

Alberta TrailTracker

www.albertatrailnet.com



SOUTHERN PLAINS PROVINCIAL TRAIL MAP NOW AVAILABLE

The Provincial Trail Map Project Steering Committee has completed the sixth in a series of 16 regional trail maps that, when complete, will cover the entire province. The map highlights approved motorized, non-motorized and mixed use trails in the region.

The Southern Plains Trail Map covers an area SE of Calgary framed by Hwy 1 on the north, the AB/SASK border on the east, the AB/USA border on the south, and Hwy 4 (Milk River to Lethbridge) and Hwy 23 and 24 (Lethbridge to Strathmore) on the west.

This map along with the other maps in the provincial trail map series are free of charge to the public through provincial and local tourism visitor centres, regional Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development and Alberta Park offices, and through Alberta TrailNet's Edmonton office. Please call Alberta TrailNet at 1-877-987-2457 or visit www.albertatrailnet.com to view a digital version of the map.

Trails contribute to the social, environmental and economic health and wellbeing 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 available in the Provincial Trail Map series include: Northern Rockies, Lakeland, Grande Alberta North, Clearwater and Battle River Trails.



NATIONAL TRAILS COALITION AWARDS TRAIL PROJECT GRANTS ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA

Canada has a vast network of recreational trails which allow Canadians to experience the outdoors and appreciate this country's natural beauty. Thanks to a partnership between the Government of Canada and the National Trails Coalition (NTC), \$10 Million has been made available between 2014 and 2016 to help expand and rehabilitate Canada's snowmobile, all-terrain vehicle (ATV) and non-motorized trail systems. Local trail organizations across Canada were invited to submit project proposals directly to the NTC this past summer. 186 projects, 22 of which are in Alberta, received funding. Organizations were required to provide matched funding.

Jo-Anne Farquhar, President of the National Trails Coalition Board of Directors said: "The NTC was founded in the belief that trail users and volunteer trail builders/managers can achieve much more by working collaboratively and supporting each other's goals. Thanks to the support of the Federal Government, trail users have once again been able to apply for project grant money. These additional funds of \$10 million from the federal government will ensure the revitalization of recreational trails across our country and provide individuals and families with the opportunity to enjoy quality outdoor infrastructure and continue to live active and healthy lives."

\$1.2 Million was available for Alberta projects with 1/3 of that amount allocated to each of the indicated user categories. Several mixed use trail projects also received funding.

ALBERTA PROJECTS THAT EITHER ARE OR WILL BE UNDERWAY IN 2015 INCLUDE:

ATHABASCA RECREATIONAL TRAILS ASSOCIATION - PEACE RIVER TRAIL UPGRADES AND MAINTENANCE (MULTI-USE)

Repair portions of the Peace River Trail from Athabasca to Sawdy, AB that were washed out by heavy rains and snows; install culverts and gravel on areas experiencing perennial wet conditions.

BIGHORN HERITAGE ATV SOCIETY - RIG STREET PILOT (ATV/ORM)

Develop a multi-faceted trail stewardship program, which will foster cooperation among users, industry and government and encompass trails assessment, planning, maintenance, management and education. The goal is a backcountry trail and infrastructure system which will be used in a responsible manner and managed for future generations to enjoy.



Trail flood damage in the MD of Bighorn.

CROWSNEST PASS QUAD SQUAD – MACGILLIVRAY-SPOON VALLEY-VICARY REHABILITATION (ATV/ORM)

Repair bridge abutments MacGillivray Trail (habitat management/safety); re-route 1000 metres of trail and deactivate bypassed section on MacGillivray Trail (habitat management); backfill ruts and refurbish water bars in Vicary Creek and Spoon Valley (habitat management/safety); repair south bridge abutment & Spoon Valley (habitat management/safety); replace collapsed culvert, backfill ruts and refurbish water bars in Racehorse Pass (Safety); repair and backfill the northern abutment of the bridge in its existing location at South Racehorse Creek (habitat management), and replace plugged culverts and re-establish damaged section of road in Dutch Creek (habitat management).

ROCKY MOUNTAIN DIRT RIDERS ASSOCIATION - MCLEAN CREEK PUBLIC LAND USE ZONE (PLUZ) CONNECTIVITY & GHOST PLUZ WATER CROSSINGS PROJECT (ATV/ORM)

Addition of single track connectors to route around damaged sections of trail and eliminate ongoing usage and deterioration of these trail sections. Re-route of single-track around the "new" wetter areas is also included in this scope.

EASTERN SLOPES ATV SOCIETY - SOUTH GHOST

Staging Area Rehabilitation (ATV/ORM)

Install a double vaulted toilet and resurface the staging area. All users will appreciate these new facilities, as well as the freshened up staging area.



Rest stop constructed by the Eastern Slopes ATV Society, South Ghost.

STURGEON COUNTY – LAMOUREUX TRAIL DEVELOPMENT/ INTERPRETIVE SITE (NON-MOTORIZED)

Development of interpretive and rest node staging area at Lamoureux, AB which is located on the historic Athabasca Landing Trail.

TOWN OF TROCHU – TROCHU CENTENNIAL TRAIL EXPANSION AND REPAIRS (NON-MOTORIZED)

Expansion of current gravel/asphalt trail system and repair of two existing trail sections affected by water.



