



WILD LANDS ADVOCATE

THE ALBERTA WILDERNESS ASSOCIATION JOURNAL



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A LEGACY FOR WILD ALBERTA

Dear Members and Supporters:

A few weeks ago, when I was hiking in the canyons of southern Utah, I was amazed by the strength and natural beauty of the cottonwood trees struggling for survival on the sand-filled plains. I have shared these trees with many species, seeking the shade they provide on hot days on walks along the Oldman and Milk Rivers.

Such trees are an important symbol of the timeless forces of our wild landscapes. They remind us of our connection to the earth and of our wildness within. They represent all the wild things that need protection, now and in the future.

Just as these cottonwoods are an integral part of the ecosystem, a permanent monetary fund for Alberta's wilderness is an integral part of wilderness for tomorrow. Carefully nurtured a fund will grow strong over the generations to come. Years from today, that fund will continue to provide for the care and protection of Alberta's natural landscapes.

AWA's Alberta Wilderness and Wildlife Trust Endowment is designed to do just that.

The Trust began in 1986 as a memorial fund, established as a tribute to biologist Orval Pall. Throughout the years, families seeking to remember their own loved ones found solace and strength in devoting resources to the memorial fund, which was dedicated to support the protection of wilderness in Alberta.

On the 15th anniversary of the fund, AWA established the Trust as an endowment fund with the Calgary Foundation, to support the long-term sustainability of the Association. The Trust supports wilderness programs and research that contribute to the protection, understanding and appreciation of wilderness, wild waters and wildlife.

Each year in November, AWA hosts the Alberta Wilderness and Wildlife Trust Annual Lecture, given by a renowned guest speaker. At this time we recognize outstanding achievement in conservation by individuals with the Alberta Wilderness Defenders Awards.

This year AWA is celebrating its 40th year. With the 100th celebration of Alberta's provincial status, we are challenging members, donors, individuals, schools and corporations to help celebrate our wilderness with a gift to our endowment fund. Our goal is to raise \$100,000.

Please take time to reflect on our wilderness legacy and help us celebrate our heritage and the vision of wild Alberta. Every gift makes a difference. If you would like to know more, please call me or visit our website.

As I write to you, I have just learned that Andy Russell, one of AWA's founding fathers, has passed away. Andy had a deep and enduring passion for our wilderness. Because of the vision and foresight of Andy and others like him, of all those who came before, of those who are still here and of those who will come after us—we will be a timeless force for wild Alberta.

Sincerely,

Christyann Olson, Executive Director

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WILD BISON RECOVERY JEOPARDIZED BY COMMERCIAL INTERESTS

By Dr. Shirley Bray

When Alliance for Public Wildlife president, Darrel Rowledge, was unceremoniously dis-invited from a recent bison workshop, it had the unintended effect of opening up to public scrutiny a subject the government has been keeping pretty quiet—commercial bison grazing on public land. And that inevitably opens a window on the conflict between those who want commercial bison for profit and those who want wild bison for conservation.

Who doesn't want to see magnificent herds of bison roaming freely across a rich and diverse resurrection of the North American grassland "Serengeti" that greeted explorers two centuries ago? The question is which bison? How free? And who makes the decisions?

While various agencies and conservation groups are working on an international project to bring wild bison back to the Northern High Plains, Alberta bison producers are getting ready to graze their commercial bison on public land as well. And while both sides make the claim that this is essential for restoring our native grasslands, bison producers are turning commercial bison into far different creatures than their wild ancestors, hampering recovery plans for wild bison, and manipulating multi-stakeholder processes to get their way.

Multi-Stakeholder Mayhem

When Larry Simpson of the Nature Conservancy of Canada asked Rowledge if he would sit as an advocate for wildlife and wild lands at an April 27 workshop in Edmonton to discuss fencing for commercial bison grazing on public lands, Rowledge agreed. After two interviews, he received a formal invitation by email from the government. The interviewers had described the workshop as balanced and collaborative, with decisions drawn from a "consensus of

interests."

The decision to graze commercial bison on public lands under grazing disposition had already been made by a multi-stakeholder committee in 2001. It was enshrined in the Public Lands Act in 2003 (see *WLA* April 2003). The Bison Confinement/Wildlife Permeability Workshop was convened to determine how to fence these public lands to keep the privately owned bison from escaping but allow wildlife to pass through.

every wildlife scientist on the planet." He condemned the attempt to impose "consensus by exclusion."

The Alberta Fish and Game Association advocates against game farming. In 2001 they recommended against bison grazing on public land because fences would exclude wildlife and the public, fail to contain bison completely, and escaped domestic bison would cause serious problems. Yet they were not excluded from the workshop.



C. Wershler

Plains bison - in North America bison are also called buffalo, even though they are not true buffalo

Two days later, Dr. Cormack Gates, a recognized expert in bison ecology and management at the University of Calgary, and a member of various national and international bison committees, phoned Rowledge and told him that the bison producers didn't want him to attend the workshop. If Rowledge wasn't willing to back out, the workshop would be cancelled. Gates said the producers had given no specific reasons for disqualifying Rowledge, they just complained that he was a well-known opponent of the commercialization of wildlife.

"That complaint," remarked Rowledge, "would disqualify virtually

Tom Olson, a lawyer, owner of several bison ranches in southern Alberta, and president of the Alberta Bison Association is being taken to court by the Nature Conservancy for violating a conservation easement on a property he purchased from them and adjacent public leased land. He erected wildlife impermeable fencing and refuses to take it down. He was not excluded from the workshop either.

Rowledge refused to withdraw from the workshop. He had consulted several scientists regarding the issue of fencing: Dr. Vince Crichton, Manitoba government Senior Scientist of Wildlife and Ecosystem Protection; Dr. Val

Geist, internationally known wildlife scientist; Dr. Bill Samuel, Associate Dean at the University of Alberta; Dr. Steve Torbit of the National Wildlife Federation; and Dr. Paul Paquet, a Saskatchewan-based ecologist.

While these scientists supported improving wildlife permeable fencing design in general and provided Rowledge with good background information for the workshop, they expressed serious reservations about the wisdom of allowing or encouraging commercial bison on public land. They also told Rowledge he must attend the workshop.

Then John Laarhuis, from Sustainable Resource Development's (SRD) Range Management Branch, threatened to dis-invite Rowledge if he refused to commit his comments exclusively to the narrow issue of

public lands grazing dispositions. Furthermore, support for such a policy must not be construed from stakeholder participation to achieve or endorse an improved fencing design.

Laarhuis was also unhappy that Gates had made Rowledge aware of the bison producers' prejudice, which he had attempted to deny. Then he claimed that their concerns had been met and the dis-invitation had only to do with Rowledge's disagreement with the policy of commercial bison on public land.

Keith Lyseng, SRD's executive director of range management, sent Rowledge an email stating he was retracting his invitation "as bison grazing on public land is not the workshop topic."

Gates says that workshop organizers were looking for

full disclosure. Instead, in Alberta stakeholders are encouraged to come to the table with their wish lists and provide anecdotes instead of science.

The government told Rowledge that they had done no comprehensive environmental or economic analyses to determine whether bison grazing on public land will offer any net benefit. The fencing issue seems to be faring somewhat better, but it's less political.

"If you don't do rational analyses," says Rowledge, "don't be surprised if you end up with irrational public policy."

AWA past-president, Cliff Wallis, says the government needs to do broad public consultation before making a significant shift in public policy. Wildlife scientist Brian Horejsi believes that every significant issue should go to public hearings, so that everyone has a chance to express their views. The current process is corrupt, undemocratic and unfair, he says.

"You're not doing anyone favours when you take part in these kinds of processes because they're designed specifically to defeat the public interest."

Bison Grazing on Public Land

Is allowing commercial bison to graze on public land a good idea?

The bison producers think so. Olson says grazing commercial bison on public land is their way of being environmentally responsible because it will help restore the natural grasslands (*Calgary Herald*, May 29/05).

The government thinks so. They say bison grazing on public land is based on their integrated resource management philosophy. SRD spokesperson Dave Ealey said the debate on this issue is over and the regulations are being fine-tuned to make sure best practices, and public safety (which generally means denying public access) and environmental concerns are in place (*Calgary Herald*, May 8/05). They plan to "limit the consequences and effectively mitigate the risks of disease transmission from wild to domestic bison" by not allowing bison grazing in northern Alberta, but they are leaving the southern grasslands wide open.

But many conservationists and wildlife scientists don't think it's a



Native grassland in southern Alberta

fences. Rowledge made it clear that denying participants the ability to establish accurate and validating context, in any process, was untenable, unscientific and undemocratic. He offered to restrict the bulk of his comments in the workshop to the fencing issue, if he could include a simple caveat for the public record.

The caveat stated that although there may be merit in improving fencing guidelines to allow wildlife permeability, wildlife scientists, resource economists, wildlife and conservation organizations and the general public maintained serious reservations about the wisdom of allowing commercial bison on

"collaborators," and Rowledge apparently didn't fit their definition. But Rowledge points out that all those who wanted him to withdraw were attempting to skew the "collaborative process."

John Ralston Saul has pointed out that multi-stakeholder processes are by nature exclusionary. They are certainly political. Yet they have become a popular method governments use to increase public input into their decision-making processes.

The stakeholder process, says Rowledge, only works if it's a truly balanced and legitimate public process, with everyone contributing rational analyses and committing to

good idea. “It’s a harebrained idea that’s being put forward by people who haven’t done their homework,” says Geist decisively (*Calgary Herald*, May 8/05). Rowledge says the bison producers are trying to disguise their profit-based agenda by using all the conservation-based arguments for wild bison restoration. None of them can reconcile the disconnect between commercialized bison and the wild genome, he says.

Bison are considered superior to cattle in self-sufficiency. They digest forage more efficiently, gain weight on lower quality feed, and have a strong immune system. Their pelvis is better designed for walking than cattle, so they will graze further from water sources, resulting in less destruction of riparian areas. They eat primarily grasses, giving forbs more opportunity to survive, and therefore contributing to greater biodiversity.



C. Olson

But there are several problems with grazing commercial bison on public land. Commercial bison must be contained by fencing in relatively small pastures, which doesn’t mimic the natural grazing pattern of free-ranging bison, and may not mesh with wildlife users of the same land and vegetation.

It is uncertain how genetic changes by domestication or hybridization with cattle will affect grazing behaviour. Wallis says it just muddies the water to add another user with so many unknowns. He thinks it’s unlikely bison grazing will be much of an improvement over cattle grazing if better management practices are not followed.

If these bison are placed on public lands, he asks, what lands will be available for wild bison

recovery? Although bison-proof, wildlife permeable fences are in the works, many believe domestic bison will inevitably escape and likely contaminate wild bison populations.

“If bison in adjoining pastures make up their minds that they want in with the other herd, practically no fence will keep them apart,” writes USDA’s Kristin Miller (*Center for Grassland Studies Newsletter*, Winter 2003).

Making Bessies Out of Bison

There are other ways to destroy a species besides simple slaughter. Threats to bison as a wild species, wrote Delaney Boyd in her 2003 University of Calgary master’s thesis on bison conservation, include: loss of habitat due to agricultural and other land development, reduction of genetic diversity, hybridization, domestication, disease, inconsistent legislation and policies.

Privatization, commercialization, and domestication of bison have a long history, but the concerns are the same as for other game-farmed species—threats of disease, parasites, habitat fragmentation, and genetic pollution.

The push to make wildlife part of the agricultural enterprise, which requires the

private ownership and a market in dead wildlife, is in direct opposition to the principles of wildlife conservation, writes Geist in his book, *Buffalo Nation*. “A wildlife farming industry bodes no good for native wildlife populations and poses a perpetual risk to their survival.”

Boyd pointed out that experience with animals like cattle shows that recovery of original genetic diversity is virtually impossible once domestic breeds are highly selected for specific traits and wild stocks are extinct. She suggested it would be of advantage to commercial producers to help maintain wild bison herds so that the genome will be available for their future use.

“Bison ranching is not conservation,” wrote Geist; “it is domestication, the deliberate or

inadvertent alteration of bison to make them tractable and a source of products desired by their owner or the marketplace.”

The issue of large numbers of bison in private ownership seems to stymie people trying to restore wild, genetically pure bison. There seems to be little hope in getting rid of an industry so favoured by the government. Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada supports bison ranching as an important diversification of the livestock industry. It claims the bison industry not only contributes to genetic health but also sustainable land management with some cultivated land converted back to forage and the preservation of native pasture lands.

But Geist is unequivocal. “If bison are to survive in the future, conservation must focus on the long-term maintenance of public bison on public land by public institutions and find a way to deal with agricultural bureaucracies and their call for the destruction of wildlife under the banner of ‘progress.’”

“Conservation aims both to prevent species extinction and retain adaptive variation within a species,” he said. Diversity requires normal ecological conditions, conditions that continually challenge the species, such as native climates and vegetation, predators, and freedom. In captivity, selection favours individuals that adapt to captivity.

“Large herds on large tracts of land and little hindered by fences are more likely to remain close to the native genotype of bison, while small herds closely managed and in contact with humans are likely to be more altered by domestication and inbreeding.”

