

## GETTING THERE

- From Calgary, head south on Hwy #22.
- Immediately after the road crosses the Oldman River, turn right onto the Forestry Trunk Road Highway 940 (Grid ref: 049198).
- After 20 km turn right (north) to cross Racehorse Creek (Grid ref: 873256).
- After 11 km, immediately after a bridge crossing the Oldman River, turn left (west) onto the Oldman River Road (Grid ref: 858362).
- Follow this road along the Oldman River for 22 km. Parking is available in a large clearing 2 km past the Soda Creek trail access.



PIKA

AWA FILES

See Topographic Maps 82 J2 and 82 G16.

## SAFETY

- This brochure provides only the most basic information.
- Plan your trip carefully. Check the weather forecast. Be aware of the time you have and your capabilities.
- Be prepared for adverse weather conditions.
- Be sure to take enough water. Drinking naturally occurring water is not recommended.
- Be aware of wild animals.
- Care should be taken when crossing rivers. Be prepared to abandon your crossing if conditions are not suitable.

### DISCLAIMER

Although every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information contained in this brochure, Alberta Wilderness Association accepts no responsibility for any loss caused as a result of the reading or use of this document. None of the information here constitutes professional advice, and the reader should recognize the need to seek specific advice from suitably qualified professionals.

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## ALBERTA WILDERNESS ASSOCIATION

*Defending Wild Alberta  
Through Awareness and Action*

The Alberta Wilderness Association (AWA) is the oldest wilderness conservation group in Alberta dedicated to the completion of a protected areas network and the conservation of wilderness throughout the province.

Founded in 1965 in rural southwest Alberta by backcountry enthusiasts, ranchers and outfitters, the AWA has grown into a provincial organization. With three decades of success, we are known for our tenacity, corporate memory and integrity.

We have a provincial office and resource centre in Calgary, and active members throughout Alberta. A great deal of our work is carried out by volunteers.

AWA is a non-profit, federally registered charitable society.

## HOW CAN I BECOME INVOLVED?

- Become a member of AWA.
  - Join the wilderness news listserve.
  - Join WIN, the Wilderness Network to help protect wilderness.
- Volunteer:**
- AWA has stewardship responsibility for a number of wilderness areas. Volunteers are needed to participate in field inspections and reporting.
  - Join our conservation outreach team and participate in events and displays.
  - Help out at our offices.

### ALBERTA WILDERNESS ASSOCIATION

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## Beehive Natural Area



D. LYNN

The Beehive Natural Area offers a stunning mix of cool dark subalpine forests and broad alpine meadows against a dramatic backdrop of rugged rocks and scree. Considered a living museum, the area boasts more than 2000 acres of old-growth forest, with 300-year old trees.



Alberta Wilderness Association

www.AlbertaWilderness.ca

C. BRUUN

**W**ILDERNESS IS . . . Wilderness exists where large areas are characterized by the dominance of natural processes, the presence of the full complement of plant and animal communities characteristic of the region, and the absence of human constraints on nature.  
*Alberta Wilderness Association*

**A**LBERTA'S NATURAL REGIONS  
 Alberta has 6 Natural Regions which are divided into 20 subregions.



*"A visit to wilderness is as much a state of mind as it is a journey. Your personal wilderness ethic and knowing how to touch the land as lightly as possible is just as important as having the right maps and rain gear."  
 Montana Wilderness Association, 2002*

**A**LBERTA'S PROTECTED AREAS  
 Alberta's protected areas are designed to protect the beauty and diversity of our natural landscapes. A complete protected areas network should represent the full range of Alberta's natural diversity, including each region and subregion. Some Natural Regions (such as the Rocky Mountains) are currently well represented, but others (such as the Foothills), remain under-represented.

There are many protected area designations, offering different levels of protection. They range from highly protected wilderness landscapes to intensive-use recreation areas.



PILEATED WOODPECKER

**T**HE BEEHIVE  
 The Beehive is located in the Rocky Mountain Natural Region, the most rugged in the province. This region is distinguished from the adjacent Foothills region by sharp, high peaks.