Town of Trochu Trail

CITY OF EDMONTON – BUENA VISTA/LAURIER PARK SHARED-USE TRAIL (NON-MOTORIZED)

Reconstruct a former road bed from the William Hawrelak pedestrian bridge to the Edmonton Rowing Club Facility in Buena Vista Park. This portion of the trail will be rebuilt as a dual-surface shared-use pathway, with a 3 metre wide asphalt portion, and remaining space in the existing pathway right-of-way will remain as improved gravel surface. The remaining section of trail from the Edmonton Rowing Club facility to the Sir Wilfrid Laurier Park boundary will be rebuilt as a 3 metre wide asphalt pathway. Painted solid yellow line and appropriate markings as well as signage and colored symbols will be added.

GLENBOW RANCH PARK FOUNDATION – BEARSPAW TRAIL CONSTRUCTION (NON-MOTORIZED)

Completion of 2.2 km of the Bearspaw Trail required to link the east end of Glenbow Ranch Provincial Park to the City of Calgary's Haskayne Park.

SAMSON CREE NATION (MASKWACIS) – COMPLETION OF TRAIL FOR SAMSON CREE NATION

Complete construction of trail east from Maskwacis along Highway 611 to Battle River.

GROUARD-PEACE RIVER TRAIL NET SOCIETY – SHAW CREEK BRIDGE

Construction and installation of a bridge over Shaw Creek on the north shore of Lesser Slave Lake.

ALBERTA EQUESTRIAN FEDERATION – PANTHER RIVER TRAIL RESTORATION (NON-MOTORIZED)

Trail restoration in Panther River area includes 16 km of trails that require re-contouring and/or erosion mitigation.

GREATER BRAGG CREEK TRAILS ASSOCIATION – WEST BRAGG ALL SEASON TRAIL PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Upgrading and repair of East Telephone Ski Trail (6.1 km) and Demi-Tel Trail (2.3 km).

ANNE AND SANDY CROSS CONSERVATION AREA (CALGARY AREA) – HIKE TO CONSERVE, A TRAIL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT (NON-MOTORIZED)

Improving signage on property to reduce risk to visitors. Includes: develop a colour coded system for each trail; increase trail markers, create more interpretive signage; create new print material (maps and brochures); and build a small kiosk/information center at the trail head.

TOWN OF OLDS- LINKING GROWTH (NON-MOTORIZED)

Trail expansion on the northwest and southeast edges of the Town of Olds.

MUNICIPALITY OF BIGHORN – SOUTH EXSHAW TRAIL (NON-MOTORIZED)

Granular surfacing, purchase and installation of trail amenities such as benches, waste bins, trailhead and wayfinding signage, and trailhead parking area improvements. Trail was damaged in the flood of 2013 and has now been rebuilt and relocated.

BANFF AVENUE CONNECTION FOR TCT/ROCKY MOUNTAIN LEGACY TRAIL (NON-MOTORIZED)

The Town of Banff is working with Parks Canada on adding a new controlled road crossing at the west end of the Mountain Park Legacy Trail as well as developing a new section of trail on the north side of Banff Avenue. This trail will improve safety and connectivity.



THE ATHABASCA RIVER RUNNERS – TRAIL EXTENSIONS WEST BAPTISTE LAKE (SNOWMOBILE)

Already managing over 240km of trails, the club will add another 100km of connector trails throughout the system to create loops and shortcuts within the trail system, thus enhancing the riding experience for snowmobilers.

THE NORTHERN LIGHTS SNOWMOBILE CLUB (BARRHEAD) – GOODRIDGE NORTH (SNOWMOBILE)

The Trans Canadian Snowmobile Trail (TCST) in this region uses old cut lines through the area which are badly overgrown. 16 km of trail will be rehabilitated through mulching, stump grinding and cat work.

THE PEMBINA DRIFT BUSTERS (WESTLOCK) – LONG ISLAND LAKE TRAIL SYSTEM (SNOWMOBILE)

Rehabilitate some overgrown trails in the Long Island Lake trail system north of Westlock, AB. The trails will be cleared and widened to allow access to a trail groomer.



The Pembina Drift Busters Snowmobile Club Trail Project.

SWAN CITY SNOWMOBILE CLUB (GRANDE PRAIRIE) – BIG MOUNTAIN TRAIL IMPROVEMENTS (SNOWMOBILE)

The club will rehabilitate, upgrade and widen the trails at the Big Mountain Snowmobile area south of Grande Prairie. This work will allow for increased access and more complete grooming into some areas previously too steep to allow equipment access.

RIVERLAND RECREATIONAL TRAIL SOCIETY – BEAVER RIVER TRESTLE BRIDGE REBUILD (MULTI-USE)

Portions of the Beaver River Trestle, which is situated along Alberta's Iron Horse Trail west of Cold Lake, AB, will be rebuilt. One end of the trestle was heavily damaged by arson in June of 2012.



ATN Board members inspect the damage to the Beaver River Trestle in 2013.

BRAGG CREEK AND AREA TRAILS MAP

Be one of the first people to get this new, great quality, detailed map that highlights all of the local trails.