Bison, he noted, have evolved to be long-distance runners, known for their speed and endurance, to escape predators. A bison’s hump, for example, allows it to extend its stride with the front legs, and the longer the stride, the faster the bison.

“Commercialization is the single greatest threat to the genome,” says Rowledge. With ease of handling and efficient, marketable meat production as goals, bison producers are intent on turning the majestic bison into humpless, short-legged, fat-assed, docile

non-jumpers. Selection for hunting trophies will also occur.

In *Buffalo Nation*, Geist notes that bison were the only large grazing herbivores left after the extinctions at the end of the Ice Age. Populations were kept in check by predation by native North Americans until the 1600s. The coming of the Europeans brought diseases which wiped out many of the native peoples. This allowed many wildlife populations to expand

commercialization (hunting safaris, hunting competitions, and markets for bison products, particularly tongues and hides), and the sheer entertainment of killing. Even after the bison had disappeared, there was a market for bones left scattered on the prairie, until they too disappeared after a decade.

“These great, noble North Americans,” wrote MacEwan, “which had withstood 10,000 years of droughts, floods, natural enemies,

of beef production. The experiment at Manyberries ended in 1964, with the cattalo shipped off to market, “ending very much like other buffalo chapters, in extermination, one way or another,” remarked MacEwan.

Prior to 1951 there were no privately owned herds of bison in Alberta because it was contrary to the Game Act. But that year, Fred C. Burton bought surplus animals from the Manyberries Range Experiment



Wild bison roam freely in Theodore Roosevelt National Park, North Dakota

their numbers and territories. Bison expanded east of the Mississippi and the great herds noted by explorers of the 1800s were born.

In his book, *Buffalo: Sacred and Sacrificed*, Grant MacEwan tells of an Assiniboine Elder who said that these newcomers “would show no conscience in destroying buffalo, birds, fish, soil fertility, fur-bearing animals and even good scenery if there was money to be had.”

It took less than 20 years in the 1800s to reduce the massive bison herds to near extinction by mass slaughter, largely due to politics (specifically the goal of eliminating the resistance of native Americans by eliminating their food supply),

famine, disease, extremes of winter cold and summer heat, blizzards, fires and a lot more,” could not withstand the greed, guns, politics or economics of the new westerners.

Yet hunting did not end. Although banned in 1883, it was revived in the Northwest Territories in 1959 until an outbreak of anthrax in 1962. But hunting returned on game farms, licences for which were initially handed out in the early 1980s. Alberta allows penned hunting of commercial bison.

In Canada, initial attempts to domesticate bison and breed them with cattle in the early 1800s met with little success. In 1916, cattlemen began a “cattalo” project, crossing cattle with bison, hoping to increase the efficiency

Station that had been shipped to auction to be sold for meat, and brought them back to his ranch in southwestern Alberta. A subsequent court challenge ruled in favour of Burton, who was allowed to keep the private stock. From then on private herds proliferated and a market in bison products grew.

In 1967, in celebration of Canada’s centenary, the government proposed testing a small herd of bison for suitability on a ranch. They noted that the idea of bison ranching had been around for years but had met stiff resistance until now, notably in Alberta, which was opposed to wild species in captivity at the time. The Alberta Game Act designated bison as big game animals that could only be kept legally

in captivity in licensed game farms, which required 160 acres of land and a suitable environment.

When the Alberta government legalized game farming in the late 1980s, it promised that game farms would not be allowed to expand onto public land. Only livestock, defined as cattle, horses and sheep, were allowed on grazing dispositions. From the 1990s to the present the government authorized some 50 pilot projects for bison grazing on public lands, even though there were no regulations in place; that number was halved with the downturn in the market due to mad cow disease. Plains bison are excluded as wildlife from current legislation, and individuals from private herds are no longer considered wild.

The Agricultural Lease Review of 1998 pointed out that grazing dispositions with bison often resulted in exclusion of multiple uses, notably public access, and the fencing required to contain bison restricted wildlife movement.

This led to the formation of a 2001 multi-stakeholder committee to review bison grazing on public land that included the Alberta Bison Association, Alberta Beef Producers, Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties, Peace Country Bison Association, Alberta Grazing Leaseholders Association, Alberta Chapter of the Wildlife Society, Federation of Alberta Naturalists, and Alberta Fish and Game Association, with support from government staff and the University of Calgary.

Not everyone was happy with the recommendations, but the main goal of getting legislation allowing grazing of bison on public land was achieved in 2003.

Saving Wild Bison

Most bison today live in managed herds. But in May 2004, 50 bison from Elk Island National Park, deemed to be disease-free and genetically pure, were let loose in the 5,300 hectare Old Man on His Back Prairie and Heritage Conservation Area, jointly owned by the Nature Conservancy and the Saskatchewan Government. It was considered an historic occasion to see these bison freely roaming native prairie again. Well, almost freely, it

took three years to fence the land.

North America's Northern High Plains is one of the most threatened ecosystems in the world. The World Wildlife Fund, the Northern Plains Conservation Network, and other groups are working to restore native prairie ecosystems and bison restoration is an important part of these initiatives.

"We need to start seeing bison as wildlife again," says Gates.

According to Boyd, of the approximately half a million bison in North America, at least 95% are under commercial production. There are about 230,000 commercial bison in Canada and 1900 producers. Of more than 19,000 plains bison in conservation herds (public herds and private herds managed for conservation purposes), less than half are free-ranging. There are only 1300 free-ranging, disease-free bison within their original range. Of these, only about half are not subject to regular handling.

In 2004 COSEWIC listed the plains bison as threatened. However, in May 2005 federal environment minister, Stephane Dion, failed to add plains bison to the list of species protected under the Species at Risk Act (SARA).

"Canada's refusal to list plains bison under SARA limits the ability to use this keystone species in recovery efforts and will also hamper recovery plans for several other species at risk," says Wallis. "The Minister should have accepted COSEWIC's recommendation."

The minister's primary reason was the difficulty of distinguishing domestic from wild bison. Wallis says that it is important to distinguish, not domestic from wild bison, but genetically pure from hybrid bison, which is not a problem with current testing methods.

The minister's second reason was the potential economic implications for the Canadian bison industry.

"This is the sort of political interference in listing species at risk

that AWA was most concerned with when we commented on drafts of SARA," says Wallis. "The Minister has chosen to listen to the concerns of a handful of bison producers over the thousands of Canadians who want to see wild bison back in the prairies." The decision, says Wallis, panders to the decades of unsustainable agricultural land use in Canada's threatened grassland region.



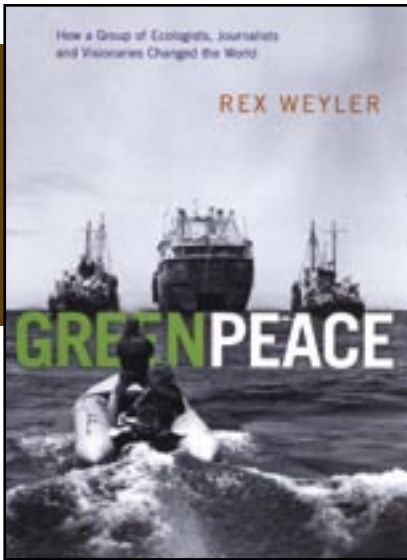
C. Olson

Commercial interests have to stand out of the way and allow space to put wild bison back onto public lands, says Wallis. "We could probably bring the bison producers on side, but I think that their judgment is clouded, and the way they've attacked this tells me that they're not there in good will. If you read their vision statement, not one of their goals applies to natural ecosystems and getting wild bison back in there. In fact, they don't even address the genetic issue."

However, Wallis is pleased the minister has not closed the door on the listing, just putting it on hold and studying it further, and that he's continuing to work with the public on wild bison recovery plans. "We are committed to working with the minister to find a path forward on this issue" and to securing a listing under SARA for plains bison, he says.

"The buffalo is the true American hero, a symbol of freedom and strength," says Dan Thiel, owner of the Terry Ranch in Colorado and Wyoming. "People look at the buffalo as a survivor."

Hopefully, the main survivor in the future is the wild bison and not domestic Bessie.



GREENPEACE COFOUNDER LOOKS BACK ON ORGANIZATION'S EARLY YEARS, AHEAD TO FUTURE OF CONSERVATION

By John Geary

It has been a long journey for Rex Weyler since taking his first steps down the road that resulted in the formation of one of the world's most outspoken, most dramatic and arguably most successful environmental groups of our time. Although he still travels on that path, the scenery has certainly changed during the course of his years upon it.

In the book *Greenpeace*, released in the fall of 2004, the Vancouver writer and environmentalist has set down a sort of road map detailing the start of the journey, from the first tentative steps, through the organization's growth, up to the point where the organization became truly international, in 1979.

As a young adult, Weyler certainly did not envision himself becoming a champion for the environment. He actually trained as an engineer, at Occidental College in Los Angeles, and in 1967, began working as an apprentice engineer for Lockheed. He did not stay there long though, leaving within a year to pursue a career as a journalist.

Two years later, he published his first book, and three years after that, he moved to North Vancouver, where he began working at the *North Shore News*. The following year, 1973, he sailed on the first Greenpeace campaign, and stayed with the organization through 1979, when it evolved into Greenpeace International.

Weyler says one of the biggest and most important events that took place globally in the environmental movement at the time Greenpeace came along was a shift, a movement from

conservation of natural resources for our own use to that of ecology, which seeks to preserve for the sake of that being preserved.

"Ecology begs respect for the thing you're studying," he says. "When we started Greenpeace, we were saving the whales for the whales' sake, not our sake. However, we used the whale campaign to speak to a bigger issue."

They did that by taking action, and it could be argued that Greenpeace did more to bring about that shift than anyone else. While people like Rachel Carson and Barry Commoner had previously expressed concern about environmental issues, Greenpeace took it to the next level.



Rex Weyler

"When we confronted Russian whalers on the high seas in 1975 and brought film and pictures back in, we popularized ecology," he says. "It embedded environmentalism into the global consciousness. Greenpeace and other groups built on that."

Weyler is quick to point out Greenpeace was not solely responsible for the rapid emergence of a global environmental consciousness.

"The Friends of the Earth already existed, there was the Environmental Defense Fund in Washington, D.C., there were a lot of other people working on this kind of stuff. But the Greenpeace action in 1975 put ecology

on the public map."

During the ensuing years, the organization recorded many victories. They count a whaling moratorium, a halt to French nuclear tests in the atmosphere, a European ban on dumping toxic waste into the ocean and drift net bans among their environmental accomplishments.

None of those victories came easily, however. Just like Mary and her little lamb, wherever Greenpeace went, a storm of controversy seemed sure to follow. That's because every issue the group faced, every ecological action they advocated for, involved people losing jobs at some level.

"If we protested a nuclear power plant, lobbied to shut it down, it involved a loss of some jobs," says Weyler. "Lobbying to shut down the seal hunt meant a loss of jobs. We realized there would always be this local pride, a local heritage that needed to be overcome."

That, says Weyler, is at the whole centre of the issue of ecology: we need to constantly evaluate the way we live, and if necessary, be prepared to change it.

"Just because something is traditional does not necessarily mean it's good. For example, slavery used to be a tradition in the southern U.S. and when it was discontinued there was an economic impact.

"It's not possible to change culture without impacting economy, jobs and local traditions. That means there is going to be opposition from the status quo that does not want change."

In the book, he writes of the way in which the ruling elite works to maintain the status quo. Bucking that would seem, at times, to be a lost cause. Weyler says there is hope – but we cannot be naïve about our expectations.

"We're not going to end fear and greed overnight," he says. "I think

human culture can be nudged and shifted and changed, but it's a long process. We have to be prepared for the long haul and be eternally vigilant.

"Citizens have to be prepared to always stand up, now and forever. Even in democracies like Canada and the U.S., we elect our government officials, but that doesn't guarantee they're going to act in our best interests—they'll look after their own interests, because power corrupts.

"We're not going to change that, but we have to find ever more vigilant ways of keeping greed in check."

That's one of the most important messages environmentalists need to heed, because if we are not vigilant, if we do not keep greed in check, we will violate the one rule that humankind's arrogance so easily forgets, the one rule that we break at our own peril, one that could, in the long run, produce results fatal to our own species.

"We have to live within the laws of ecology," says Weyler. "That is an extremely complex set of laws—climate change impacts water, and then

forests, while forestry impacts climate and water, and so on."

He says creating an awareness of that was really the organization's biggest victory.

"The most important achievement of Greenpeace was to popularize ecology, to bring it to the front brain consciousness of a large segment of our planet."

The next step involves embracing ecology on a deeper level. So far, we've been engaged in environmental nibbling, but we need to take bigger bites if we are to effect any kind of significant progress.

If we do not take that step, we will be, in essence, writing the final chapters in a different and very sobering journey: the last few miles of the human race.

What About Alberta?

Because Alberta is a resource-rich province, Rex Weyler says it is in a good position to make wise environmental decisions.

"They can't just pump out all the oil, cut down the forests as quickly as possible, or rip up the tar sands as fast as possible," he says. "As much as possible, the province needs to develop a long-term view for themselves and their resources.