Elevations rise from about 1000 m in major river valleys to 3700 m along the Continental Divide.

The Rocky Mountain region contains three sub-regions: Montane, Alpine and Subalpine. The Beehive includes parts of the Alpine and Subalpine subregions:

- The Alpine subregion includes vegetated areas and bare rock above the tree-line and species characteristic of areas that were left free of ice during the last glaciation.
- The Subalpine subregion is characterized by closed forests and lower elevations.



LYNX

**P**ROTECTION STATUS  
 The Beehive was protected as a Natural Area in April 1987. Natural Areas "protect special and sensitive natural landscapes of local and regional significance while providing opportunities for education, nature appreciation and low intensity recreation."

## OLD-GROWTH FORESTS

- The forests in the Beehive are up to 1000 years old, with individual trees as old as 300 years.
- An old-growth forest is more than just a group of old trees. It is a complex system of interconnected species, including plants, mammals, birds, fish, insects and micro-organisms.
- Old-growth forests are better defined by their features than by their age. These features include large trees, fallen trees, wood in various stages of decay and a high diversity of species.
- Old-growth forests are important for water conservation, carbon storage and fish and wildlife habitat.
- Some species that occur at the Beehive, such as pileated woodpecker and northern flying squirrel, depend on old-growth forest for their primary habitat.

## WATERSHEDS

- The Oldman River forms part of the South Saskatchewan River catchment. Its waters flow across southern Alberta and into Saskatchewan and Manitoba.
- Forests in the mountains and foothills play a crucial role in maintaining clean and abundant water supplies.
- Threats to watersheds include forest fragmentation and road construction caused by industrial development, uncontrolled off-highway vehicle (OHV) use and climate change.
- Although the forests in the Beehive Natural Area are relatively well protected, forestry operations in the surrounding area have been extensive.