These maps were produced in partnership between Greater Bragg Creek Trails Association (GBCTA), Rocky View County and Banded Peak Communications. Proceeds go to the Greater Bragg Creek Trails Association for the construction, grooming and maintenance of trails. A great value at only \$15.

Maps are available in Bragg Creek from: Bragg Creek Shell, Moose Mountain General Store, Bragg Creek Family Foods Smack Cycle, Creekers, Bragg Creek Pharmacy, Creekside Country Store, Best Little Wordhouse in the West; Yoga with the Heart, Art Country Canada, Bragg Creek Community Centre, and Branded Visuals.

Maps are available in Calgary from: Map Town, Mountain Equipment Co-op, Bow Cycle, Norseman Ski Shop, Riddleys, Lifesport, and The Bike Shop.

The map can also be purchased through the iTunes App Store and Google play.



HINTON, WINTER TRAIL PILOT PROJECT UNDERWAY

BY JENN LAING, HINTON MOUNTAIN BIKING ASSOCIATION



Small snowmobile for mobility and keeping narrow trails and groomer for ideal width of our non-motorized winter activities.

year round riding, developing youth riding through programs like Sprockids and organizing amazing events like the Annual Beaver Bike Fest and Dirt Jams.

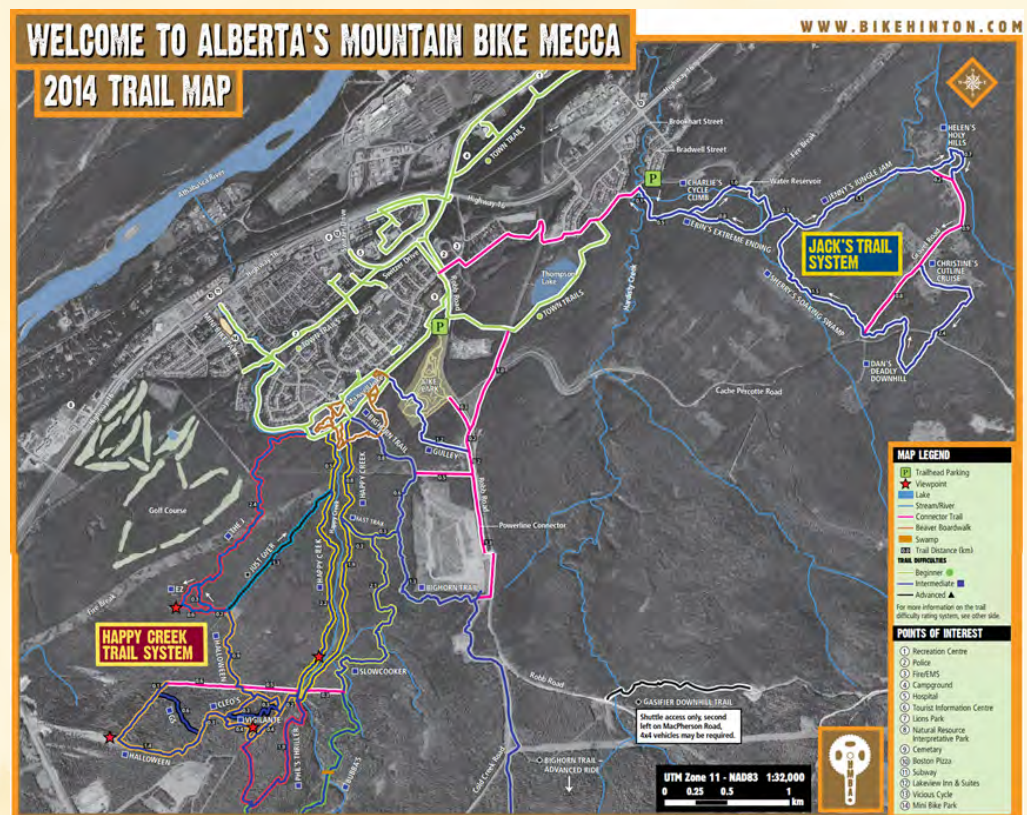
Some of Hinton's local fat bike riding enthusiasts have teamed up on a Winter Trail Pilot Project. With the support of the Hinton Mountain Bike Association and the Town of Hinton, this project will allow the grooming of some of the favorite established backyard trails! The grooming will improve trails for winter access for the following activities; cross country skiing, snowshoeing, hiking, dog walking, trail running and of course fat bike riding.

The area that will be groomed includes a connection of several small trails in the Happy Creek zone. The following trails will be part of the groomed loop: The J; Ranger; GS connector; GS; Halloween; Phil's Thriller; Bubba's and Bighorn.

Winter trail maintenance is available thanks to the volunteer time and funds of Hinton locals Mike Mahoney and Mike Langford. Happy Trails!!

<http://www.bikehinton.com>

The Hinton Mountain Bike Association (HMBA) is a non-profit organization that has been operating in the town of Hinton for the past 8 years. Our location on the eastern slopes of the Rocky Mountains offers excellent mountain biking for all ages and skill levels. In addition to the largest free access Bike Park in the province, a committed group of volunteers help develop and maintain over 30 kilometers of multi-use non-motorized recreational trails. The vision of the HMBA is to develop, maintain and promote the best possible mountain biking opportunities in and around Hinton while ensuring responsible and safe practices in environmental conservation, trail construction, trail maintenance, and riding. We also promote the sport of mountain biking in our region by providing our members with discounts from local businesses, offering skills clinics, promoting



TRAIL PROJECTS IN THE TOWN OF CANMORE

BY MEGAN DUNN, TOWN OF CANMORE



Cyclists take on the challenge of the Rocky Mountain Legacy Trail.