"I'm not against resource harvesting—logging, petroleum exploration—I am against reckless harvesting, but unfortunately, most of the harvesting we do is reckless. These things can be done intelligently and responsibly, and it's not rocket science to come up with ways to do that."

Doing that means accepting a bit of short-term pain for long-term gain—and that's not something most politicians or corporations have ever seemed very keen to accept.



COUNTY ALLOWS WIND FARMS IN CYPRESS HILLS

By Shirley Bray

Cypress County is allowing wind turbines in the buffer area around Cypress Hills Provincial Park, known as the Fringe. On June 7, a month and a half after a public hearing on April 19, the County unanimously passed third reading of an amendment to its Municipal Development Plan and Land Use Bylaw which deals with Wind Energy Facilities (WEF) in the County.

In spite of allowing WEF in the Fringe, the Council has been responsive to opponents of such facilities in this buffer area. The Council has created two classes of WEF, one for outside the Fringe area and one for inside, each with its own development standards.

The Council plans to make all decisions about WEF within the Fringe. Although WEF proposals, inside or

outside the Fringe will be subject to a public hearing, there will be no appeals on decisions in the Fringe. Instead, the Council will hear evidence from both sides of the issue, and issue written reasons for their decision.

Interestingly, the amendment says that Council "will have due regard to the policies, guidelines and intent of the Cypress Fringe Area Structure Plan (see WLA, April 2005). WEF must be designed and located to minimize the impact on the environment and be consistent with the objectives" of the Fringe plan.

Recall that the vision for the Fringe is to protect, within 20 years, the majority of the fescue grasslands and the mixed-aspen montane outside the Park as unbroken ranchland for the long term. "This is the legacy of

visionary citizens," states the Fringe Plan.

Applicants with WEF proposals within the Fringe must submit an environmental review of the WEF, a digital terrain model that assesses the visual impact on the natural scenery, landscape character, and cultural landscape of the Fringe and adjacent area.

The amendment states "WEF should not be permitted in those portions of the fringe area that in the opinion of Council are prominent for their scenic character and natural values, but may be considered in less sensitive areas of the fringe area."

Public Hearing Points

The public hearing in April brought out a number of people on

all sides of the issue. At that time, the Council had worded a bylaw amendment that stated that WEF would not be allowed in the Fringe. Since this was unexpected, it created confusion as to how people should present their argument.

farms in the Fringe were Cliff Wallis and Cleve Wershler, environmental consultants who have both done many years of research in the Cypress Hills, Phil Horsch of the Grasslands Naturalists, Julie MacDougall from Cypress Hills Provincial Park, two

screams in the face of conventional wisdom; however, banning this type of development provides significant economic benefits to the County and its residents, which far outweigh those presented by the industrial developers of wind farms.”



Wind farm in southwest Saskatchewan

Clearly, those opposed to wind farms in the Fringe would have nothing to say, while proponents would have plenty. West WindEau owner, David Boileau, had already had hours of the Council’s time in making presentations regarding his proposal to build a wind farm in the Fringe. Reeve Jack Osadczuk told participants just to state their case and the Council would figure it out. However, everyone was restricted to a five-minute time limit, which was considered unusual.

Although the contracts that Boileau had made so far with four residents were confidential, it was known that signatories were required to come to the public hearing and speak in support of wind farms. A few other ranchers in the area seemed to speak generally against the Fringe Plan, believing it was an infringement on their right do with their land as they pleased, even though the Plan was developed with public input over several years.

Among those who made presentations that opposed wind

landowners Henry Binder and Paul Heune, and myself.

I spoke to the Council both as a representative of AWA and as a rural Albertan facing an invasion of coalbed methane development in Wheatland County, east of Calgary. I told the Council that they were lucky because they had a choice about allowing WEF in the Fringe, whereas landowners have no choice about having oil and gas wells on their land. I reminded them of the Pekisko ranchers who are fighting to retain the integrity of their grasslands in the face of potential drilling by Compton. I urged them to remember the legacy of those visionary citizens who created the Fringe plan.

Paul Heune, chose to live in Cypress County because of its “unspoiled vistas, wildlife, quiet, clean air,” escaping the noise, pollution and traffic of Calgary. His job allowed him to relocate to a more remote area. Among many other points, he proposed that Council ban WEFs throughout the entire county.

“I realize this is a huge step which

Heune pointed to the research of Dr. Thomas Power, of the University of Montana, and author of *Post-Cowboy Economics*. “As people such as myself decide that the quality of our lives is not decided by how much money we make but by the environment we live in, the communities we work in and the relationships we have with our neighbours who have values which are consistent with our own, we will see Cypress County grow.

“It will in fact become what it once was – an area where many quarters have a home on them where livestock is raised for personal consumption, or sold locally, and where the rural towns become vibrant communities providing goods and services to those in the outlying areas.”

Henry Binder discussed the myths of the benefits of wind farms, emphasizing that they were industrial developments, no matter how beautiful or green they were. He pointed out that those with wind turbines on their property would benefit from extra revenue, while their neighbours without

turbines might see their land devalued. Wind turbines, he said, should not be located around parks or in natural areas, but should be treated as any other industry and located where they least interfere with other land uses.

“Any land use change in the area,” he said, “should recognize the Hills as a powerful engine for future growth that will promote economic prosperity for the whole region. All we need is sound planning to retain the natural features which make our County a desirable place for people to live and work. Surprisingly, we are now thinking of marring this powerful natural and economic feature with wind turbines.”

The Fringe plan, he said, recognizes the value of the natural landscape in the area, and the County was fortunate to have such a study already completed. “If we have faith in [the Plan] and just carry on from there, by applying its spirit and intent we will be doing the right thing for the County.”

David Suzuki Wades In

Near the end of the hearing, Boileau made his presentation. He not only took up his allotted five minutes, he then proceeded to read an article by David Suzuki on “The Beauty of Wind Farms,” using it as an endorsement for his wind farm proposal.

In the article, Suzuki claims he would gladly share the beautiful view he has from his cabin on an island off the coast of British Columbia with a wind farm, and laments that he seems to be in the minority. He cites a number of groups and individuals who are complaining about the location of wind farms.

“In Alberta,” he wrote, “one group is opposing a planned wind farm near Cypress Hills Provincial Park, claiming it would destroy views of the park and disturb some of the last remaining native prairie in the province.”

A number of us wrote to Suzuki, explaining the issue of wind farms in the Cypress Hills in more detail. We were concerned about his emphasis on beauty, which we thought was a red herring. Debate on whether wind turbines are beautiful in the Cypress Hills was taking the focus off their real impact—industrialization of the landscape. None of us appreciated

being lumped in with hypocritical and counterproductive complainers. We were clear that we were not opposed to wind energy and that there were many other more appropriate places in the County for wind farms.

However, we knew that Suzuki’s intent was not to undermine our arguments. We agree with him that “wind farms should not be allowed to spring up just anywhere,” that environmental assessments for wind projects are essential, and that renewable energy sources are critically important.

“We are working towards the same goal,” he responded in a letter, “to protect the diversity of nature and improve the quality of life, now and for future generations.”

We were pleased to see a subsequent article by Suzuki in the *Lethbridge Herald*. In this article he focused clearly on the importance of siting wind farms properly “where they can have the greatest positive effect with the smallest environmental footprint. After all, the whole point of clean energy is to reduce our environmental burden, not make it worse.”

Now the managing editor for the *Medicine Hat News*, deciding that “wind turbines are ugly and inefficient,” is suggesting that a nuclear option should be investigated!

Niagara Chooses Protection

With Ontario establishing a priority on renewable energy resources, parts of the Niagara Escarpment, a World Biosphere Reserve, were pinpointed as favorable locations for wind farms. However, the Niagara Escarpment Plan “seeks to ensure that development is compatible with the physical, environmental and scenic resources of the Escarpment” (Policy Report, Oct. 2003).

Its purpose is the same as the *Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act* (NEPDA): “to provide for the maintenance of the Niagara Escarpment and land in its vicinity substantially as a continuous natural environment, and to ensure only such development occurs as is compatible with that natural environment.”

Two of the objectives are “to

maintain and enhance the open landscape character of the Niagara Escarpment in so far as possible by such means as compatible farming or forestry, and by preserving the natural scenery; to ensure that all new development is compatible with the purpose of the Plan.” These objectives are very similar to those of the Cypress Hills Fringe Area Structure Plan.

After public input, the Niagara Escarpment Commission (NEC) voted unanimously that “industrial-type wind power developments should not be permitted in the Niagara Escarpment Plan.” It also reserved the right to comment on any adjacent project. The NEC is amending the NEPDA so this recommendation will become law, not just policy. The NEC is highly respected worldwide, and this decision is an important planning precedent in Canada.

Dawn Nichols, a Director of Planning and Municipal Relations for a local Ontario resident’s group, Blue Highlands, wrote to AWA with this and other valuable information and to tell us about her own battle with Superior Wind Energy, Boileau’s former company. She was not impressed with Boileau’s lack of respect for the protected areas. Boileau had not only tried to open the Escarpment for wind development, but was also involved in a project off the coast of Lake Erie, between two important bird sanctuaries.



Raven © Joan Sherma



SOMETHING HAS TO CHANGE IN THE GHOST WAIPAROUS

By Nigel Douglas, AWA Conservation Specialist

If there is one thing that the diverse groups involved in the Ghost Waiparous Access Management Plan (GWAMP) process agree with, it is that something has to change. This stunning 1500km² wilderness area off the eastern boundary of Banff National Park, has been suffering enormous problems in recent years with unregulated motorized access. AWA is determined that maintenance and restoration of wilderness and water quality will be two of the guiding principles of this process.

Although only 170km of designated trails run through the area, around 1600km of trails and seismic lines are being used on a regular basis. Previous management of the area seemed to involve looking the other way and hoping that the problem would go away. This has clearly not worked.

After a year long hiatus, nominally due to last year's provincial election, the GWAMP process, which began in December 2002, rumbled back into life in April 2005, with the first of a series of four invited stakeholder meetings to debate the draft plan. The GWAMP process is being run by Alberta Sustainable Resource Development (SRD), and stakeholder's groups represented at the meetings include watershed groups, motorized recreationists, ranchers, outfitters and environmental groups.

Heinz Unger, AWA Director and Chair of the Ghost Watershed Alliance Society (GWAS) has mixed feelings about the invited stakeholder approach. "This is an imperfect way of getting public input," he says. "It has led to horse-trading over the designs of trails and has become subject to lobbying from different pressure groups."

The first two of the four proposed stakeholder meetings have been held in a relatively civil atmosphere. Most organizations seem to agree that something has to be done, that the

status quo is unacceptable. Members of the different sides often comment that it is surprising how much many of the different groups have in common.

SRD has stressed throughout the process that groups who enter the process with the attitude, "It's my way or the highway," will not gain anything. The groups have been told that SRD has the responsibility to represent many different interests, including wildlife and water quality protection, and that any decisions have to make a balance. They also have to take into account the views expressed during the public input process, including a random telephone survey carried out in 2003.

Draft Map Unveiled

At the first of this new series of meetings, a draft map was unveiled, showing an extensive network of proposed trails. The map certainly restricts the current "anything goes" status of trails, but it is debatable whether it goes far enough to achieve the stated aims of the process:

1. to ensure public safety;
2. to ensure sustainability of natural resources;
3. to minimize conflicts between recreational OHV users and other users; and
4. to provide a range of opportunities for summer and winter recreational OHV use.

Unger is concerned that the plans are simply making bad trails official. "Many of the trails are subject to braiding because of heavy use. We shouldn't be designating trails which are prone to erosion: we should be using trails which are safe and good for the environment." He pauses, then adds, "Or at least not bad for the environment."

Although the tone of the meetings has been civil, this is not to say that everybody is happy with the proposals in the draft Management Plan. The messages that appear in the media and on websites once the stakeholder meetings are over don't tell quite the



A. Ford

Off highway vehicles in the Ghost-Waiparous area, 2004

same cooperative story.

"The proposed plan has slashed the trails by astronomical proportions," states the website for the Alberta United Recreationist Society (AURS). People are encouraged to sign on to a letter to SRD to "demand that you rescind this plan as it is currently proposed and come up with a solution that enables full use of all of the trails for all of the users!"

AWA Concerns

AWA and other groups also have many concerns about the draft plan. It is encouraging that the plan emphasizes the values identified in the 1988 Ghost River Subregional Integrated Resource Plan (IRP), which states "the overriding principle for all zones is to protect the valuable water resources of the eastern slopes and to provide for public land and resource utilization in a manner consistent with principles of conservation and environmental protection."

Pretty unequivocal stuff! The 1988

IRP designated certain areas as Prime Protection Zone, specifically stating that this zone was for non-motorized use only. AWA is pleased that this definition is re-emphasized in the plan. We can only assume that proposed trails which pass through the Prime Protection Zone are an error which will be rectified as soon as possible.

Similarly, there is also considerable concern about dead-end 4x4 trails which lead up to the very boundaries of the adjacent Don Getty Wildland and then abruptly stop. Are we seriously expected to believe that the 4x4 users are going to drive up to the edge of the protected area and then obediently stop, turn around and go back again?