WHITE AVENS

R. RASMUSSEN



FERN

R. RASMUSSEN



YELLOW COLUMBINE

R. RASMUSSEN



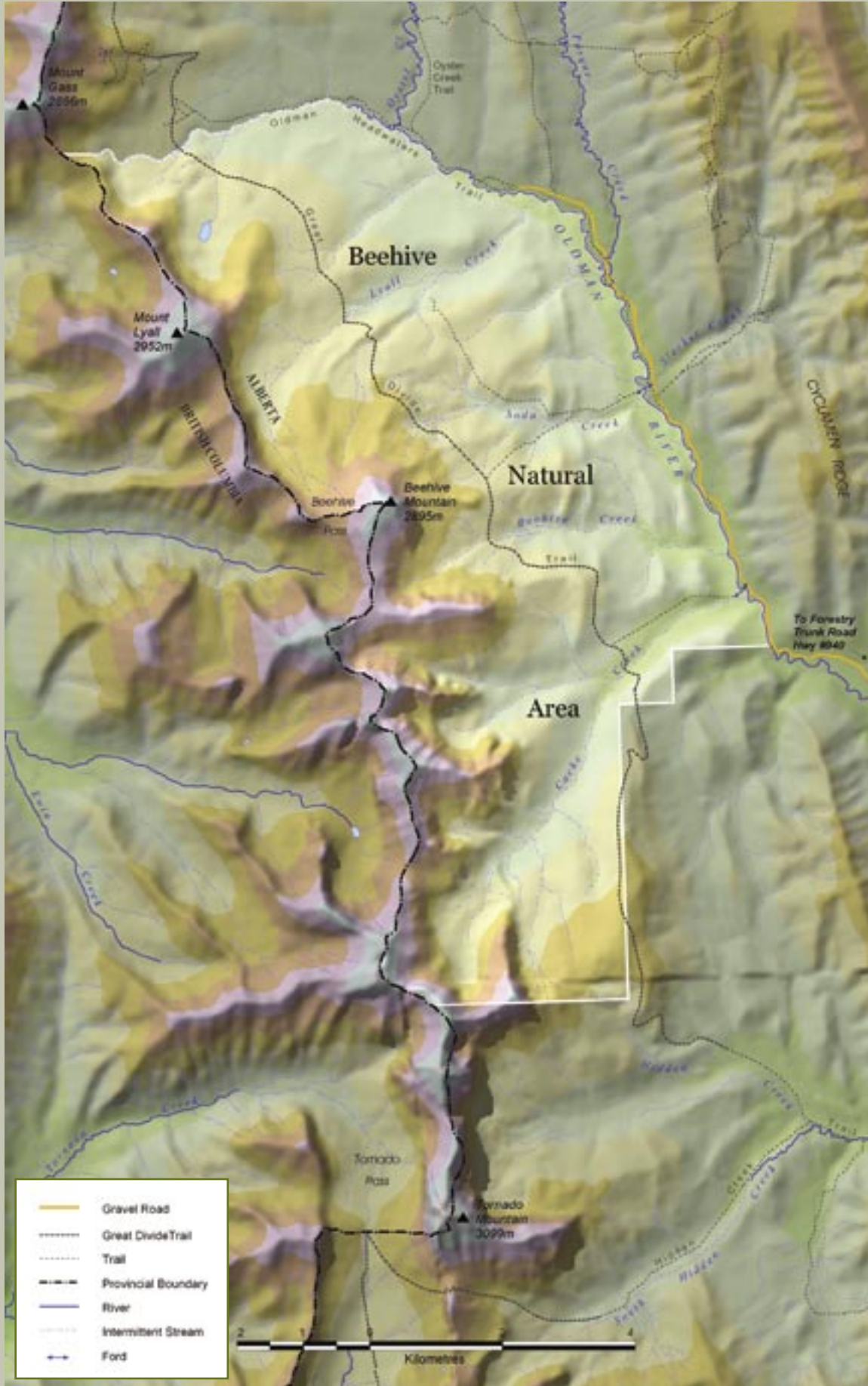
GOLDEN EAGLE

C. WERSHLER



RIVER BEAUTY

R. RASMUSSEN



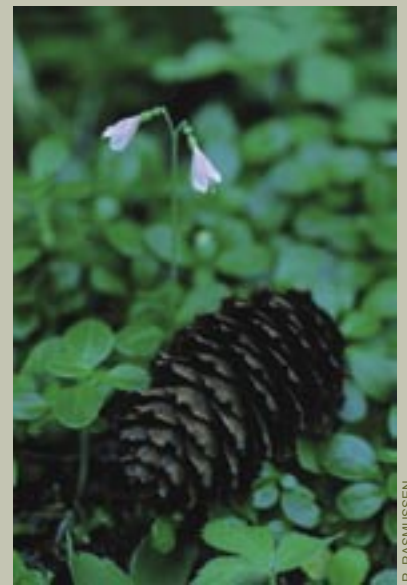
CINQUEFOIL

R. RASMUSSEN



BEEHIVE

D. LYNX



TWINFLOWER

R. RASMUSSEN



CLARK'S NUTCRACKER

C. WALLIS



HAREBELL

R. RASMUSSEN

## WILDLIFE

- The Beehive contains important habitat for grizzly and black bear, bighorn sheep, mountain goat and one of Alberta's largest elk herds.
- The Oldman River and its tributaries are among Alberta's top trout fisheries.
- The Beehive is home to a number of rare and sensitive species:

Grizzly bear	May be at risk	Pileated woodpecker	Sensitive
Canada lynx	Sensitive	Yellow angelica	Rare
Peregrine falcon	At risk	Lance-leaved grape fern	Rare
Golden eagle	Sensitive	Rocky Mountain willowherb	Rare
Common nighthawk	Sensitive	Blunt-fruited sweet cicely	Rare

## THE GREAT DIVIDE TRAIL

- The Great Divide Trail is an informal 1200 km hiking trail, running from Waterton National Park on the Canadian/U.S. border to Kakwa Lake, north of Mount Robson.
- It runs through the Beehive at treeline, and crosses the Oldman River at the northern boundary of the Natural Area.
- The Trail consists of an assortment of tracks, cut lines and roads.