php**. Please ensure that you check this TCT website frequently to ensure you have the most up to date information. 🐾



Trans Canada Trail
Sentier Transcanadien

CROWSNEST COMMUNITY TRAILS RIBBON-CUTTING CEREMONY

by: Jenice Smith, Walking Trails Coordinator



Ribbon-Cutting. From left to right: The Honourable Ted Menzies (MP for Macleod and Minister of State for Finance), Mr. Evan Berger (MLA for Livingstone-Macleod), Pam Somerville (Trails Committee Member and Culture and Recreation Board Member), and Mayor Bruce Decoux (Municipality of Crowsnest Pass).

"Our Government is proud to support the development of this exciting project," said Ted Menzies, Member of Parliament for Macleod and Minister of State for Finance, on behalf of the Honourable Lynne Yelich, Minister of State for Western Economic Diversification. "The Trail System will help improve our community's outdoor recreational activities while boosting our local economy."

Provincial support was contributed by the

The Municipality of Crowsnest Pass marked Friday, July 29th as the symbolic opening of the Crowsnest Community Trails.

Municipal Sponsorship Program (\$366,000) and the Basic Municipal Transportation Grant (\$196,000).

The Trails Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony was scheduled Friday, July 29th at 2:00 pm outside the Blairmore Legion. Everyone was invited to join us in celebrating this exciting community initiative. In attendance was the Honourable Ted Menzies (MP for Macleod and Minister of State for Finance), Mr. Evan Berger (MLA for Livingstone-Macleod), Mayor Bruce Decoux, and Pam Somerville (Trails Committee), commemorating our new trail network.

"This project was made possible through the generous support of federal, provincial, and local sponsors," said Jenice Smith, Walking Trails Coordinator. "In addition, many volunteer hours were contributed to bring this project to completion."

Crowsnest Pass business owners, community residents, and visitors also provided significant assistance to the project. "The community championed this project from the beginning. It was their support that provided the foundation to make this project a success," said Smith.

Project funding of \$184,400 was provided through the Government of Canada's Recreational Infrastructure Canada (RIInC) Program, which is administered by Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD). Three bridges were installed as part of the project with funding assistance from the National Trails Coalition.

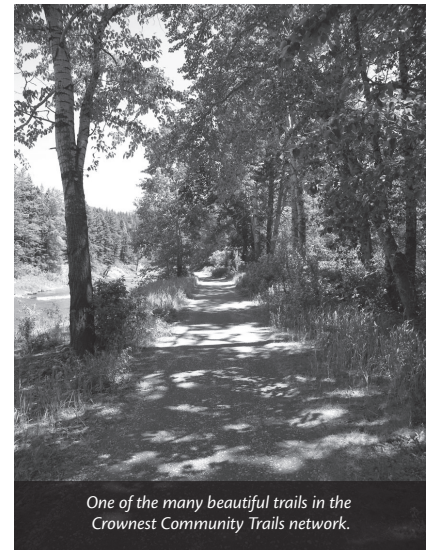


Many volunteers contributed to making the project a success.

The Crowsnest Community Trail is a 23 km, non-motorized trail network that connects the communities of Crowsnest Pass together. The route increases trail user safety, improves community health and wellness, and promotes local cultural and natural history.

By following the scenic Crowsnest River valley, the trail links to popular tourist attractions, such as the Frank Slide Interpretive Centre, the Hillcrest Mine Disaster Memorial and Cemetery, and the Bellevue Underground Mine Tour. In addition to trail development, a number of amenities have been installed, including benches, picnic tables, signage, BearSmart garbage containers, and bike racks.

If anyone has any questions about the Crowsnest Community Trails project, please contact Cam Mertz, Community Services Director at (403) 562-8833.



One of the many beautiful trails in the Crowsnest Community Trails network.