BIG NUMBERS ON THE LEGACY TRAIL

After the final missing link between Canmore and Banff was completed in the Fall 2013, the stage was set for 2014 to be a fantastic year on the trail. The Rocky Mountain Legacy Trail was open for seven months in 2014 from mid April to mid November. With the completed connection, numbers on the trail in 2014 nearly doubled those of any previous year since the first phase of the trail was completed in 2010. 107,504 users travelled the trail in 2014, with the highest one day count of 1746 users (trail counter: www.legacytrail.canmore2.visio-tools.com). The dramatic increase in counts on the trail is a strong indication of how cyclists and pedestrians value safe, continuous, comfortable, efficient, and aesthetic links between destinations.

OPEN SPACE AND TRAILS PLAN

A new Open Space and Trails Plan is also in the works for Canmore. The draft plan makes some optimistic recommendations, aspiring to finally connect the Trans Canada Trail from Dead Man's Flats through to Canmore. Other recommendations focus on elements such as strengthening commuting trail connections throughout town, working with the province to address trail erosion, increasing clarity regarding trails in wildlife corridors and habitat patches, and potentially creating a few new trails!

ENGINEERS PLANNING FOR CYCLISTS!

Canmore's new Integrated Transportation Plan has been approved by Council for planning purposes and sees Canmore as Alberta's premiere walking and cycling community, with a goal to obtain a 30% work trip mode share for sustainable modes by 2020. Active transportation is an integral part of the Town's community fabric. The existing recreational trail network is integrated with an aspirational network that aims to serve utilitarian trips as well as recreational trips. The network focuses on cycling; however the routes and existing trail system can serve alternative active modes as well. The existing pedestrian network will also benefit from improved active transportation connectivity, and it will be continually improved as part of ongoing projects. With successful projects such as: two mountain bike skills parks, the Trans-Canada Highway Pedestrian/Cyclist Underpass, the Rocky Mountain Legacy Trail, bicycle corrals, covered bike parking and bike maintenance stands, Canmore has shown a strong commitment to cycling.

PROJECTS IN THE WORKS

Coming up this summer is the start of work to continue the Legacy Trail through Canmore to create a link to the Canmore Nordic Centre. Beyond that – we're looking forward to seeing what happens once the Open Space and Trails Plan is approved!

TOWN OF BANFF TRAIL UPDATE

BY PIERRE-HUGUES GAGNON, TOWN OF BANFF

A 230 metre trail may not seem like much, but this small extension is going a long way for safety.

The Town of Banff is extending the popular Banff Legacy Trail so it will better connect with the downtown core and create a safer experience for trail users. Currently the trail – which connects the communities of Banff and Canmore along the Trans-Canada Highway – stops at the entrance to the Town of Banff. To continue on, cyclists have to either illegally cross traffic at the end of the trail where there's no formal crossing, or walk their bikes along the existing sidewalk. At peak times over 1,000 people use the Legacy Trail every day, so safety is paramount for this important connector. With the help of a \$50,000 grant from the National Trails Coalition, and support from partner, Parks Canada, the Town of Banff will expand the shared-use trail this year, improving the link to downtown Banff. The 230 metre expansion will go on the (east/west) side of Banff Avenue, creating a safe route for all trail users to access more of Banff.



Karen Sorenson, Mayor of the Town of Banff and Blake Richards, MP for Wild Rose announce recent funding from the Government of Canada.

The Banff Legacy Trail was completed in 2010 to commemorate the 125th anniversary of the establishment of Banff National Park. Since then, it has become a not-to-miss experience for visitors and an essential summer connector for residents in both communities cycling to work. The 230 metres of paved trail extending the Legacy Trail will make the experience that much better, and safer for the residents and visitors to Banff. It will also improve the onward connection of the Trans Canada Trail through the Town of Banff to the Goat Creek Trail.

TOWN OF BLACKFALDS TRAIL OPENING

BY MIRANDA COOPER, TOWN OF BLACKFALDS

Located in Central Alberta between Lacombe and Red Deer, the Town of Blackfalds is a vibrant, young and growing town in Central Alberta where 85% of people are aged 40 or less. With a dramatic increase in population due to a high birthrate and a greater number of people moving into the area, the town is one of the nation's fastest growing communities. Due to this young and rapidly increasing demographic, the Town identified the need for more outdoor recreation such as parks and trails, with a primary focus on the development of an indoor recreation facility.