Groups such as AURS are pushing very strongly for protected areas such as the Don Getty Wildland to be opened up to allow motorized access, and there is a danger that the GWAMP process will be used as a lever to further this aim. This is why AWA argued so strongly in 2003 against motorized access in the protected areas of the Whaleback. Motorized access is not appropriate in protected areas, period.

Unger also points out that there

has been little attempt to synchronize the GWAMP process with industrial uses of the area, particularly the Draft Forest Management Plan for Spray Lakes Sawmills.

“How can you try to talk multiple use if plans for the two highest impact uses do not coordinate?” he asks. “They are even under the supervision of the same ministry [SRD].”



V. Pharris

Old truck trail now thoroughly rutted by ATV traffic, 2004

Show Me the Money

There is one area where most of the stakeholders are in agreement. Regardless of what the draft plan says, and whatever trails a draft map shows, without any serious commitment to increased resources to manage the area, nothing is going to change.

Current levels of funding and enforcement led to current levels of damage: the status quo is not an option.

The stakeholder process is due to finish with the fourth and final meeting on September 24. The motorized recreation groups are stating their cases loud and clear, and it is important that people concerned about other values of the area also have a say.

Send your comments to:

- Your MLA (contact information for all MLA's can be found by calling the government toll-free number 310-0000),
- The Hon. David Coumts, Minister of Sustainable Resource Development #420 Legislature Building, 10800 - 97 Avenue, Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6
Email: Livingstone.Macleod@assembly.ab.ca



COAL MINING ON CAW RIDGE: AN UNWANTED LEGACY

By Lara Smandych, AWA Conservation Biologist

We are standing with Gene Wusaty and his colleagues on the lip of one of the great black coal pits on the top of Caw Ridge on a cold April day. It is one of several pits that pockmark the delicate alpine meadows, still snow-covered. Large numbers of bighorn sheep were killed in this very area by hunters. The sheep had grown accustomed to humans when the McIntyre and Smoky River Coal mines were operational and never thought of running away. It was one of the many lessons learned in the unexpected and unwelcome legacy of surface coal mining in our wild places.

Wusaty is the vice president of operations for the Grande Cache Coal Corporation (GCC), the mining

company currently operating on Caw Ridge, 20km from the town of Grande Cache. He is taking Christyann Olson, AWA's Executive Director, and me on a tour of their current operations in the No.12 Mine South B2 extension pit.

We survey the scarred valley. There is a mountain created by the spoils dumped by the continuous exchange of trucks with \$75,000 tires that carry 300 tonnes of unwanted rock and soil with each haul. Wusaty shows us the grade of the roads, the extent of the pits, the differences in the stages of the excavations and talks of their plans to someday mine the entire extent of Caw Ridge.

There is more than 30 years of coal mining history on Caw Ridge

and adjacent areas. AWA has opposed coal mining activities on Caw Ridge since mining began with McIntyre Mines Ltd. in the early 1970s. The mining history has been volatile due to fluctuations in global coal markets. GCC's CEO Robert Stan has been in the forefront with the media for his success in negotiating record prices for coal, that is in large part destined for the Korean market.

Caw Ridge is a majestic alpine ridge of provincial and national significance, stretching over an estimated 21km² area, and lying adjacent to Willmore Wilderness Park. The Ridge has been described as the Serengeti of Alberta, an area for Watchable Wildlife, and has been



C. Olson

Gene Wusaty, Lara Smandych and Dennis Quintilio near the B2 pit

pointing out the complex maze of barriers these animals must negotiate in order to survive.

In addition to GCC's operations, Weyerhaeuser has large tracts of forest on the chopping block and plans for a large access road to the north. Talisman has also recently proposed a 70 km pipeline that transects critical caribou range. The cumulative footprint within the entire area is huge. It is an indicator of government's failure to regulate activity within the ranges of Alberta's dwindling caribou herds.

But Bighorn sheep adapt well to coal mining operations. Not only do sheep adapt to the noise and human presence of the disturbed area, they also are attracted to the salt left on or near the surface of the piled debris. But that adaptation comes at a price. Wusaty recounts the bumper to bumper traffic along the entrance to the mine and the slaughter of many unsuspecting animals when SRCL closed.

became a free-for-all to recreationists, including hunters looking to take home large bighorn sheep.

According to Tom McDonald of the Aseniwuche Winewak Nation, bighorn sheep in the mine area are known to have horn bases with a circumference as great as 16 inches. This is even larger than those found in the Cadomin area, known for its large-horned sheep. Given the sheep hunt, GCC is concerned about access once operations and reclamation have been completed and would support an access management regime for the area.

Ideally, the entire ridge should have been left within Willmore Wilderness Park, but now half the ridge is gone, taken away in truckloads of mined coal. There are plans to take down the entire ridge, so AWA does not want to see mining progress further. GCC is investigating the possibility of obtaining permits from Alberta Energy to advance their operations into the



C. Olson

Grande Cache Coal's B2 pit at the base of Caw Ridge, April 2005



C. Olson

Sheep on the spoils pile from Grande Cache Coal's operation

noted as being one of six remaining unprotected biological hotspots in the Rocky Mountain region. Of particular concern for the area is the fate of one of Alberta's largest populations of mountain goats and the already threatened Redrock/Prairie Creek caribou herd.

As we make our way up the winding, muddy mine road into the B2 mine pit area, I question the impact the mine is having on the caribou herd and what their monitoring is revealing.

"We have some confused caribou," Wusaty acknowledges,

In 2000, Smoky River Coal Limited (SRCL) went into receivership due to declining world coal prices. SRCL abandoned their fully stripped mine pit at Caw Ridge, leaving a large scarred moonscape on the edge of a wildlife mecca. Not only was the Alberta public left with a distasteful mess and a large reclamation bill, but the site was left unmonitored.

Given the safety and liability issues brought about during mine operations, access was closely monitored by SRCL. However, with the demise of the company, the area

remaining ridge.

GCC says they will assume responsibility for reclamation of the mine area, but only after they remove the remaining coal. GCC currently has not received final approvals for the final phase of mining of the No.12 B2 pit.

AWA will continue to meet with GCC and monitor their activity in the B2 pit. We have also written to the Ministers of Energy and Sustainable Resource Development asking them not to approve further industrial activity on Caw Ridge.



LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR

By Brian Bildson

The New Testament book of Matthew tells us to love our neighbours as we love ourselves. While I'm kinda fond of myself most days, there's one neighbour I'm struggling to accept. I didn't start out disliking them, they had to earn that distinction all on their own. My bigger problem is this neighbour has the potential to impact on something a lot more important than me, namely Caw Ridge.



Looking northwest along a haulroad to Caw Ridge and Grande Cache Coal's B2 pit

I'm lucky enough to call the Sheep Creek country my home for parts of the year. Along with my family, I operate Sheep Creek Back Country Lodge, just out of Grande Cache, Alberta. I also have a registered fur management area that extends along the northern boundaries of Willmore Wilderness Park, some of the wildest country left in Canada.

It's beautiful but also resource rich, which may also be its curse. This area has it all, with an ample supply of oil, gas, lumber, and coal. The changes

in the landscape from all the industrial activity over the last five years have been hard to watch. Thankfully, Willmore Wilderness Park still stands as an intact forest.

Speaking of neighbours, one of my first ones was Smoky River Coal Limited (SRCL). The company's holdings extended from their plant site on Highway 40 right to the base of Caw Ridge. It was on Caw Ridge that SRCL and I first butted heads. I appealed their development approval for what was then referred to as the B2 pit. I felt placing an open pit mine right in the middle of a caribou migration path didn't make good sense.

Appearing in front of the Environmental Appeal Board and going head to head with both SRCL and the Energy and Utility Board (EUB) lawyers was an eye opener. Changes to the government's definition of "directly affected," and expanded time lines for filing statements of concern, were a positive result of the appeal; but in the end we lost the battle.

SRCL lost no time in carving an open pit mine, which extended from the base of the hill right up close to the height of land on Caw Ridge. Shortly thereafter, SRCL declared bankruptcy, leaving both an open wound on the landscape and a huge deficit in the required reclamation costs.

A New Neighbour

Despite the best efforts of the receivers, there was little interest from purchasers in picking up the former holdings of SRCL. However, at the last minute a new company surfaced calling themselves the Grande Cache Coal Company (GCCC) and began the process of acquiring some of the old SRCL leases.

As a stakeholder in the area I was provided information on this new company. It didn't take long to discover that GCCC had some familiar faces. Both Barry Davis, the CEO, and

Bernd Martens, environment manager, of SRCL, were involved with the new GCCC. I did not find this to be very reassuring. I decided that this new company would bear watching.

As part of their approval process GCCC had Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) done on their proposed operations. After reviewing the EIA I began talking with GCCC on a frequent basis. I questioned them about their water management practices (SRCL frequently had settling pond breaches), dust and sediment control (the main haul roads parallel Sheep Creek), caribou management procedures, and shared road use agreements.

I soon detected a familiar trend. In the early days, before they had received their government approvals, GCCC was very good at communicating with me. I was reassured that this was a new day and a new company and GCCC was going to be an industry leader in environmental management, and wanted to be a good neighbour to Sheep Creek Back Country Lodge. In fact, wouldn't it be great if GCCC could use my lodge for corporate functions! But I was less than enthusiastic about GCCC plans and filed a statement of concern with Mr. Kem Singh, the regional approval manager for Alberta Environment.

Despite what I consider legitimate concerns, GCCC received approvals to operate #7 mine, an underground mine located on Mount Hamel, as well as the B2 pit. After extracting the easy coal left behind at the B2 pit, GCCC has now applied for an extension to the B2 pit which will allow them to dig right up to the height of land on that part of Caw Ridge.

This is in the same area that GCCC's own environmental impact assessment states, "The monitoring studies indicated that the entire ridge could be used for crossing by caribou; however, the southeast half from Pan-

Am Pass to Caw Pass (within 0 to 8+ km northwest of the existing highwall of the B2 extension pit) receives the most use. Extensive use of the J arm (immediately west of the B2 mine area) and the Cupola arm for foraging occurred during fall periods when the caribou remained on the ridge for an extended time.”

Sounds like a great location for an open pit mine.

Early in the spring of 2005 GCCC came knocking at my door. Bernd Marten and Brenda Landry came to my office to sell me on the B2 pit extension for which they were seeking approval. Their main pitch was that by allowing them to extract the remaining coal at B2, they could then begin reclamation work in four to six years. I listened carefully then began asking questions.

Q) What was the current status of their caribou management strategy?

the loss of the caribou migration path and traditional access trail located immediately adjacent to the berm on top of B2, as their pit extension would remove both?

A) They believed the caribou would adapt and use migration routes further to the west. As for resident access along the traditional trail they were not aware of the trail and had concerns about citizens being in close proximity to an open pit mine.

Q) What were their plans for dust control on the roads?

A) There were no plans to cover trucks but dust control would be in place on road surfaces.

Q) After two years of written requests by myself, and multiple promises by GCCC to provide it, where was our shared use access agreement?

A) Sorry for the delay, and a commitment was once again made to

with rainbow trout and slimy sculpin. However because of the nature of the creek it was difficult to identify any existing fish redds so they were committed to doing water quality and population surveys during the course of their operations.

Sharing My Perspective

At this point I felt I had heard enough and asked to share with them my perspective. I told them that I believed they had done a poor job of caribou management, and, in fact, did not even have an accurate count. I knew from my own contacts that the largest number of caribou in years had staged and crossed over Caw Ridge that fall. I also believed that their contribution to any caribou study was a token effort at best and did not meet the spirit of their previous commitments.

I pointed out that their disregard



The caribou diversion wall along Caw Ridge at the top of the B2 pit

Looking along Caw Ridge. The caribou migrate through this area. The caribou diversion wall can be seen on the right

A) They were co-operating with the West Central Caribou Committee. They had even purchased and donated a caribou collar.

Q) What was the status of Caribou movement on Caw Ridge and how did they come up with the data?

A) They did not have any staff in the field observing caribou movement. They were gathering information from other sources such as the biologists from Universities of Laval and Sherbrooke who were studying mountain goats. They believed there had been several caribou sightings that season.

Q) How did they plan to mitigate

have a written agreement to me shortly. I was told that I might be required to purchase a buggy whip and a radio in order to comply with their safety requirements.

Q) As the B2 pit extension will have an impact on the Beaverdam Creek and Copton Creek, and in light of past settling pond failures, what assurances could they offer to the continued viability of the species found in the creek, with special concern for bull trout?

A) GCCC had conducted fish surveys as part of their E.I.A. study and acknowledged the presence of both juvenile and adult bull trout, along

for other users of Caw Ridge was not a good sign. To be ignorant of a major historical trail, which hooks up the two main arms of Caw Ridge, is a sign of bad planning and research. Also, their initial reaction when I told them about the trail was about keeping people away from the site, not working to find an alternative solution. As for the access agreement, I showed them where they had made an earlier commitment to provide me with any equipment they felt necessary, such as radios and buggy whips. And finally I pointed out that the water-quality and dust-control issue go hand in hand, both have the potential to have a negative impact on fish habitat.