EMERALD AWARDS HIGHLIGHT TRAIL PROJECTS 🐾

A number of trail initiatives were nominated at this year's Emerald Awards which took place in Edmonton on June 15th, 2011. The Emerald Awards recognize and reward the excellent environmental initiatives undertaken each year by large and small corporations, individuals, not-for-profit associations, community groups and governments. Alberta TrailNet Society was a finalist under the Shared Footprints Award for its participation in the KIFI Project Team for the Kananaskis Integrated Forest Interpretive Trail project (see Winter 2010/Spring 2011 TrailTracker newsletter for a profile on the project). Other trail related projects that were nominated including the Beaver Boardwalk Volunteer Partnership, Bighorn Access Management Plan Implementation, and the Edmonton Bicycle Commuters' Society. Congratulations to everyone who was shortlisted and particularly to the Bighorn Backcountry Monitoring Group who won the Shared Footprints Award.

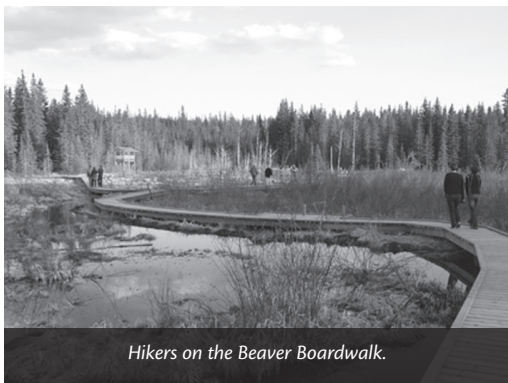


Bighorn Trail Bridge

BIGHORN BACKCOUNTRY MONITORING GROUP, STANDING COMMITTEE: BIGHORN ACCESS MANAGEMENT PLAN IMPLEMENTATION – SHARED FOOTPRINTS AWARD WINNER

Developed with input from representatives of all the different groups who use the Bighorn Backcountry, the Access Management Plan implements projects which help those users reduce their environmental footprint thus allowing the Bighorn Backcountry to retain its natural beauty and maintain accessibility. The Standing Committee of the Bighorn Backcountry Monitoring Group is a group of 30 individuals who represent and bring forward concerns and recommendations regarding access management for all users of the Bighorn Backcountry. These users include First Nations and youth, motorized and non-motorized users, hunters and anglers, municipal government and commercial users, as well as many others. While it is easy to blame others for environmental damage, members of the Standing Committee instead work together as a team to understand the needs and interests of other users in an effort to monitor the land and develop projects that will lessen the impact from all users on the Bighorn Backcountry environment. Members work together on trail development, designing camping facilities and

facilities for equestrians, motorized and other users, and educating the public about responsible use of the land.



Hikers on the Beaver Boardwalk.

BEAVER BOARDWALK VOLUNTEER PARTNERSHIP: BEAVER BOARDWALK- COMMUNITY GROUP AWARD FINALIST

In order to divert beavers from areas where they disturb the land, the Beaver Boardwalk was constructed in a location where beavers could continue to maintain a dam that serves as a device for water control in the local lake and wetland complex. During the years from 2006 to 2009, a small group of citizens organized construction of the 3,000m elevated wood boardwalk in a wetland/ forest ecosystem on the edge of the Town of Hinton. The group fundraised \$222,000 from 6 sponsors for materials, and the longest wood boardwalk in

western Canada was built almost entirely by 150 volunteers. The project solved beaver damage problems and ensured that beavers would continue to maintain a dam that provides vital water control for a local lake and wetland complex. The project also created a very popular environment-based community and visitor site for public recreation and environmental education. The Beaver Boardwalk features 2 observation towers, an outdoor classroom, a waterdeck, 12 interpretive signs, a blog, and a project website. Also, the boardwalk provides the best opportunity in Canada to see wild beavers in their natural habitat, especially during the annual fall beaver feeding program. To access a brochure and more information, visit www.beaverboardwalk.ca.



Edmonton Bicycle Commuters Society member at work.