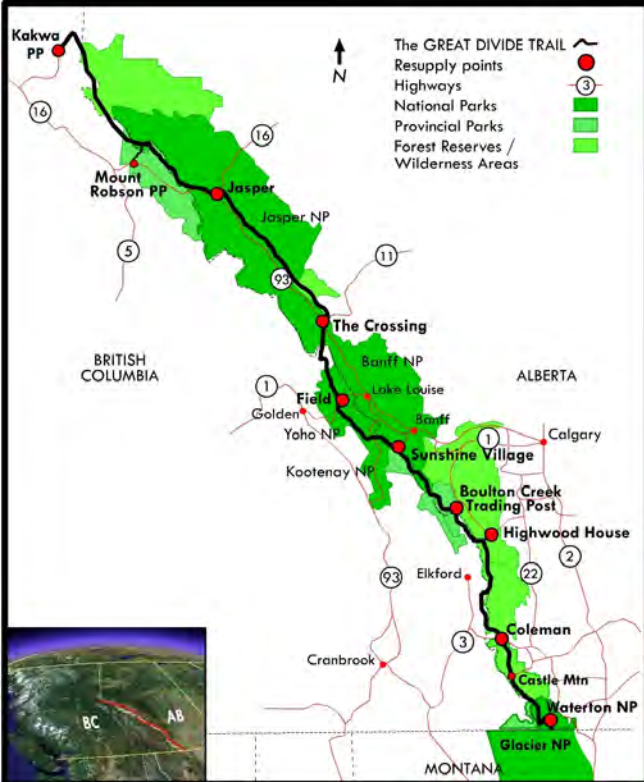
BUILDING THE DREAM OF A GREAT DIVIDE TRAIL

BY GEOFF ELLWAND, GREAT DIVIDE TRAIL ASSOCIATION

The Great Divide Trail is 1,200 kilometre backcountry (mostly) walking trail stretching from the US border to a point in Kakwa Provincial Park northwest of Mt. Robson. It roughly follows the height of land between Alberta and British Columbia and takes hikers through some of the most spectacular Rocky Mountain country reachable on two feet. It incorporates portions of existing trails in national and provincial parks and elsewhere. Those trails are stitched together by a group of dedicated volunteers who regularly maintain and improve the trail. The Great Divide Trail Association (GDTA) has been renewed and reinvigorated over the last couple of years and continues to reach out to recruit new members and volunteers in Calgary, Vancouver and elsewhere. We now have a GDTA website and a Twitter account GDTA Twitter and have arranged a partnership on some of our projects with The North Face.

The Great Divide Trail Association is working closely with Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development to ensure that the Great Divide Trail is considered a priority and recognized in the development of the South Saskatchewan Regional Plan.

Last summer more than 20 member/volunteers hiked into the Hidden Creek area on a very successful four day trail maintenance expedition. This summer our major project sends volunteers into BC for another four day project on the Aldridge Creek Trail. The GDTA is always looking for fit, hard working volunteers who want to make a hands on difference. If you would like to apply for a spot on the team, check out our website. If you can't volunteer, consider becoming a member so you can do your part in building the Great Divide Trail!



Trail building crew at work.



GLENBOW RANCH PARK FOUNDATION LAUNCHES FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN TO BUILD TRANS CANADA TRAIL CONNECTION TO CALGARY



Trail lovers, hikers, walkers, bikers and nature enthusiasts will soon be able to follow the Trans Canada Trail from Calgary to Glenbow Ranch Provincial Park, with the help of the Glenbow Ranch Park Foundation (GRPF) and the generosity of public and corporate donors.

The Foundation is taking the first step to promote the new Calgary to Cochrane Trail (C TO C TRAIL). Phase One of the trail is Bears paw Trail, a 2.2 km stretch that joins the northwest corner of Calgary (Haskayne Park) to the Glenbow Ranch Provincial Park.

This portion of the Trans Canada Trail is the start of an expansive network of pathways to be constructed. Overall costs are estimated at \$7.5M over a period of five years. The C TO C TRAIL will provide access to some of the most spectacular parkland and vistas the Bow River Valley has to offer. It will include more walking, hiking and biking trails, a railway crossing, and a pedestrian bridge across the Bow River to connect to the Town of Cochrane. Individuals, families, companies and organizations are invited to be a part of a lasting legacy.

Thanks to GRPF's fundraising efforts, more than 60 percent of the overall project funds of \$352,000 for phase 1 have already been raised or committed by various organizations, including Alberta TrailNet, Rocky View County and Trans Canada Trail, and by many other public and private donors.

Doug Marter, the City of Calgary's Parks Planning and Development Manager, says the timing of the Bears paw Trail construction aligns with the city's plan to begin park and trail construction at Haskayne Park in 2015. "We support the initiatives undertaken by Glenbow Ranch Provincial Park and the Glenbow Ranch Park Foundation, including the ongoing collaboration with our partners in making this connection a reality in 2016."

Susan De Caen, Executive Director of Glenbow Ranch Park Foundation, adds that the vision for the overall project is to have the Calgary to Cochrane Trail open for public access by 2020. "Imagine a time when you will be able to bike from downtown Calgary, through the park and treat yourself to Mackay's Ice Cream, or take part in fun activities in the park and the Town of Cochrane," she says. "Cochrane residents will also be able to access northwest Calgary parks, shops and services."

Supporting the Calgary to Cochrane Trail (C TO C TRAIL), and particularly, Phase One (Bears paw Trail) campaign, is easy and convenient. Donors are invited to visit www.CtoCTrail.ca to make an online contribution. Donations can also be received by mail or in person at the Glenbow Ranch Provincial Park: 255001 Glenbow Road, Cochrane, AB T4C 0B7. Call (403) 851-9053 or email ctoctrail@grpf.ca for more information.