I requested that they do a survey of fish redds and begin a monitoring program. Their own research had shown there was a significant population of bull trout in the Beaverdam and Copton Creeks. That same research had found no bull trout immediately upstream or downstream of the existing settling ponds so it raises concerns about additional industrial activity.

At the conclusion of the meeting I told the GCCC representatives that I felt compelled to share my concerns with the Director of Approvals from Alberta Environment, as they had not given me the reassurances I was looking for. I don't believe that they were very happy to hear that, and left my office telling me they would get back to me.

Company Bans Access

Two days later I headed out to run my trap line. As had been my practice all winter, I accessed my line via the former SRCL haul roads, which I enter through the GCCC processing plant. As I approached the security gate an employee came out and pulled me over. I was told that until I conformed to all GCCC safety practices I could no longer use the road network.

I politely told the employee that I understood their position but I had traps to run and they weren't going to prevent me from doing so. The employee then told me she would have to report me or she would be fired. I told her to feel free to do so but I was going in. I then proceeded through the gate and out to my trap line.

After a few days on the line I arrived back home and found a registered letter from GCCC waiting for me. In the letter I was told that I was banned from their mine site and all road networks. It went on to say that I would be prosecuted should I return. What a coincidence, I thought. Right after calling them to task on their practices they decide to deny me access to my lodge and trap line. I faxed them back and wrote that I'd be rolling through their site in two days and I didn't believe they had the authority to stop me.

At this point things started to get interesting. I received a call that evening from the staff sergeant of the

Grande Cache RCMP. He informed me that if I went back to the GCCC site I would be charged with criminal trespass. He was somewhat surprised when I told him I was prepared to deal with that if I had to, but perhaps he might be interested in hearing both sides of the story. Perhaps he could share with me the version he'd heard so far.



Looking down into Grande Cache Coal's B2 pit

I was then surprised to hear from the staff sergeant that not only had I breached the gate security but had also endangered an employee's life by dragging her with my vehicle. As that was a total fabrication I asked him where he had got that information. He told me from Merle Cropley, a GCCC manager. I suggested he talk directly to the employee in question as well as check with the appropriate government agencies, as I believed I had the right of access and intended to go through that gate the following Friday.

The next day the staff sergeant called me back and very politely informed me that he had done his research and was sure of his facts. First of all, he had spoken to the employee and knew that I had not dragged her or endangered her life in any way. He had also discovered that I did have right of travel on the roadways without interference. However, GCCC, as the leaseholder of the land, did have the right to deny me access to the haul road through their mine site. I was glad to hear this as I did have another potential access point.

Shortly thereafter, I received

another letter from GCCC stating that they would allow me emergency access as long as I purchased a radio and a buggy whip. I replied with thanks, but no thanks. I let them know that, thanks to them getting the RCMP involved, I knew my rights and I recommended that they not try to interfere with my right of access. To date they have not tried to do so.

Caw Ridge Futures

So here we are today, two neighbours that really don't like each other. I can live without GCCC liking me but what concerns me most is their future plans for Caw Ridge. As Bernd Marten of GCCC told me, although they do not currently have coal leases on Caw Ridge, they owe it to their share-holders to explore all options to make a profit, and there are substantial coal reserves on Caw Ridge.

In a perfect world the provincial government would act now to protect Caw Ridge, as there are no existing coal lease holdings past the B2 site. What will it take to persuade the government to protect this last stronghold of the Prairie/Redrock caribou herd, as well as being home to the largest and longest studied mountain goat herd in Alberta?

I don't have the answer to that question, but I'd encourage concerned



Brian Bildson stands next to the caribou diversion wall on Caw Ridge surrounding the B2 pit

citizens to let their voice be heard by both the government and Grande Cache Coal Company. As for me, I'll just keep on enjoying the wilderness and keeping an eye on that damn neighbour of mine.

L. Smandych

L. Smandych

ABRAHAM GLACIER WELLNESS RESORT IS DEAD, COUNTY LAND PLAN REVIEWED

By Lara Smandych, AWA Conservation Biologist

Three years after its conception, a proposal to place a resort on the ridge above Abraham Lake adjacent to Bighorn Wildland is dead, says Clearwater County. The final blow came in March 2005 when the government cancelled the reservation on the land where the developer, Don McCarger, was to build the resort.

“Based on the deficient proposal we saw, the county did right in declining the application,” says Alan Ernst, owner of Aurum Lodge. “We must ensure that high standards are also applied when reviewing new applications. This area is too sensitive and too valuable to be ruined by speculative developments and unsuitable projects.”

The proposed resort was to be a 520 acre, full-service, self-contained health spa and resort on the ridge above Abraham Lake adjacent to Bighorn Wildland in the Whitegoat Lakes Development Node.

McCarger is apparently threatening to sue the province for \$120 million for ruining his opportunity to lease crown land. After being refused a development permit by Clearwater County in 2004, McCarger exhausted all options to gain approval for his resort including appealing to the County and taking his fight all the way to the Court of Appeal in Edmonton.

Even though the resort is off the radar screen, concern over future development in the area remains. Even if McCarger wants to reapply for a development permit, there may be many applications in line ahead of him. Before any new applications will be accepted for the area, the county will review the Whitegoat Lakes Development Node Concept Plan.

The Plan provides direction for land uses and design guidelines for new development in the Node. The review process has already been initiated and Clearwater County is seeking written stakeholder input and holding public meetings.

“Adoption of the Concept Plan will mean clearer rules for any future developers who are interested in the Whitegoat Lakes Development Node,” says Martha Kostuch, president of the Alberta League for Environmentally Responsible Tourism (ALERT). “The Concept Plan recognizes that the value of the Node is its wilderness appeal.”



Abraham Lake

AWA and ALERT believe the Concept Plan should be adopted for the area with modifications, including the establishment of a wildlife corridor free from development, a limit placed on development size from small to medium sized accommodation, and the elimination of some discretionary uses, including the establishment of a heliport.

“The tourism emphasis for such a sensitive and extraordinarily pristine and beautiful site should be nature-based,” says Vivian Pharis, AWA Director, who believes the current plan is a huge improvement over earlier plans. “What should not be invited into the area is inappropriate Banff townsite-style entertainment development.”

AWA supports low impact tourism development that does not compromise the ecological integrity of wilderness.

Large-scale tourism developments are not compatible with wilderness values and experience.

“My primary concern with development at Whitegoat Lakes is that it will again chip away at one of our few remaining intact wild lands, by inviting large numbers of people onto its brink,” says Pharis. “In this

age of mobility, I see no reason why such tourism developments should not be restricted to existing communities that can act as the ‘gateways’ to wild places.” She believes Nordegg, Sundre, and Rocky Mountain House are all more appropriate sites for resort development.

The County seems committed to the vision and intent of the Concept Plan. Hopefully, the Plan will include some very stringent development limitations and requirements for the Node. However, the Plan deals only with activity within the Node itself, leaving activities and developments in the surrounding region uncontrolled and unaddressed.

For more information on the Whitegoat Lakes Development Node Concept Plan review, contact Joe Baker, Clearwater County at 403.845.4444.



“WE WANT TO DO IT RIGHT!” BUT CERI’S “SHARING THE LAND” WORKSHOP LEAVES OUT MOST VULNERABLE

By Jonathan Wright and Jessica Ernst

Living with drilling

“But anywhere that coal lies under the ground, under the present laws, these houses and farms and communities have no firmer hold on the future than so many bird nests.”

- Wendell Berry

Because the exorbitant registration cost would likely assure lack of representative stakeholder presence, we decided to attend the recent Canadian Energy Research Institute (CERI) Energy Environment Workshop called “Sharing the Land: Public Policy, Regulation and the Quest for Resources.”

The workshop was primarily aimed at resolving how energy industry proponents can obtain “surety” of access to lands, the owners of which are becoming increasingly angry and uncooperative. The escalating crisis is attributable in large part to the exponential increase in land access required to fulfill the quest for gas in coal or coal-bed methane (CBM).

CBM has a bad rap—for good reason. Some proponents know that honesty is the only policy when trying to sell an experimental process. Actions by prominent others, including the “coal-bed methane giants,” have indicated a working philosophy that is quite the opposite.

The title of the workshop leads one to suspect that all Alberta stakeholders, especially farmers, would be welcome. But the registration cost, at a thousand a head, the highest we have ever paid to attend a workshop,

assured that it would be an elitist gathering of mainly industry and government. Our party of two spent three thousand dollars for the two-day event because CERI’s policy would not permit a refund for our third party—the only farmer registered—who had become ill and could not attend.

The list of delegates registered proved to us our reason for attending was sound. To learn how to share the land and work with the many industry and Alberta, British Columbia and Saskatchewan government delegates, many of whom live in cities, there were no listed First Nations, farmers or ranchers, environmental consultants (other than us), surface rights, coalition or synergy groups, citizens from rural communities, representatives from Alberta municipalities or counties, environmental, conservation, public lands, advocacy, wilderness or similar type group representatives, Alberta Sustainable Development, Alberta Environment or Community Development representatives.

The stakeholders most needed at the workshop were not there. The above list does not include invited speakers. One synergy group member attended for free because she came along with someone invited to speak, and a representative from a British Columbia surface rights group was in Calgary and able, on short notice, to use one day of the two that we could not get refunded.

Numerous media representatives attended—they got in free. Lucky for them—the lunches were delicious—so

were the snacks. Because of the lack of representative stakeholders attending, we found the workshop an expensive and sad near-waste of our time, other than being able to hear a few excellent speakers and ask many questions, although most were censored.



Compressors two miles northeast of Rosebud. There are two additional compressors less than one mile northwest of Rosebud.

The two speakers we thought gave us the most valuable insights were Dr. Roger Gibbons, President and CEO of the Canada West Foundation, and Calgary journalist Andrew Nikiforuk. As the keynote speaker at Monday’s luncheon, Gibbons summed up our issues by pointing out that in the big scheme of things, he really couldn’t care less whether he had to pay a provincial sales tax or not, he wanted to know that when he looked out from his window at the skyline of the Rocky Mountains, he was looking at an Alberta that was being properly cared for.

Nikiforuk had been invited by

CERI to speak as an Alberta landowner. We were appalled to see Nikiforuk, a man lauded for his objective excellence in journalism, tacitly, yet transparently, dismissed by Workshop Chair Douglas Bruchet as a radical. Nikiforuk gave a riveting presentation with stark examples of pathological land, water and community abuse inflicted on Alberta by the energy industry with encouragement from our government.

The workshop was filled with endless talk about what the energy industry needs to meet its goals (legislation, timelines and profit margins, etc.) at the expense of honest discussion on why landowners and negatively impacted rural citizens are becoming more and more unwilling to share the surface of their land with those underneath. Neglected at the workshop were ethics, honesty, effectual and integral regulation by the EUB, limits to growth, short and long-term planning, what it's like to live

morning, we asked Mike Ekelund, Assistant Deputy Minister of Energy, "How can we share the land if the EUB reduces consultation requirements for industry and takes away citizen rights with Bulletin 2005-08?" The question was ignored.

"Question cards be damned—these questions are too important to be ignored!" We stood up and respectfully repeated our questions out loud. Ekelund stated that he could not answer the question, that it was an EUB issue, not a Department of Energy one. We kept repeating the question, and advised that after having spent so much money and time to attend the workshop we deserved answers to our questions. Mike Ekelund still refused to answer. He did, however, come running after us when the session was over advising that we now had his attention.

In a break, we asked CERI Chair Douglas Bruchet what was going to happen to the unanswered questions.

reared its head. Looks on panel member faces became increasingly apprehensive; the subject was dropped again and again in favour of some alternative theme that didn't pose a threat or attempt to deal with the enormity of our problems. Finally, cumulative effects could be glossed over no longer, and there was a cursory discussion of this most important topic.

The outcome underscored the fact that we are, to quote Wendell Berry, a people who "do not believe in problems that do not have 'practical' solutions." Bruchet asked us towards the end of the day, "Can you provide examples where cumulative effects assessments have been completed in other provinces?" Our reply was, "What examples do we need from other provinces? Cumulative effects are happening in Alberta. Why not begin right here?"

The CBM giants were most notable at the CERI conference by their absence, or at least by the

J. Ernst



This lease road to a CBM well is 1100m long. The Chairman of the Canadian Society for Unconventional Gas advised that lease roads are not required for CBM wells in Alberta



Compressors eight miles southwest of Rosebud, a new compressor station has been added on top of the hill.

J. Ernst

in the midst of an industrial invasion, negative effects mitigation, protection plans and the most worrisome neglect of all—cumulative effects.

The panel moderators did not want discussion on cumulative effects. Our cumulative effects questions, that we had to write down on little cards and hand in like school children, were repeatedly censored. At first we thought the cards were a good idea, until we understood and experienced the reason for them—censorship and control.

The first day, our questions were entirely or partially censored, but we remained obedient. The second

He advised that CERI had decided to provide the various panel members time to answer these questions and that, if answered, the information would be included on the DVD summary of the workshop that will be sent to all registered delegates, panel members and speakers.

We asked what would happen to the unanswered questions. He did not respond. We then advised him that in our opinion the unanswered questions are important and need to be included on the DVD for everyone to think about.