EDMONTON BICYCLE COMMUTERS' SOCIETY, ON-ROAD CYCLING AND BICYCLE MECHANIC EDUCATION – EDUCATION: NON-FORMAL AWARD FINALIST

The Edmonton Bicycle Commuter's Society is a non-profit organization that recognizes cycling as an accessible, environmentally sustainable mode of transportation, and therefore supports and promotes bicycle usage for everyday urban travel. EBC refurbishes unwanted bicycles (thus diverting them from landfills) and sells these bikes to members of the public at a low cost, allowing anyone the opportunity to cycle. Through their volunteer-run community bike workshop, youth programs, and courses for community groups, businesses and

institutions, EBC teaches people on-road cycling skills as well as how to repair and maintain bicycles. In 2010 alone, EBC's workshop recycled over 12,000 pounds of scrap metal and rubber, and was used by over 3400 cyclists. Their courses were attended by more than 3800 people, and along with a dozen new CANBIKE on-road cycling instructors, EBC trained over 100 new bike mechanics to share their knowledge with the rest of the community. For more information visit www.edmontonbikes.ca. 🐾

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR ALBERTA TRAILNET'S CASINO DECEMBER 15 AND 16, 2011

Alberta TrailNet Society will be holding a casino at Century Casino in Edmonton (13103 Fort Road) on December 15 and 16, 2011. This event will raise funds for essential trail programs and services provided by the Society. We are looking for committed and energetic volunteers for various positions to help make our Casino a success. Have fun, meet new people and support a worthy cause. Food and refreshments are provided. Transportation and accommodation will be covered if you are further than 100 km from Edmonton. Other expenses such as babysitting costs, local transportation to and from event via taxi or bus are also covered.

Please contact Shannon Maliteare at the office at 1-877-987-2457, 780-422-7150 or email atnadmin@telus.net for more information and/or to sign up for a shift. Thank you.

GLENBOW RANCH PROVINCIAL PARK NEAR COCHRANE NOW OPEN

Glenbow Ranch Provincial Park, located in the Bow River valley between Cochrane and Calgary, is now open to visitors.

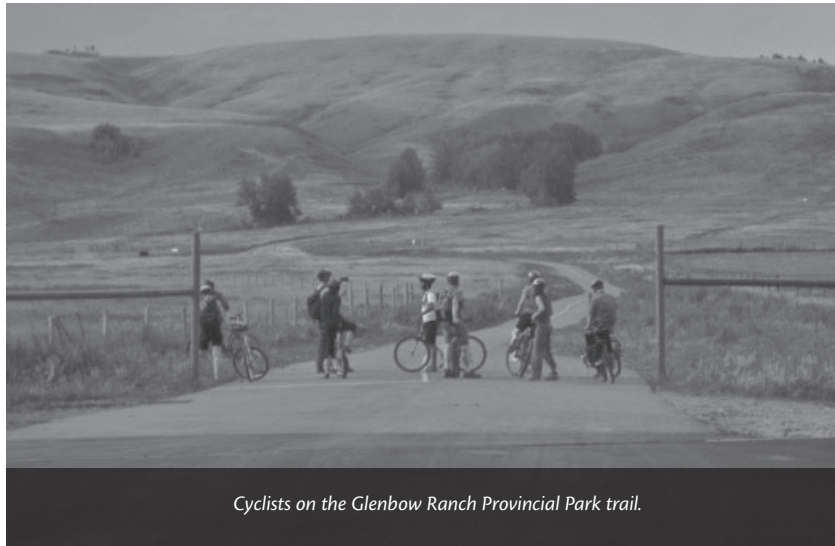
"Glenbow Ranch Provincial Park showcases an important part of Alberta's natural heritage and cultural history," said then Premier Ed Stelmach, at the park opening ceremony on August 9th, 2011.

"Glenbow Ranch will become a signature site in our provincial parks system that will be enjoyed by Albertans for generations to come."