Bordering Calgary on the northwest corner of the city (Haskayne Park) and stretching 14km along the Bow River to Cochrane, Glenbow Ranch Provincial Park is one of Alberta's newest parks. Glenbow Ranch protects more than 1,300 hectares of foothills parkland.

The park preserves and protects a natural and cultural heritage that spans thousands of years. On-park research is being done to conserve and restore native grasslands, and the rich history of the area is evident in the tipi rings and the remains of the historic Glenbow town site.

IN MEMORIAM - ROY SCOTT (1926 - 2014)

BY SHEILA THOMPSON



Hearts are heavy in Northeastern Alberta with the passing of Roy Scott, July 19 at the age of 88. Roy was a founder of Alberta's Iron Horse Trail, currently the longest connected section of Trans Canada Trail in the province. It is no coincidence that it ran right past his door in Heinsburg. Roy had a deep appreciation of the history of northeastern Alberta, including the settlement days, early railroad and fur trade eras, and was willing to share stories with anyone who asked.

Roy Scott was an early advocate of the rails-to-trails movement. In 1980, when CN abandoned 34 kms of rail line between Elk Point and Heinsburg, he took the opportunity to use it as a horse and wagon trail. In 1994, the County of St. Paul bought this rail line, and Roy lobbied county officials to formalize its use as a trail. This laid the essential groundwork for a watershed campaign in 1999,

when CN abandoned the entire Bonnyville-Coronado rail line, almost 300 km in total. With the County of St. Paul's previous experience operating a rails-to-trails line, ten municipalities were convinced to take ownership of this unique transportation corridor. Roy Scott was a founding member of Riverland Recreational Trail Society, the volunteer group that took on stewardship of Alberta's Iron Horse Trail. He worked tirelessly to build staging areas, raise awareness and promote trail use.

Scott was above all a horseman. He not only led wagon treks along the trail every year, he also built Red River carts with authentic detail including shaganappi/rawhide holding the enormous wheels together. This was a nod to the Métis history of the area and the historic Victoria Trail used by Red River carts in the 1860's. The Iron Horse Trail, in part, follows this historic route.

Roy and his gracious wife Marge were friends to all trail users who passed their way. Tea and cookies were always on the table. Roy will be sorely missed by the trail community and we extend our deepest sympathies to Marjorie Scott and family.

Following are links that tell more about Roy Scott.

1. <http://www.edmontonjournal.com/Life+Times+Cowboy+championed+abandoned+forgotten/10199721/story.html>
2. http://www.metrocinema.org/film_view/2027/
3. <http://www.canada.com/story.html?id=bac19836-d7b8-41ac-bcf7-d36f45f0916e>
4. Click on Iron Horse Trail video, Part 2 for some images of Roy Scott & his Red River carts: <http://www.ironhorsetrail.ca/downloads.html>



ALBERTA SNOWMOBILE ASSOCIATION (ASA) UPDATE

BY CHRIS BROOKES, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



2015 World Snowmobile Invasion took place from February 11 to 15, 2015 in Whitecourt, AB.

The end of another season is upon us and I, like many others that I have talked to, did not find as much snow around Alberta as we had hoped for.

The sporadic weather did not however deter us as an Association, with membership sales looking good across the province and many trails well used. While we are busy as always with our regular programs, Safe Riders, snowmobile shows, Board and Annual meetings, mapping meetings, etc., we've also been involved in many other initiatives.

Our participation in the Canadian Council of Snowmobile Organizations (CCSO) was on display when we hosted the national spring meetings here in Whitecourt, Alberta, in conjunction with the ASA Jamboree and World Snowmobile Invasion. Our national partners were more than impressed with the turn out and took in a ride on Friday, meetings on Saturday and the bug party Saturday night. The Whitecourt club put on an amazing event and are to be congratulated for their hard work.

At the CCSO meeting, we discussed the Spring Sneak Peek shows that we participate in (AB, SK, Man, Ont and Que) and talked about future national efforts, including future National Trail Coalition (NTC) funding and potential national groomer programs. We also saw the creation and adoption of a new National Legal and Environmental Defence Fund, where the CCSO will raise funds to help smaller associations deal with legal issues that affect snowmobiling in their provinces. I'm proud to say the ASA was the sponsor of this funding proposal and it was passed at the meeting. The next CCSO meeting will be held in conjunction with the International Snowmobile Congress (ISC) this June in New York.

We were also fortunate this season with the availability of government funds coming into the trail system. The NTC brought \$400,000 of federal funding to ASA clubs and is a welcome investment. These projects are in full swing and we have some clubs who have already completed their projects! This is one of the benefits of belonging to organized snowmobiling at the provincial and national level.

The Alberta Recreation Trails Partnership Pilot Program (ARTP) was created by the Minister of (then) AB Tourism, Parks and Recreation in 2014 to develop the foundational structure (elements) for the development and delivery of a designated provincial trails system. Although there have been several delays, the committee's work is proceeding and several ASA club pilot projects have been approved and will receive Partnership funding this year. Similar to NTC requirements, to take advantage of this opportunity your club had to be a member of the ASA. The project also had to involve an existing trail and had to meet one or more of the ARTP objectives.