Regardless of the censorship, the topic of cumulative effects persistently

absence of their brains, which never seem to appear in public. We get the overwhelming feeling that their unfailingly enthusiastic, acquiescent love-noises—"You have nothing to worry about because we're doing it all for YOU, Alberta!"—represent little more than the parrot mimicry of some rote-learned MBA system chant sworn to tenderize uncooperative meat.

Isn't it telling that the people who stand to benefit the most from this newest thrashing of the land, the mighty Gwyns et. al., the brains of the biggest beasts, are the ones least likely to participate in an event like this one? They'll cross the continent, perhaps the

ocean, to attend a shareholder function, but won't cross the street to inject some sincerity into their own slogans or learn how to share. Instead, the underlings are left to puzzle over how to "have" our trust, flummoxed by the point that with some people, at least, trust can't be "had" or "bought," it needs to be earned.

At the CERI workshop, it became apparent that industry and our government are not seeking trust. They want cooperation without having to work for it or deserve it. Nobody at the conference thought to point out this obvious error. While gaining trust can be a lengthy process (very lengthy when you've gained a reputation for covert operations, dishonesty and underhanded dealings), cooperation can be bought, swindled, or, as a perfectly legal last measure in Alberta, taken by force. Cooperation is the practical alternative to trust where the objective is to get things done yesterday and maximize profit.

We simultaneously bobbed about on the gushing crocodile optimism of all those in attendance who "wanted to do it right!" We floundered in the grim subconscious surety that if most of us knew not at all what we meant, *none* of us had any working answers yet. At the same time, the CBM giants swarmed unchecked in our backyards like an invasion of diesel-powered Cossacks, intent on nothing less than a total CBM rout in as little time as it took.

At the time of the workshop, EnCana, for instance, already had under its belt two years of CBM invasion complete with inappropriate or completely lacking consultation, little or no planning, and no environmental and socio-economic impact or cumulative effects assessments.

In some communities, CBM was kept quiet and boldly lied about in order to get access to the land. The EUB was advised of actions occurring contrary to regulatory requirements. Inappropriate actions continue

unchecked with reports of non-compliance ignored or dismissed. Isn't it too late to be claiming "we want to do it right this time?"

This nagging discrepancy between our insistence on having the chance to do-it-right-this-time and the fact that we were already well up to our asses out there doing-it-wrong

was brought to the panel's attention. The solution voiced more than once by industry, heaping irony on irony, was: CBM is *new*, we need to develop it *first* in order to learn how to do it!

An interesting way out, given that these were the same people who had already assured us in earlier breaths that there is nothing new about CBM, not a thing to worry about, it is exactly the same as conventional gas.

Do we really "Want to do it right!?" Do the major aggressors

pushing for CBM "Want to do it right!?" The answer's a cinch. If you want to know what a "person" (the corporation is considered by some "a person") really wants, don't listen to what they are saying, look at what they're doing. Given their druthers, and they are given their druthers—the EUB grants 97% of oil and gas applications—what they are doing is what they want to do. Are they:

- Conducting open and transparent consultation with all stakeholders prior to their activities?
- Waiting until our best scientific and political minds reach some consensus about how to "Do it Right!?"
- Polling the communities to find out if they're comfortable with the coming levels of development before they proceed?
- Prescribing limits to their growth, their presence on the land?
- Conducting Environmental and Socio-Economic Cumulative Effects Assessments?
- Implementing scientifically sound aquifer and water well monitoring and protection?
- Preparing adequate protection and mitigation plans?
- Fairly compensating landowners for their surface trespasses?

As for the rest of the proponents out there, the ones we know of whose words ring with sincerity, it is unfortunate that they are bound to be tarred by the same black brushes. One thing seems inevitable—by the time we convince anyone what is needed to "do it right" "it" will be long done-for. The people most responsible for doing it, those who have grown fatter from it, won't be the ones living with the repercussions or attending workshops in order to learn how to heal the land.

(The CERI workshop took place in Calgary, April 4 and 5, 2005. The authors are from Ernst Environmental Consulting. Photos were taken within a few hours on the same day in May, 2005, all within about 8 miles of Rosebud, Alberta. There are additional compressor stations within 8 miles of Rosebud that were not photographed for this article.)

J. Ernst



Sharing the land and water - local water use for drilling and a new compressor station at the crest of the hill.

One of the key recurring, puzzling, themes put forth repeatedly and emphatically at the workshop was the idea that, *this* time (with CBM?), "we *still* have the chance to do it right!" This suggestion of a history of doing things wrong missed a crucial point. The point being that while we were at the CERI conference putting our brains together and trying to figure out "how to do it right," no one out there in the real world was waiting at the starting gate for the sound of our pistol.



Two Ravens © Joan Sherman



Joan Sherman

Art is much more than just the end result. While a painting or drawing may be static, the process of producing the work—the experience of painting or sketching—is a dynamic event. Sometimes the experience that produces a result is just as important as the end product. In some instances, it may be more important.

For Athabasca artist Joan Sherman, the experience is certainly every bit as important as the picture. For the past year, she has concentrated

ATHABASCA ARTIST SHARES EXPERIENCES TO ENTERTAIN, EDUCATE PEOPLE WITH ART CARDS

By John Geary

on producing note cards from many of her paintings, based on her experiences in Alberta's boreal forest. In addition to the artwork on the front, the back of each card includes some information about the image. If a bird or mammal is the focus, some natural history about the animal adorns the card back; if it is a picture based on a particular event, Sherman provides some details about the inspiration for the image. By doing that, she hopes to entertain as well as inform the reader about the boreal forest, conservation of the habitat, and the wildlife that lives there.

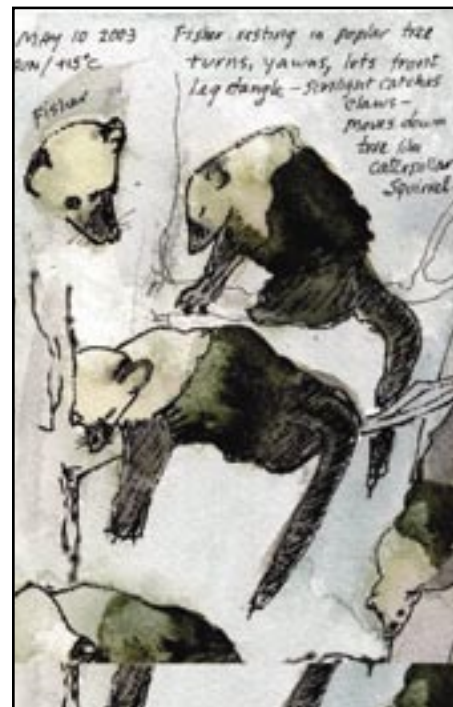
Sherman is involved in a biophysical survey of some land near her home, and when she goes out on research walks, her sketchbook is always with her. Sometimes she limits her accessories to a small sketchpad with some pencils and pens; at other times, she'll take a small watercolour set with her. She will sometimes even pack along her art materials in her kayak, and wedge herself into bulrushes or cattails, to view plants and bugs more closely. And if she's lucky, sometimes she'll experience an encounter with larger, more mobile denizens.

"One time I was wedged into some water lilies when I heard some noise behind me," Sherman says. "I looked and there were a couple of beavers, rolling up lily pads like tacos and stuffing them down their mouths. Then they might grab a plant bud and pop it in like a Brussels sprout.

"It was marvelous."

She sketched the beavers and eventually turned it into a watercolour painting, as she turns many of her sketches—and experiences—into paintings and then into cards.

"I decided I'd like to share my experiences in nature with people," she says. "Cards are inexpensive and portable, and I can tell the cardholder a



Fisher © Joan Sherman



Deer © Joan Sherman

little bit about what prompted me to do the sketch or painting."

All of her artwork is taken directly from what she sees in the wild, not from a photograph, as is the case with some artists. She says when she lets people know her artwork is based on actual experiences, they are often surprised. That approach results in some very unique and interesting images with some very entertaining and educational stories, like the one about the beavers—or like the work she



Red Necked Grebes © Joan Sherman

produced in 2003, based on watching a great horned owl hunting grasshoppers.

“One night I looked out and saw what looked like a grouse walking

around the yard,” she says. “It was actually a young great horned owl, chasing grasshoppers. He did this for about an hour, then flew away.

“Two days later, I woke up and looked out my window at 7 o’clock, and he was already out there. I watched him for three hours; he was walking the entire time, pouncing on grasshoppers. I was running from window to window, sketching him.

“I tried to capture a movement, a feeling, in my artwork ... not a bird per se, but what the bird was doing.”

An active environmentalist all her life, when she is not sketching or painting, Sherman is making presentations at hearings, working on environmental policy papers for government opposition parties.

“It’s like banging your head against a wall,” she says of that process. “You rarely see any results you’re satisfied with, and people get tired of listening.”

She hopes her art cards can help get the important message about conservation to people in a different

way, creating an awareness where there may not have been any, previously.

“I think, in a very small way, it’s effective. People will read something about the animal or conservation that’s written on the card, then say, ‘Oh, I didn’t know that,’ and perhaps they’ll remember.”

Creating awareness is crucial, particularly about an area like the boreal forest, if we are to save it. For the most part, the boreal forest does not have spectacular landscapes or breathtaking viewpoints. It does, however, have a lure all its own.

“It’s quite overlooked, all the beauty is subtle,” says Sherman. “You have to get into the forest and see all the plants that grow to notice them, sometimes getting down on your hands and knees to experience the lushness.

“It’s a wonderland.”

Selections of Joan Sherman’s cards are available at the Edmonton Art Gallery, Old Crow Antiques in Athabasca and Silvercup Café in Bonnyville. You may contact Joan at jsherm@telus.net.

THE LORD GOD BIRD

I know we live in a world filled with evil and very bad, concussive news, but I really encourage you to take a private moment to reflect on the extraordinary good news of the rediscovery of the Ivory-Billed Woodpecker. You may not even have known of him, or the other legendary extinct American birds like the Passenger Pigeon or the Carolina Parakeet, but make no mistake, this news event is as spiritually significant as would be the confirmed existence of benevolent extra-terrestrial life.

As a child I used to draw and paint the Ivory-Billed and the Passenger Pigeon and the Black-Footed Ferret, as well as the once-immense herds of Buffalo, the Prairie Dog towns, and others. These legendary animals—some lost to extinction, some left alive as handfuls of individual survivors—represented a direct connection to a “lost wild America.”

It’s a tragedy in itself that many

people have never even heard of the life that once lived. Without a personal sense of history and culture, always rooted in peoples’ experience of the (any) landscape, there is no adequate belonging or stepping forward.

I hope you can take a moment to absorb and celebrate this Earth-shaking news of the return of the Ivory-Billed. And use that rush to fight even harder to protect sacred pristine places like the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, and restore others like our damaged and heartbroken Great Plains. And make sure that the mistakes (and worse) of the past are never repeated. It’s up to you. It’s always been up to



Colorized digital image of ivory-billed woodpecker at nest

you to belong, and to open the door into that Future.

Jarid Manos
Executive Director, Great Plains
Restoration Council
Fort Worth, TX

NORDEGG COMMUNITY FIRE PLAN IGNORES FIRESMART MODEL

Dear Editor:

The Nordegg community fire plan that SRD has allowed to expand into a calamitous harvest plan that could add to the area's fire susceptibility rather than decrease it, really raised my hackles (see WLA, April 2005). How can this agency be so contemptuous of the science that is right there under their noses in the form of the well-researched FireSmart program? Now apparently, SRD wants to apply their Nordegg model to the Crowsnest Pass! I say NO! Let them apply the real FireSmart model, not its SRD distortion.

One of Alberta's biggest single budget items is forest fire suppression. Decades of suppression, mainly for the benefit of commercial timber operations, has made our forests fire bombs due to fuel buildup. The ferocity of recent forest fires has raised alarm amongst communities that are fast expanding along the forest fringe, and they are now demanding greater taxpayer-supported protection.

SRD has responded with fire protection plans for such communities under the guise of the FireSmart program. But, instead of applying the program as it was developed by Partners in Protection for making buildings more fire resistant and lessening susceptibility in the critical 30m area close to buildings, SRD has stretched the bounds of the program well into the hinterlands, for the obvious benefit of industry operators.

U.S. Forest Service fire researcher, Jack Cohen, who is one of the technical advisers to FireSmart, has conducted extensive research into the ignition and spread of forest fires into communities, in what is called the wildland/urban interface or WUI. His work is reflected in FireSmart. Cohen has found that "....vast fuel-reduction projects have very little to do with fires in the WUI."

In fact, he claims that the WUI is too broad; it is really the area within approximately 100 feet (30 metres) of a home that matters in home protection. "That means the ultimate responsibility

for home wildfire protection lies with homeowners rather than public land-management agencies," according to Cohen.

Cohen further points out, if the fear of fire to communities can be greatly lessened through better preparedness of the home itself and its immediate grounds, many of the fear-based objections to the use of prescribed burns to reduce fuel load, maintain wildlife habitat and restore ecosystems, could be removed. This could save taxpayers a bundle and bring about broad public good.

How about becoming truly FireSmart, SRD, beginning in the Crowsnest Pass?