The Government of Alberta acquired more than 3,200 acres of ranchland from the Harvie family in 2006 to establish this park. Over the past five years, work has been done to ensure the valuable foothills fescue parkland is preserved, and to put visitor services, parking and trails in place. The main trail running through the park is registered as part of the Trans Canada Trail system, closing a gap between Calgary and British Columbia. The Glenbow Ranch Provincial Park is a key and dramatic piece of the Trans Canada Trail that will greatly contribute to the dream of connecting all Canadians by 2017.

"The Alberta government has worked with the Glenbow Ranch Park Foundation to ensure this special landscape is ready to welcome Albertans," said Cindy Ady, then Minister of Tourism, Parks and Recreation. "From educational programs to walking and cycling trails, Glenbow Ranch will help to foster appreciation for our natural spaces and meet the growing demand for recreation." "The Government of Canada is proud to have invested in


this project through the Recreational Infrastructure Canada program," said Blake Richards, Member of Parliament for Wild Rose, on behalf of the Honourable Lynne Yelich, Minister of State for Western Economic Diversification. "Today's official opening is a reflection of our commitment to enhance recreational lifestyles for Canadians, while providing residents and visitors opportunities to experience and appreciate natural spaces."



"Our Foundation and the Harvie Family have invested almost \$7 million since the family sold this land for half its market value to create this park with Government of Alberta," said Andy Crooks, CEO of the Glenbow Ranch Park Foundation. "We now welcome Trans Canada Trail as a new partner; our

Calgary to Cochrane trail will be part of this wonderful national system," he added. "As we continue to fundraise, we thank our donors, Minister Ady, the federal government, and especially the Harvie Family, for their passionate commitment to create one of the greatest parks in North America."

The Glenbow Ranch Park Foundation offers educational programs about the park's ecosystem and history. To learn more about these programs visit www.grpf.ca. To learn more about provincial parks visit www.AlbertaParks.ca.

The Alberta TrailNet Society has recently provided a \$50,000 grant to Glenbow Ranch Park Foundation to assist towards costs of completing the eastern end of the trail. 

JOIN THE NATIONAL DIALOGUE ON RECREATIONAL TRAILS!

The National Trails Roundtable Working Group is calling on all Canadians who use recreational trails, or who develop, build, maintain, fund or advocate for trails in their provinces, territories, regions or communities, to provide their input by responding to the National Trails Survey.

This Survey has been prepared by the National Trails Roundtable Working Group following a meeting of trail stakeholders from all parts of Canada in November 2010. The Roundtable Conference was initiated and organized by Trans Canada Trail and Parks ►

Canada. The objective of the conference was to determine if there is a need and support for greater collaboration at the national level between the different groups of stakeholders concerned with trails. Participants in the workshop concluded that collaboration between stakeholder groups must become a high priority.

The objectives of this Survey are to determine the most important challenges and priorities of Canadians who care about trails, to see where there is general agreement, and to identify areas for potential collaboration. To access the Survey go to the Canadian Trails Federation website at www.ctf-fcs.ca/nationaltrailsroundtable.html.

If you have questions please contact Linda Strong-Watson, Alberta TrailNet Society at 1 877 987 2457 or Cal Rakach, Alberta Outdoors Coalition at 403-638-8546. **Deadline to complete the survey is December 30th, 2011.** 🐾

LINDEN PATHWAY PROJECT 🐾

By Lloyd Ratzlaff

In the fall of 2009 The Linden and District Agricultural Society ("the Ag Society") was doing a bit of brain storming in order to discover what the Ag Society might do to, not only serve its community, but to also pull the community's various interest groups together in a common cause. Out of this exercise came a proposal at the Annual General Meeting to take on the project of constructing a pathway from the Village of Linden to the Linden Nursing Home. The proposal was passed in principle and the one who proposed the project was given the responsibility to create a project group to carry forward the project.