These two programs alone have added a pile of paperwork for us during this operational season, but it is nice to see that the Federal and Provincial governments recognize the value and hard work put forth by organized snowmobiling, and that they are willing to invest in us. What is also important is that there is recognition by all parties that, to be sustainable, our volunteer built and managed trails require a disposition of their own on the landscape. We are also advocating for assistance with our educational programs that we present across the province and our other program areas. Although, with the sporadic snow fall, it was a bit of a disappointing riding season, there's been a lot of progress and good news and, being an Oilers fan, I'm used to saying 'let's look forward to next season'.

ATHABASCA TO COLINTON TRAIL OPENING

BY ANDREA COLLINS



Western Canadian Wagon Trail members travel down to the trail.

The day was clear and bright, the sun warm and welcoming. It couldn't have been better weather for a trail opening on Saturday, October 18, when nearly 100 people, including Councillors from rural and urban municipalities along the route of the Athabasca Landing Trail (ALT), gathered in Colinton to celebrate the opening of the Athabasca to Colinton trail.

The ceremony ended with the unveiling of a new sign with the ALT logo and, under it, another sign recognizing the funders and volunteers who made this trail project possible. Many of those attending enjoyed a horse and wagon ride along the new trail, courtesy of the Western Canadian Wagon Train group, and after the ceremony, a cake served on site and a lunch made by volunteers at Colinton Community Centre.

The Athabasca to Colinton trail is 11.1 km long, wide enough to easily accommodate horse and wagon teams, and is part of a historic transportation trail that is being redeveloped for non-motorized recreational use. The original ALT trail has a long history, and began as a footpath used by Aborigines, Métis, early European explorers and trappers. Increasing use and the difficulties of taking wagons over mud and muskeg led to the Hudson's Bay Company building a road along the route in 1876. The first Dominion Highway in Alberta, it went between Fort Edmonton and what was then called Athabasca Landing. Dubbed "The 100 Mile Portage," it became a major transportation route for missionaries, Mounties, settlers, entrepreneurs and gold rush prospectors. The Athabasca Landing Trail is part of the Trans Canada Trail (TCT) Arctic land route connecting north and west through northeast British

Columbia and the Yukon to Tuktoyaktuk on the Arctic Ocean.

The ALT project is spearheaded by the Athabasca Landing Trail Steering Committee, which has representation from five municipalities (Town of Athabasca, Athabasca County, Westlock County, Sturgeon County, City of Fort Saskatchewan), three trail groups (ARTA, Rainbow Equitation Society and the Western Canadian Wagon Train), Alberta Culture and Tourism, and Alberta TrailNet.

Much of the work on the Athabasca to Colinton trail segment was completed in 2012, but additional grants were needed to complete the remaining bridge, trail and staging area in 2014. Funding for both phases of the project came from the Trans Canada Trail, Alberta TrailNet, Government of Alberta, Athabasca County and Athabasca Recreational Trails Association.

The Athabasca to Colinton trail project was led by volunteer George Wayne, an 82 year former farmer who sits on three trail-related organizations. Other volunteers were Sam Bosack, Wilf Boissy, Al Brayford, Mel Clack, Bob Doole (donated culverts), Ben Ganther, Doug Gilroy, Glen Jewell (donated sand), Lyne Jewell, Lloyd Jewell, Al MacKinnon, Keith Meadahl, Raymond Page, John Wells, Bob Whaling and Clarence Workman.



From Left to Right: Christine Nelson (Alberta TrailNet), Lynne Jewell (Athabasca Recreational Trails Association), George Wayne (Athabasca Recreational Trails Association/ Western Canadian Wagon Train), Linda Strong-Watson (Alberta TrailNet), Deputy Minister Bill Werry (Environment and Sustainable Resource Development), Loren Winnick (Alberta TrailNet) and Councilor Warren Griffin (Athabasca County) unveil the new Athabasca Landing Trail iron grill sign.

TRAIL BLAZER 2014: ERIC LLOYD

BY SHEILA THOMPSON



Eric Lloyd receives the 2014 Trail Blazer award from Robert Sadee (Greater Bragg Creek Trails Association/Alberta TrailNet) and President Ross Hayes (Alberta TrailNet).

With the Trail Blazer Award, Alberta Trail Net each year acknowledges the often unsung and heroic efforts of long-time volunteer trail builders throughout Alberta. The 2014 award went to Eric Lloyd of West Bragg Creek.

Eric's trail volunteering began in 1976 in Drayton Valley. He was the first head of the Trails Committee with the Pembina Nordic Ski Club, working on the early development of the Pembina Nordic Ski Trails and the construction of the Vanderschoot Graham Cabin. These Pembina Nordic Ski Trails and that cabin are now part of Eagle Point Provincial Park along the North Saskatchewan River.

After moving to Bragg Creek, Eric followed in the footsteps of 2005 Trail Blazer Award recipient, Don Gardner, and became a West Bragg Creek ski trail groomer. He also volunteered for the Greater Bragg Creek Trails Association. Eric helped negotiate the 10 year Partnership Agreement between GBCTA and Alberta Parks that, in 2009, committed both parties to the West Bragg Creek All Season Trail Plan. He chaired the West Bragg Creek All Season Trail Plan Public Advisory Committee commencing in the fall of

2009 and obtained formal Plan approval in the fall of 2010. Eric led the implementation of the West Bragg Creek All Season Trail Plan from 2010 to 2014. This volunteer work included fundraising \$ 500,000 and obtaining trail construction approvals. He also worked with a broad partnership of volunteer trail leaders, Alberta Parks' staff, other not-for-profits and contractors. Eric contributed to the popular Bragg Creek and Area Trail Map and Guide, proceeds of which are used by the GBCTA to build new trails.