Vivian Pharis
Cochrane, Alberta

Read more about Jack Cohen's research at www.saveamericasforests.org/congress/Fire/Cohen.htm You can find the FireSmart manual at <http://www3.gov.ab.ca/srd/wildfires/fpd/firesmart.cfm>

ENVIRONMENT HAS NO FRIENDS IN HIGH PLACES!

Dear Editor:

This is a message to the people of Alberta. It comes from those of us in low places. Those of us that lurk amongst the 60 percent or more of Albertans who have never voted for today's government or its linchpin, Ralph Klein. I'll take the liberty, just as Klein does on behalf of Albertans, of saying I think I speak for many of the majority, those that are or think of themselves as forgotten, those marginalized by today's power structure, the deliberately excluded, and those that fear to speak for themselves.

I think I speak for at least some of the majority of Albertans who have never, in almost a lifetime, been represented by a government that

honestly and fairly treats the majority as part of this society. There are some in this majority who might be amongst the winners, basking in the glow of conservative or corporate favoritism. But most simply got swept along for the long and frustrating ride.

Everyone likes the idea of wealth, or at least well-being, but not everyone likes the favoritism that this government exhibits in decision after decision. Ask virtually any Albertan, including those that are directly warmed by the conservative glow created by preferential treatment with our tax dollars, and almost nary a one would say "spend barely one dollar out of every one hundred dollars on environmental and

resource management, protection and conservation!" In today's world, this budget failure amounts to criminal negligence. And a crime against the environment, and against the people of Alberta, it is!

Alberta's "wealth," while inappropriately reported and calculated because it conveniently omits all the costs, has been ripped from the guts of our environment. It has been torn from the heart of what some pass off as a democracy. It has been stripped from the backs of our children and young people, and it has wrought division and discontent in our society.

A mighty effort by government and industry has kept the surface waters calm, portraying a picture of tranquility

and joy and content. But below the surface, in low places, outside conservative power circles, nothing could be further from the truth.

There are those, and things, of course, that cannot speak for themselves; grizzly bears, fish, clean water, clean air, productive agricultural land, wilderness valleys, quiet landscapes. All could, and would, rightly ask why any decent, honest, fair government would allocate only a dollar out of every one hundred dollars to their well being.

And there are those things that should be part of our democracy, that many have neglected in the hopes that they will get closer to the glow of wealth, or at least not be singled out even more for insult and abuse and contempt because they are not of the chosen political persuasion. Things like public hearings on resource use, resource conservation, and resource policy. Things like legislation that would provide the public with their right to limit or eliminate the

destruction of those resources, and processes, by a small but powerful block of “insiders” like the oil and gas industry and land developers.

Many Albertans are caught up in their own confined world, worrying about paying health premiums, school costs, gasoline prices, new sneakers, and even decent and adequate food on the table. I still think many care about their environment, but unless we have the constitutional right to a fair and honest process by which these people can be heard without having to make it a near full time activist job, we will continue to see our vision of the world distorted by this government and Klein.

This is a government that is not going to “give” us democracy. It is not going to give us our rightful power to limit its actions, and to limit the access of its friends to our tax dollars, our public land, and our air and water. We are going to have to take it.

There might have been some Albertans—I concede I was one of them—who thought that on

our 100th birthday, even the most environmentally and democratically ruthless and destructive government we’ve ever been subjected to, would relent. Some thought it would look kindly upon the remnants of our land, our rivers, and our wildlife. Some thought it would protect for Albertans in perpetuity wilderness areas like that proposed for the South Castle, critical wildlife lands like the Poll Haven near Waterton Lakes National Park as wildlife refuges, and the last great prairie grasslands like Rumsey and the Milk River valley.

These thoughts, I suppose, are a tribute to the powerful spirit of humans. Even 35 years of oppression cannot kill the spirit of decency, honesty, and fairness. Even a vindictive and mean spirited budget like this one cannot, and will not kill the spirit. To those Albertans whose vision is far bigger than that of our government, I say we shall endure.

Brian L. Horejsi

WASTED SPACE PROVINCIAL PARK

Dear Editor:

While visiting a scenic little lake recently, I walked its rocky shoreline. Directly in front of me, a killdeer took tentative steps past a dead trout and a broken beer bottle, and flushed. Its course took my view to a string of plastic milk jugs. All around me, garbage dotted the landscape. Aluminum cans were at my feet and plastic bags hung from the surrounding willows.

The litter reminded me of a quad rider I’d wanted to kill during my previous visit. He was gone, but the rutted damage that he created that day will remain for half of forever—vertical scars that cut straight up-slope. On the edge of one of his tire-excavated trenches, two blooming crocuses clung to precious little, revealing that life, however capricious, often exists on the very edge of destruction.

I’ve visited this beautiful lake many times, and observed that the majority of its visitors focus their activities in destructive ways: Women

and little girls pick flowers, young boys throw rocks at beavers and their older brothers and fathers rip up the landscape with dirt bikes and quads. When evening comes, the party starts. That’s when most of the beer bottles get smashed, their jagged shards joining a litany of abuse that punctuates the shore.

This same scene is reflected wherever people are allowed to drive motorized vehicles. It’s indicative of society’s sordid love affair with “wild” places and their many natural targets. It’s also reflective of a land management ethic that’s imploded upon itself. The “managers” of these lands embrace a powerful and silent credo: No problem is too big to be ignored!

What’s the solution? It’s simple! Don’t let this type of abuse bother you anymore. It’s time to expect the expected. It’s time to ask society’s trusted politicians to pick up their pens and designate all of this province’s scenic and recreational lands as “wasted space.” How will “land

managers” respond? That’s easy! They’ll lift a leg to mount their off-road vehicles. They’ll follow the ever-expanding network of muddy ruts and dead vegetation. They’ll post signs as they go.

The signs will be everywhere. They’ll define the obvious: Wasted Space Provincial Park (an Alberta opportunity for landscape abuse).

David McIntyre
Crownsnest Pass



Aspen © Joan Sherman



ALBERTA DAMESELFIES: “FLYING NEON TOOTHPICKS IN THE GRASS”

By John Acorn

I expect that everyone has seen a damselfly at least once. Near ponds and the likes, damselflies often appear to be everywhere, especially among lush grasses. The most common ones are bright blue, and about the size and shape of a toothpick, with wings. From June through September, almost any sunny location in the province is likely to produce at least a few damselflies on a warm day.

My first memories of damselflies date back to when I was in elementary school, when I started noticing them along the back alley and in the back corner of my parents' garden, where the ribbon grass grew. I especially remember one sunny afternoon, walking to the bus stop to meet my grandfather and stopping along the way to admire what was probably a male taiga bluet resting on a white fence. At the time, it looked like it had every colour of the rainbow somewhere on its body, and it was with great surprise that I eventually discovered that these damselflies are merely blue and green.

I experienced my first spectacular emergence of American bluets at Gull Lake, the one and only time that our family rented a boat for an afternoon outing. Brilliant blue damselflies were skimming around everywhere I looked, just over the water's surface, and to be honest I remember that and not much else about the day.

Damselflies are related to dragonflies, and together they form the insect order Odonata. In turn, the order Odonata is divided into three suborders. The first, Anisozygoptera, contains only two species and is found only in Asia. The second comprises the dragonflies proper—the suborder Anisoptera. The third suborder, Zygoptera, includes the damselflies.

In Europe, the entire order Odonata is referred to in English as “dragonflies,” but here in North

America we call the Anisoptera dragonflies and the Zygoptera damselflies. The order as a whole has no English name equivalent in North America, but most of us call them “odonates” or “odes” for short.

Odonates are some of the most primitive of all flying insects. Together with mayflies (the order Ephemeroptera) they possess wings that cannot be folded back flat over the insect's abdomen—a condition generally presumed to represent the state of affairs among the earliest flying insects, long before the days of the dinosaurs. In fact, the largest flying insect that ever lived was a primitive sort of odonate (*Meganeura monyi*—which was not a dragonfly in the modern sense) with a wingspan of about 75 centimetres.

Odonate and mayfly wings are attached directly to the flight muscles that propel them, as opposed to the situation in other flying insects in which the flight muscles change the shape of the thorax, and the wings flap as a result. The odonate condition is called paleopterous (ancient-winged), while indirect flight muscles are called neopterous (modern-winged). Paleopterous insects cannot fold their wings flat over their backs, while most neopterous insects can. Butterflies are a familiar exception to this rule, since they are neopterous but cannot fold their wings flat over their backs. This condition was acquired “secondarily” in butterflies, which evolved from moth ancestors with folded wings.

Odonates are predatory creatures, and this, along with their obvious structural differences, sets them apart from mayflies. As adults, odonates have four well-developed flying wings and an elongate body. On the head, they have huge compound eyes made up of thousands of individual visual receptors, each with its own lens.

As larvae, they are generally aquatic and they are always predatory. Odonate larvae have the most amazing

lower lips in the entire insect world. The lower lip of an odonate larva is folded beneath the head. When the larva wants to capture another small creature for food, the labium shoots out to almost half the larva's body length and grasping jaws at its tip seize the prey.

The larvae catch and eat a variety of small aquatic creatures (including extra-small fishes), and in general there are two types of larval feeding patterns. Some roam around on underwater vegetation in search of their prey, while others sit quietly and cryptically in wait. Generally, larvae that live in streams or under the threat of being eaten by a fish do the latter, while those in still waters without fish predators do the former. As well, hungrier larvae forage more, while those with lots of food around them are more content to wait for the prey to come to them.

To tell the difference between a damselfly and a dragonfly, look first at the head. If the insect is hammer-headed, with the eyes on either side of a wide head, then it is a damselfly. Dragonflies generally possess more bulbous heads with eyes that meet or nearly meet at the top of the head.

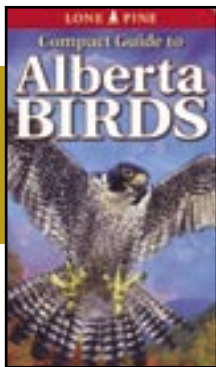
Then look at the wings. If the hind wings are slightly broader than the front wings at the base (next to where they meet the body) and all the wings are held out to the sides at a right angle to the body, like the wings of an airplane, it is a dragonfly. If all four wings are of almost identical shape and are held vertically together over the back, or out to the sides at an acute angle to the body, then it is a damselfly.

Once you get a feel for the general look of the two groups, these features will no longer be necessary for a quick identification, but when you are first learning to distinguish between damselflies and dragonflies, these are the features that work best.

As larvae, damselflies are also easy to recognize. Apart from the folding lower lip, they also possess

three leaflike gills on the tip of their abdomen. These gills can also be used for swimming, and a swimming damselfly larva wiggles its body from side to side. The larvae also breathe by flushing water in and out of the rectum, and as a consequence they literally breathe with their butts. For dragonflies proper, this is the primary means of respiration, but damselflies use both the rectum and the abdominal gills.

Both, by the way (and I don't blame anyone for wondering about this), secrete a membrane around their feces so as not to foul their breathing apparatus—like having a built-in



As the forests come alive with the sounds of summer, there is no better time to head outdoors and meet Alberta's birds. Our province's birds really came to life for me last winter, when I had the pleasure of being involved in the development of Lone Pine Publishing's new North American series of compact birding guides.

As I wrote, I watched upside-down nuthatches, intent woodpeckers and busy chickadees flit around our backyard feeder. Each book in this series, with its engaging collection of facts, details and identification information, is designed to spark the reader's interest and share our wonder at the variety of our local birds and their diverse behaviour.

The pocket-sized books, including a *Compact Guide to Alberta Birds*, will help you get to know 83 of each province's most common charismatic and charming birds. Each bird, which is featured over two pages, includes a range map, illustrations of similar birds, and a large, labelled illustration pointing out unique markings.

I find illustrations particularly useful on nature walks with children or large groups. In early May, my

plastic bag dispenser when you take your dog for a walk. And damselfly larvae can develop other proctological difficulties as well. American bluets, forktails, and spreadwings are all known to have their back ends invaded by flagellate protozoa in the winter, only to lose these freeloaders with the first skin shedding of the spring.

The damselflies of Alberta belong to three different families. In fact, the three families of damselflies in our fauna represent the three main branches of the evolutionary tree of damselflies in general. Even though we only have 22 species here in Alberta, we still have representatives of the main sorts of creatures that comprise the worldwide

fauna of some 2,568 species of damselflies, in 22 different families.

The jewelwings represent a relatively primitive group, with extremely dense wing venation and non-stalked wings. The spreadwings are off on a branch of their own, with body colours that are formed either by iridescence or a greyish pigment called pruinosity (at least among the Alberta species). And finally, the pond damsels are the so-called typical damselflies, and they usually possess bright body colours—typically blue or green—as well.

(Damselflies of Alberta is published by the University of Alberta Press, 2004.)

COMPACT GUIDE TO ALBERTA BIRDS

by Krista Kagume

young daughters and I visited Clifford E. Lee Nature Sanctuary, a protected area just west of Edmonton. Large Canada Geese and their goslings were easy for the girls to see along the side of the road, but other waterfowl bobbed away on the opposite side of the lake. For young people who are just learning to handle binoculars, a picture is a wonderful way to turn those tiny, white, duck-shaped dots into real, live Buffleheads!