Lorrin Baerg, a local farmer and an entrepreneur in the machine construction area was approached to help find a group of "movers and shakers" who would be willing to take on responsibility for the project. He found four people who fit the above description. They immediately began planning a fund raising evening. It was decided that a hog roast would be a good way to attract attention and encourage attendance at an evening where the project would be presented to the general public. Needless to say the hog roast was an

unqualified success. The idea of a pathway from the Village to the Linden Nursing Home was not only seen as a benefit to Seniors but also to workers at the Nursing Home, to recreation walkers and to school children walking or cycling to school.



Application was made to Kneehill County's Community Projects Fund. The County responded by contributing \$10,000 toward the project and a local business also contributed \$5,000 toward the project prior to the fundraiser.

Early in 2010 Encana Corporation was conducting a great deal of activity in the rural part of our community. Larry Marshall from the Drumheller office of Encana encouraged the project Committee to make application to Encana for assistance in funding. The Ag Society did so and was again rewarded with a corporate donation of \$50,000 toward the Pathway prior to the planned fundraiser.



The Ag Society was in the process of preparing an application to the Provincial Government under their Community Initiatives ►

Program (CIP). The program required that the applying organization match an equal amount of money raised locally with the amount of assistance requested. It was therefore imperative that funds be raised locally at our fundraiser. The funds were raised and the application made. Due to normal 'over summer' delays the cheque from the province arrived in September of 2010. The project Committee had from the beginning agreed not to spend money they did not have. The delay of the provincial funding component forced the project committee to delay completion of the Pathway until 2011 when the provincial funding was secure and the risk of frost compromising the integrity of the concrete pathway was no longer a possibility.

At this point in time the concrete portion of the Pathway is complete. Two bridges designed to go over water drainage ways are completed but not installed. Because the invoices for the contracts have not yet arrived for now, we can only base the cost of the last part of the Pathway on our projected estimates.

It should be noted that while the major part of the Pathway is eight feet wide, the last portion constructed in the Village proper is only 6 ft wide.

The project committee felt that a fence between the Pathway and the field would give the Pathway a better sense of definition as well as provide a sense of psychological security to the users of the Pathway. The Pathway Committee decided to finance the material for the fence and the cost of driving the posts if the youth of the community would provide the voluntary labour required for the construction of the fence. This was provided with considerable enthusiasm.

A local builder volunteered to build a rest shelter at the corner if the material could be paid for by the project committee. This was agreed to. A number of trades people responded to provide free labour and materials to finish the shelter in such a way as to make our community proud of the achievement. In addition to seating, the shelter is equipped with night lighting for the safety of the users of the shelter.

In conclusion, the committee has found co-operation with governing bodies and the local people who provided a great deal of volunteer labour to be very gratifying. In our view the project was a resounding success not only for the fact of its completion but even more so because of the fact that our community has become closer than it has been for quite some time. 🐾

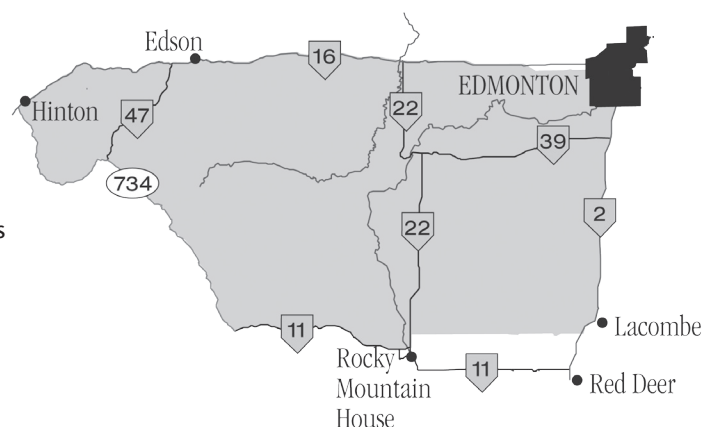
PROVINCIAL MAP PROJECT - NEW GRANDE ALBERTA SOUTH MAP NOW AVAILABLE 🐾

The Provincial Trail Map Project Steering Committee has released the 3rd map in a series of trail maps that will cover the entire province. The map highlights existing motorized, non-motorized and mixed-use trails in the region. It covers an area reaching from Edmonton in the east to Hinton in the west and south along the east Jasper park boundary to Hwy 11 then east to Highway 2 (see map below).