Through the work of Eric and other members of the Greater Bragg Creek Trails Association, The West Bragg Creek trail system has been expanded by over 60 km and upgraded to a sustainable 106 km trail network that is a world class trail destination for a diversity of summer and winter trail users.

Eric Lloyd's commitment exemplifies what all trail blazers know. With a sustained vision, step-by-patient-step we are able to reach our goals of creating trail systems that are enjoyed today and that provide a legacy for tomorrow.

GREATER BRAGG CREEK TRAILS ASSOCIATION

BY ROBERT SADÉE

Last summer saw completion of several trail projects in and around the community of Bragg Creek. The Banded Peak Connector between the Hamlet and Banded Peak School was completed. Construction of the section within the school grounds had been interrupted by the early arrival of winter, but was finished in the spring. There is a fine loop from the Hamlet to the Banded Peak School, continuing into the Provincial park and ending back at the Hamlet. A new re-route around a flood damaged portion of the Centennial Trail within Bragg Creek Provincial Park was built last fall. This re-established the shortest trail access from the Hamlet along White Ave to the Provincial Park. Hopefully the flood damaged Heritage Mile sidewalk along White Avenue within the hamlet will be restored soon.

For 2015: New Community Trail Map Signs are being designed; these will be completed in the summer and available for installation in the Bragg Creek area.

An agreement between Tsuu T'ina First Nation and the GBCTA has been completed. The GBCTA Redwood Subcommittee is anxious to restore the flood damaged Redwood Trail in the spring of 2015.

Construction of the Trans Canada Trail along the West Bragg Creek Road is also planned to begin construction this spring.

We look forward to kicking off this project soon.

WEST BRAGG CREEK TRAILS:

It was a highly energetic and productive season in 2014, as the Greater Bragg Creek Trails Association (GBCTA) nears completion of the 2010 West Bragg Creek All Season Trails Plan.

The spectacular 6.1 km Merlin View Trail, at the northwest corner of the trail system was completed bringing the total length of new all season trails up to 44km.

The snowshoe trail network was increased by 8.5km with the clearing and marking of the new Snowy Owl and Snowy Shortcut Trails. These two trails connect several all season trails to create a number of different loop options. The Snowshoe Hare trail

was also cleared of deadfall and encroaching brush, so the entire 20km snowshoe network is like new.

A big focus of the 2014 season was the cross country trail network. Twenty kilometers of ski trails were repaired, had drainage upgraded, were re-routed, brushed or widened. This included the placement of 50 culverts and construction of 7 bridges. Several sections of ski trail were re-routed to improve safety or reduce environmental impact.

East Crystal Line and Sundog ski trails were widened to create a 5 km skate ski loop. East Telephone Loop was repaired and upgraded for the first 5 km to enable it to serve as a sustainable multi-use trail for skiing, mountain biking, hiking and equestrians, all the way to the

Long Distance Trail junction.

Four kilometers of new ski trail were constructed. The longest addition being Mountain View Trail, which extends west from West Crystal Line to connect onto Mountain Road, near the Tom Snow Trail. Several easy ski loops were created on East and West Crystal Line and a couple of short novice loops were created near the parking lot. There are 50 km of ski trails and more than half is new or rebuilt.

All of the trail signage was updated, with the design, production

and installation of nearly 200 new map signs, directional and educational signage. Over 1500 blaze markers have been installed along the trails and there is signage at every intersection, so navigation of the 108km trail system is easy. Nearly 5,000 hours of volunteer work was provided in 2014, while \$260,000 was raised and spent on the West Bragg Creek trails. The GBCTA Annual General Meeting is scheduled for the evening of June 10th from 7:00 to 9:00 pm at the Bragg Creek Community Hall. Join us for wine and cheese and to discuss trail activity in our community. We hope to see you there.

Go to our website at braggcreektrails.org for more information. Thank you to all the volunteers and the Bragg Creek Community; your ongoing support and enthusiasm are wonderful. Happy trails!



Workers haul bridge building materials along the East Telephone trail.

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WRITING AND EDITING

Linda Strong-Watson
Shannon Maliteare
Barbara Johnston
Jenn Laing
Megan Dunn
Pierre-Hugues Gagnon
Miranda Cooper
Geoff Ellwand
Glenbow Ranch Park Foundation
Sheila Thompson
Chris Brookes
Andrea Collins
Robert Sadee

DESIGN AND PRODUCTION

Chelsea Huebert, Sproing Creative, www.sproing.ca

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We couldn't do it without you...

Many thanks to all our members and donors who have pledged their support to Alberta TrailNet Society. Not only is your support a big boost to TrailNet financially, but your ongoing support benefits all trail enthusiasts and will help us continue to build Alberta's provincial trail network, including the Trans Canada Trail.

MEMBERSHIP FORM

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