As you thumb through the book, colourful photos show the vast diversity of bird eggs. Here's your chance to take a close look at the pyriform-shaped eggs of sandpipers that fit snugly into the nest without rolling away. You may be surprised to discover that ground-nesting sandpipers camouflage their eggs with spots but birds that nest in cavities or burrows often have plain white eggs since their eggs are already well concealed. Always remember that birds go to great lengths to protect their eggs, and nesting birds should be left alone. Activity around a nest may cause the parent to abandon the eggs or may attract predators who have followed your scent trail.

The visual nature of *Compact Guide to Alberta Birds* is great for educators and outdoor leaders seeking quick facts or detailed information

on habitat, voice or nesting. The book also comes complete with an illustrated reference guide for tricky times when all you have to go on is a general description of body shape, colour or habitat. As well, local educators, including John Acorn and Chris Fisher, have contributed their expertise on range maps, plus provided identification tips and tidbits of avian trivia.

The beauty of Lone Pine's compact guides is that local versions are now available across Canada and will soon be featured in some states. Whether you are travelling to Atlantic Canada, British Columbia or Tennessee, you'll be able to pick up an affordable guide, reviewed by local experts, that features the area's most common birds and top birding sites. If you are new to birding, Lone Pine's new compact series can help spark a lifelong love of birds and of nature. If your birding experience makes you as wise as an old owl, this new series will be a charming addition to your book collection and an excellent gift for your non-birding friends.

(Compact Guide to Alberta Birds is published by Lone Pine Publishing. Contributors include John Acorn, Chris Fisher, Andy Bezener, Gregory Kennedy, Krista Kagume, Carmen Adams.)

A REVIEW OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND SUSTAINABILITY NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

By Richard Williams

In January of this year, AWA's Christyann Olson participated in an informal workshop involving 15 people from three Canadian environmental non-governmental organizations (ENGOs) and three resource sector companies. The workshop examined the results of a study, conducted by Vancouver based consultant, Eos Research & Consulting Ltd., which was intended to help the supporting companies respond to the growing number of opportunities for working relationships with ENGOs.

The study was undertaken between July and November 2004 with funding from Suncor Energy, TransCanada Pipelines and Tembec and was comprised of three elements: (1) a survey of Canadian and U.S. ENGOs and the issues facing them; (2) four case histories of business/ENGO relationships ranging from conflict to partnership; and (3) a comparison of how eight Canadian and European companies manage their relationships with external stakeholders and environmental groups in particular.

Over the past 30 years, ENGOs have diverged into a broad spectrum of roles that range from "watchdog" and "creating space for change" to "delivering services" and even government mandates (one group, the Earth Island Institute, had a particularly interesting role as an incubator of new groups and campaigns). At the same time, approaches taken to fulfill these roles have also expanded, with the study focusing on two themes in particular; increasing engagement and collaboration with business and growing reliance on paid, professional staff.

Focusing on the dynamics of business-ENGO relationships, it was noted that collaborative relationships have become widespread only in the past decade. This change appears to reflect the complexity of the emerging issues, with the emergence of issues

such as climate change that no one sector can address by itself. This change has been facilitated both by the growth of the environmental sector (creating groups amenable to cooperation) and the evolution of industry to accept collaboration.

It may have also been helped, at least in Canada, by government initiated "roundtables" such as the Clean Air Strategic Alliance in Alberta, that gave ENGOs and businesses the opportunity to get to know the other. Despite these factors, groups with actual experience collaborating remain much more limited than those with an interest in doing so.

The comparison or benchmarking portion of the study examined eight companies involved in industries ranging from forest products and oil and gas to a utility and a consumer products company. In most cases, the approaches to managing relationships with stakeholders and ENGOs in particular were relatively informal, with responsibility for relationships dispersed throughout each company and with limited formal policy to guide practitioners.

This decentralized response appears to reflect the number and diversity of relationships that each company must manage as well as the newness of greater concern for stakeholder relationships. Notably two companies stood out from this trend, having structure and policies to ensure stakeholder relations are well and consistently managed.

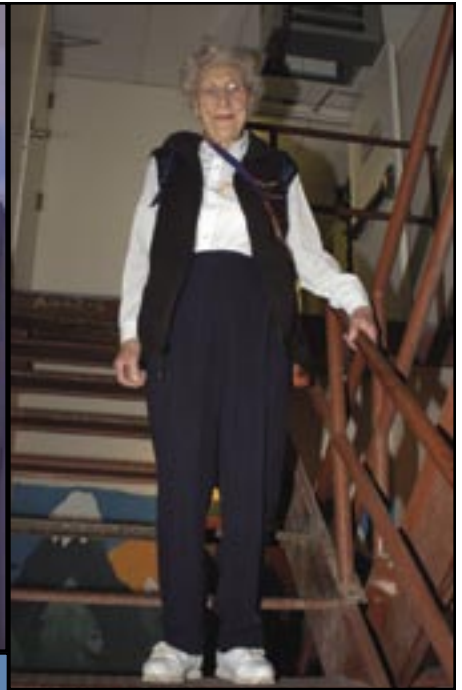
Throughout the study, both the ENGOs and the companies that were spoken to demonstrated a surprising level of agreement on what it took to make collaborative relationships work. The most often cited factor was trust. With different points of view and histories of conflict, it can be difficult for groups and companies to sit down to work together. Trust, and the personal relationships between

leaders on each side that contribute to trust, can be essential to any beginning. Those spoken to also pointed to the importance of having someone willing to take the initiative to approach the other party and of having the capacity (i.e. dollars and people) to sustain the effort required of any particular initiative.

ENGOs continue to evolve, in part to meet the demands of increasingly complex and global environmental issues. Similarly, industries and their individual companies are becoming ever more aware of the need to work with and meet the needs of stakeholders. At the confluence of these trends growing numbers of environmental groups will find themselves working closely with business and government in the years to come.

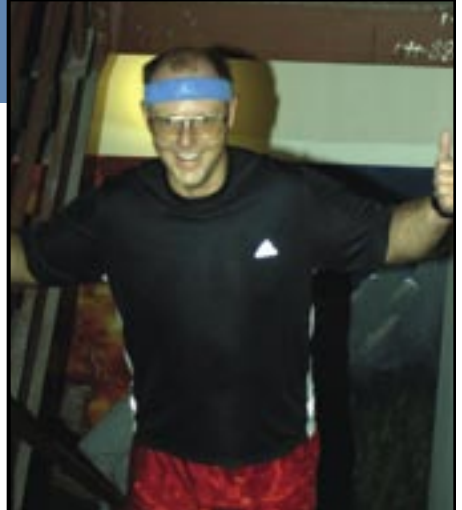
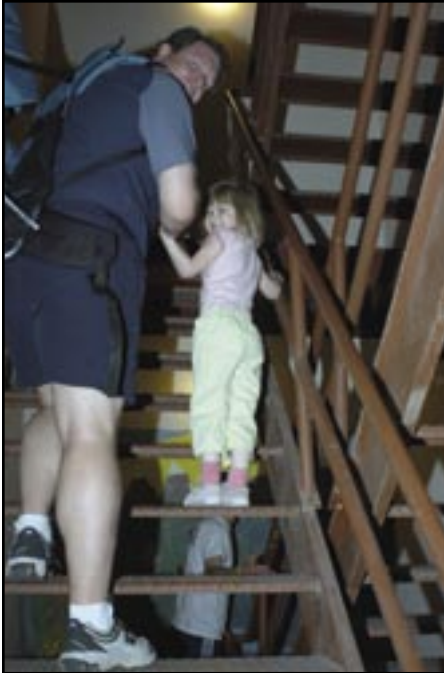
Recognizing this, at the end of the January workshop, the participants concluded that the history and tenor of cross-sectoral conversations in Canada may have created a unique opportunity for developing collaborative relationships that respond to the needs of each sector. Certainly the interviews and conversations with the groups and companies that participated in the Eos study suggest that both are increasingly open to working together. Hopefully this study and other similar initiatives help to make this cooperative future possible.

Richard Williams is the principal of Eos Research & Consulting Ltd. Eos is an independent consultant working on strategic environmental, sustainability and regulatory issues. Mr. Williams previously worked with a major Canadian energy company and has prior experience in investment and commercial banking. He received an MBA from the University of Western Ontario (Ivey) and a B.Sc. from Simon Fraser University. Mr. Williams can be contacted at richard-williams@shaw.ca.



CLIMB FOR WILDERNESS SUCCESS

The annual Climb for Wilderness and Run for Wilderness is one of the best Earth Day events held in Calgary. Climbers between the ages of 3 and 90 years made more than 2100 ascents, up the 802 stairs to the top of the Calgary Tower. AWA extends sincere thanks to the more than 40 sponsors, more than 100 volunteers and every climber and runner who made this day such an incredible success.



IN MEMORIAM

Diane Hughes was a lover of the outdoors. She completed her degree in biology, lived on an acreage in her adult life, had every nature field guide imaginable, worked as a nature interpreter at Carson Pegasus Provincial Park for one summer and was active in the RCMP Civilian Search Dog Association with her search dog Bounty. Any spare time she had was spent outdoors appreciating flowers, birds, a good storm.

Diane passed away suddenly in her sleep on October 26, 2004. She was 51 years old and finishing her degree in environmental health. She passed away due to a small tumor in her heart caused by sarcoidosis.

In her will, Diane left a generous bequest to the Alberta Wilderness Association. We offer our sincere sympathy to her family for their loss. Diane will be remembered for her gift and investment in Alberta's wilderness legacy.



AWA Executive Director Christyann Olson (right) and President Richard Secord (left) were among the guests invited to dinner with the Queen by the Honourable Paul Martin. The Prime Minister's message was one of optimism as he recounted the natural beauty and the resources and strength of the people of this tremendous province.

OPEN HOUSE PROGRAM - SUMMER DAY HIKES

An exciting program of day hikes to a variety of Alberta's wild places. All hikes are led by local experts with a wealth of environmental and historical knowledge of their area.

All day hikes: \$20:00
Pre-registration required for all hikes
Contact us: (403) 283-2025, toll-free
1-866-313-0713, awa@shaw.ca

Saturday, July 23, 2005
Lakeland
with Dr. Richard Thomas

Saturday, July 23, 2005
Ya Ha Tinda
with Will Davies

Saturday, August 20, 2005
Beehive Natural Area
with James Tweedie

Saturday, September 24, 2005
Picklejar Lakes
with Vivian Pharis

BACKPACKING TRIPS

Cost: \$100 – AWA members
\$125 – Non-members

Pre-registration required for all backpacking trips. Trips will be limited to eight participants. Contact AWA at (403) 283-2025 or awa@shaw.ca to book your space or for more details.

July 27-29, 2005
South Castle Wildland

Join guide Reg Ernst on an exploration of the Yarrow Creek headwaters of South Castle.

August 11-14, 2005
White Goat Wilderness
Traverse Nigel and Cataract Passes with guide Don Wales to explore the headwaters of Cataract Creek on the edge of the White Goat Wilderness area.



The AWA Wild West Gala
Friday, September 16, 2005

Please join us for a Wild West time
in support of
Alberta Wilderness Association.

For tickets call 283-2025 or visit
www.AlbertaWilderness.com

A TRIBUTE TO ANDY RUSSELL



1915-2005

AWA extends our deepest sympathy to the family of Andy Russell. We will all miss him and his passion for Alberta's wilderness.

As a tribute to this great man, who had so much energy and passion for wilderness and wildlife conservation in Alberta, AWA is proposing that the Castle Wildland be protected as the Andy Russell Wildland Provincial Park.

In 2003, AWA gave Andy Russell an Alberta Wilderness Defenders Award in recognition of his contribution to wilderness conservation in Alberta. Andy couldn't make it to the award ceremony, so his acceptance speech was videotaped. Even though he was in pain from a recent fall, he spoke to us with all the magical power of a born storyteller. This is what he said.

Well, I can say this to you, in respect to our province of Alberta, which I'm sure you all love and I love just as much as anybody could. At the same time, you and I have traveled this province - we don't have to be told the beauty and the power of this province by anybody. And quite frankly, we've not taken care of it very well. And what we've done is good but what we should be doing is a whole lot more, and very, very important.

What this outfit [AWA] is doing is of greater importance than I think its members know. And while we've gone a long ways and done a lot of work, we haven't even got started yet. And we need to have a consistent and constant pressure, not only on industry but on the government itself, to clean up.

We're in a hell of a shape really, considering the time we've had and the resources that we have to work with. We have got nowhere really. We haven't even got started yet. And it might scare you to death for me to tell you that we could start with our rivers and our creeks, and if we clean that up and get it going, there's some other things that are waiting for us to do.

You know, I'd love to have you all working for me, I really would; working under my direction, showing what needs to be done. I'd love it. I'd love it. And you'd probably end up cursing me because you wouldn't be able to sleep, you wouldn't be able to turn around in your tracks without me having something that I wanted you to do.

We'll let it go at that. There's a great deal to be done. Let's get at it.

Return Undeliverable Canadian Addresses to:



Alberta Wilderness Association
Box 6398, Station D
Calgary, Alberta T2P 2E1
awa@shaw.ca