This map and other maps in the provincial trail map series are available to the public through provincial and local tourism offices, Alberta Sustainable Resource Development and Parks offices, and at Alberta TrailNet's office in Edmonton. Please call TrailNet at 1.877.987.2457 or visit www.albertatrailnet.com to view or download a digital version of the map.

Trails contribute to the social, environmental and economic health and well-being of Alberta communities. These maps highlight recreational and tourism opportunities and are intended to help visitors and recreational users discover Alberta's beautiful natural settings in a responsible and sustainable way. Other maps in the planned provincial trail map series available at this time are: Northeast Alberta Trail Map; Northern Rockies Trail Map. 🐾

Grande Alberta South



RAINBOW EQUITATION SOCIETY PARTY 🐾

By David Wasserman

The Rainbow Equitation Society (RES), a recreational riding club that is also steward for several natural areas in central Alberta, celebrated its 30th anniversary with an event at its property northeast of Edmonton on August 20th, 2011. The property, with the adjacent Halfmoon Lake Natural Area, includes 27 kilometres of non-motorized trails maintained by RES, including part of the Athabasca Landing Trail component of the Trans Canada Trail. The vicinity is known as the Ghost Horse Hills.

Society members and invited guests witnessed the unveiling of two plaques, one honouring the seven founding members of the society, and the other in memory of Clem and Edna Harke. The plaque unveilings were preceded by a bagpipe tune played by Olivia Imbrogno, honouring the historic role of Scots in the fur trade in the area, and fiddle music by Troy Gates (accompanied by John Appleton on guitar), honouring the role of the Métis in the early history of the Ghost Horse Hills and northern Alberta.

The event was organized by Richard DeSmet, one of the founders and volunteers from the RES.

Also featured were demonstrations of horse packing (Lee Barr and Amos Jensen), bannock baking, and sled dogs (Rhaean Bury), rides in a horse-drawn wagon, art work by Charity Dakin, nature photography by Janice Hruday, saddle and leather work by Dave Kallal, and cowboy poetry by Rose and Garth Bibby. The event wrapped up with a meal of roast bison, beans, and corn on the cob, with Saskatoon cobbler for dessert. A very good time was had by all. 🐾



Wagon rides from the Longriders were available.



Horse packing demonstrations by Lee Barr and Amos Jensen.

GROUARD PEACE RIVER TRAIL NET SOCIETY TRAIL DAY



Grouard Peace River Trail Net Society's Treasurer John Chapman unveils the new trail sign while Director Robert Goulet, Director Lee Willier and Nicole Marx (left-right) look on.

The Grouard Peace River Trail Net Society held its annual Trail Day August 20th, 2011, in honour of the late William Marx (1947-2010), a longtime volunteer of the Society who was key in developing trail in the area. Many people attended including many members of the Marx Family. The event opened with the unveiling of a trailhead sign which shows a map of the Society's 55 km trail on the north shore of Lesser Slave Lake from Grouard east to Big Point. Following this beautiful ceremony a weiner roast lunch was held at the Salt Prairie Community Hall. At 2 pm the new 23.5 km 'Will Marx Trail' located several kilometres to the east of the hall was opened with a ribbon cutting ceremony. An inaugural hike down the trail took place along the east side of the High Prairie Grazing Reserve. The new 23.5 km multiuse trail connects southward to the Shaw Creek Trail and Police Point Trail nearer to Grouard. Permitted uses of the trail include hiking, biking, cross-county skiing, horseback riding, ATVs and snowmobiling. Visitors are advised to use

the trail at their own risk. Following the hike guests were served refreshments at the Salt Prairie Community Hall. The Grouard Peace River Trail Net Society is continuing its work of building sections of the Trans Canada Trail from Big Point westwards towards Peace River. 🐾

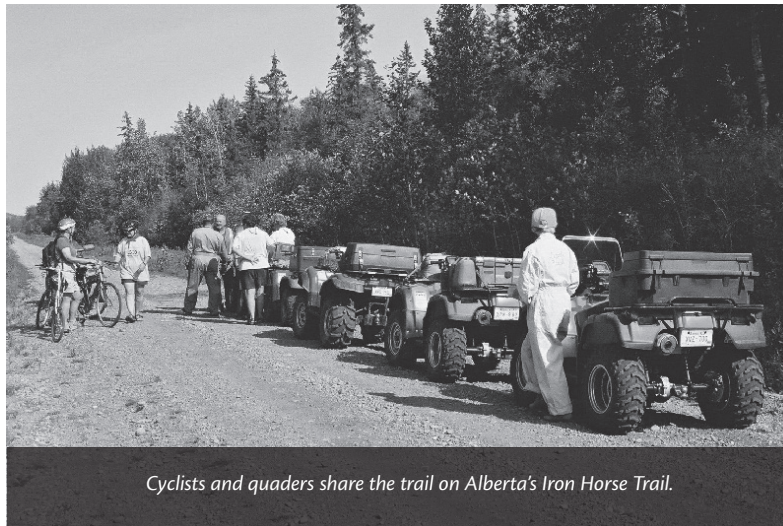
USER CONFLICTS AND THE TRAIL EXPERIENCE

Article submitted by grad student Andrew J. W. Spiers (University of Alberta)

Canada is blessed with abundant natural landscapes (e.g., forests, mountains, lakes, rivers etc) that provide opportunities for a diverse range of outdoor recreation experiences. Trail networks throughout Alberta and the country are a particularly important resource for providing unique recreation and tourism experiences. "Trails are important to the physical and economic health of communities, especially in rural Alberta," said Hector Goudreau, at the time Minister of Tourism, Parks, Recreation and Culture. Ensuring that users have an enjoyable and satisfying trail experience is of primary importance. Trail networks however, are home to a variety of different user groups (e.g., hikers, bicyclists, snowmobilers, horseback riders, ATVs), which has been found to result in user conflicts. Growth in recreation conflict has coincided directly with increased participation, the innovation of new activities, and a greater accessibility to natural resource areas (Hammit & Cole, 1998; Spiers & Plummer, 2005; Vaske, Donnelly, Wittman & Laidlaw, 1995). Consequently, recreation conflict has therefore been understood as "incompatible goals, as the result of another person's or group's actions, threat of action, or personal/group attributes" (Ewert, Dieser, & Voight, 1999, p. 337).

Research into people's recreation experiences has revealed a variety of potential causes of user conflicts. One cause has been the simple competition for resources as more and more people wish to use the same resource (e.g., section of trail) for different purposes. Skiers and snowmobilers are a classic example of user groups whose activities may interfere if undertaken in close proximity (Ewert, Dieser, & Voight, 1999). The nature of the type of recreation activity is often a contributor to conflict. For example, it has been found that certain activities are often regarded as incompatible. For instance, a hiker and a person riding an ATV on the same trail are more likely to experience conflict, because the activity of ATVing has a greater dependence on mechanized technology than the activity of hiking. Oftentimes these types of encounters create misunderstanding between the different users. The one group (i.e. hiker) perceives a lack of respect and courtesy while the other does not. "For example the nature of the sport of mountain

biking has revealed such instances where complaints have been issued surrounding issues of safety and courtesy as mountain bikers were regarded as biking too fast, riding irresponsibly, and lowering the quality of the experience" (Spiers & Plummer, 2005; Carothers, Vaske & Donnelly, 2001). This can often lead to concerns regarding the social acceptability of certain recreational activities. What activities may or may not be acceptable is often governed by an individual's values, attitudes and beliefs and generally is a reflection of a person's individual and cultural characteristics which can often be quite different. How willing people are to tolerate individual differences is often a contributing factor to the occurrence of conflict. Crowding also has strong connections to conflict. As more people, participating in an increasingly diverse set of recreation activities interact, crowding is likely to be experienced. The values of solitude and tranquility are often associated with outdoor recreation activities and these values are easily disturbed when crowding occurs or is perceived.



Cyclists and quaders share the trail on Alberta's Iron Horse Trail.

Dissatisfaction or conflict "can take several forms, including concerns about crowding, litter, and damage to park environments. Sometimes visitors express concerns about

noisy or rowdy behaviour of other visitors, or conflict with other types of users (e.g., hikers with horseback riders, skiers with snowmobilers)" (Needham & Rollins, 2009, p. 137). It is important as a user of outdoor recreation trails that you be aware of the other trail users and of the potential circumstances that may cause conflict. There is some evidence that suggests that occurrences of conflict can be reduced by people simply being more respectful and accepting of other trail users and differences that may exist. Trail users are encouraged to continue to educate themselves on what they can do to reduce occurrences of conflict. A number of excellent resources can be found at the following website(<http://www.americantrails.org/resources/ManageMaintain/index.html>). Perhaps most importantly is for trail users to understand that it is their behaviour that is often the root cause of incidences of conflict. Following appropriate trail etiquette and being respectful of other trail users can be remarkably effective in reducing occurrences of conflict. ►



Responding to outdoor recreation conflict is an inevitable reality of recreation professionals and practitioners charged with the responsibility of managing Canada's natural resource areas. Professionals/practitioners are encouraged to continue to use various zoning and educational programs to help mitigate conflict. They are also encouraged to determine/identify social norms regarding appropriate behaviours and activities and to set standards of quality for trail experiences. Lastly, practitioners are urged to find a way of communicating occurrences of conflict with trail users and to continually explore alternative and creative approaches to managing recreational areas (Rollings, Trotter & Taylor, 1998). 🐾

RALPH MORRIS (1925-2011)

Ralph Morris of Edmonton passed away peacefully on April 18, 2011, at the age of 86 years. A Senior Engineer and bridge designer with Canadian National Railways and 1946 graduate of the University of Manitoba, it was Ralph's job along with



Ralph Morris

an assistant, to inspect 1,200 rail trestles in western Canada. He was responsible for the maintenance of the bridges from 1961 until he retired in 1988. His interest in rail bridges never waned however, and he was pleased to see a number of them preserved and converted for recreation trail purposes. One such bridge was the Koksilah River railway trestle or "Kinsol" trestle on the Cowichan Subdivision on Vancouver Island in B.C. Ralph Morris had long been one of the Kinsol Trestle's biggest fans and continued to visit the historic structure annually on his vacations to B.C. after retirement. Given his occupation, Ralph kept

detailed notes and other documents on the bridge which he "borrowed" to keep them from getting lost when the bridge was abandoned in 1979. Ralph's close relationship with the trestle has resulted in his involvement with the current trestle restoration, so much so that Ralph's own designs from decades ago were put to use. Unfortunately Ralph never got to visit the restored bridge which officially re-opened for trail traffic in March 2011. Ralph helped evaluate the recreation potential of a number of abandoned railway trestles in Alberta as well and provided valuable insights regarding possible locations for new pedestrian bridge crossings. He was very pleased to learn that the Beaver River Bridge on the Iron Horse Trail had been preserved. His cheerfulness and positive attitude were big assets in determining what was possible and how best to accomplish the task at hand while keeping a firm grip on reality. Ralph is remembered with love by his wife Margaret, by his daughters and son's in law and grandchildren. His lasting legacy continues in the recreation use of a number of the old rail trestles he maintained during his working career. 🐾

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