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AWA



WILD LANDS ADVOCATE

THE ALBERTA WILDERNESS ASSOCIATION JOURNAL



The White Goat Wilderness — H. Unger

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Annual General Meeting**
Saturday, November 18, 2006

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POWER OF THE PEOPLE

Each fall, AWA takes time to consider the past year and make plans for the coming months. We also take time to write to each of our members and supporters with news of the past year and a request for ongoing support. Your gifts make all the difference to us – they are the reason we continue to be a strong force in this province.

Years ago Albert Camus wrote, “Some say that hope lies in a nation; others, in a man. I believe rather that it is awakened, revived, nourished by millions of solitary individuals, whose deeds and works every day negate frontiers... Each and every man, on the foundations of his own sufferings and joys, builds for all.”

AWA believes in and is based on the power of the people. The outpouring of concern through phone calls, letters and meetings that forced the suspension of the spring grizzly bear hunt is one example of that power. AWA is known for its watchdog role, and as we know more about each corner of the province and the growing pressures on diminishing wilderness and wildlife resources, we make a difference year after year. Your letters and phone calls are appreciated as you help us keep watch on Wild Alberta!

When you go out into Alberta this fall – whether through reading the *Wild Lands Advocate*, hiking a mountain trail, exploring a river coulee resplendent with sage and fall colours, listening to flocks of migrating geese, or appreciating the iridescent glow of larch trees – remember the daily work of AWA and the ongoing commitment to keep the wild in Alberta. We need your support. Your contributions allow us to be financially independent and free to speak out for wilderness and wildlife.



Mule deer in the Castle Wildland

Each day we are reassured by the knowledge and support of individuals who help us build for all. Our vision of Wild Alberta is a powerful one. We are strong with your support, and we are tenacious in our quest for truly protected areas that represent each of Alberta’s magnificent natural landscapes. Please send your gift today.

Yours in conservation,

Christyann Olson
Executive Director

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N. Douglas



THE QUIET URBANIZATION OF THE BACKCOUNTRY: PART 4

By Shirley Bray and Vivian Pharis

The current parade of commercial recreational lease applications in the Eastern Slopes, coming on the heels of increasing oil and gas development and recreation pressures, is causing concern over the fate of our diminishing backcountry wilderness. While some people want to stop this march of urbanization into our publicly owned backcountry, others wonder how they too can scoop up a piece of paradise cheap when the recreational property market is so hot.

“Carving out a mountain lodge in the backcountry wilderness is the dream of many a desk-bound businessman,” begins a 1988 Calgary Herald article on Mt. Engadine Lodge in Kananaskis. But Brad Stelfox of Forem Technologies is shocking audiences with forecasts of the cumulative effects of development in the Eastern Slopes. His ALCES models show development moving westwards and mushrooming in the foothills where scenic unspoiled vistas still exist.

Commercial recreation ventures, just one more pressure on the landscape, are being approved with outdated planning tools and an antiquated value system that emphasizes development over protection. People are concerned that owners and potential developers will demand growth of these little bubbles of permanent recreational development in our wild lands for “economic viability,” and that they will swallow up ever more public land, like an urbanization cancer within the backcountry.

Our wilderness areas are no longer vast frontiers, but fragile landscapes endangered by the relentless expansion and intensification of human activities. These days we glibly repeat that our economy depends on the environment – what does this mean for specific on-the-ground decisions? The culture of secrecy that pervades government

prevents the public from knowing much about public land activities.

This is particularly true of commercial recreation proposals, even though many are designed for a public clientele. AWA was forced to obtain records through the freedom of information and privacy (FOIP) process. Because of differing interpretations of our request, many records we asked for were not provided. A staff person from SRD’s FOIP office spent a number of long phone calls trying to discourage us from obtaining any files at all.

Everyone acknowledges the Integrated Resource Plans (IRPs) that followed on the heels of the 1977 (and revised 1984) Eastern Slopes Policy are out of date. The multiple-use strategy is now considered passé. Several broader planning processes in the Eastern Slopes are underway, but in the meantime many developments, from oil and gas projects to forest management plans to commercial recreation ventures, are in the process of being

approved and will have consequences for decades.

Over the past four decades we’ve seen land use plans come and go. They have consumed countless hours and energy of citizens, yet we are still crying for a plan. It begs the question: how many horses will still be left in the barn if and when the promised overarching land use plan is developed, and will such a plan really make any difference to the horses left? Will we ever be prepared to shut the barn door to protect our wilderness and watersheds?

In our fourth article in this series, we examine the ups and downs of the Alberta Tourism and Recreation Leasing (ATRL) process through the lens of some current proposals that have caught the public’s eye. The process deals with commercial recreation proposals on public land considered large enough to require a comprehensive review. Battling them one by one is a slow and uncertain way to change the system, but public



Looking north along Willow Creek which runs under Highway 532. The eastern bank of the creek at this site is popular for random camping.

S. Bray

involvement has shone a less-than-savoury light on the process that may prompt change.

First Come, First Serve

When Henk and Riny de Jonge took over the operation of Indian Graves Campground at the south end of Kananaskis Country four years ago, they recognized the value of the area for the recreating public. Nestled between Willow Creek and Johnson Creek on the north side of Highway 532, the public campground provides a base for numerous recreational

children. They also saw that a great deal could be done to improve the area to make it amenable for all users.

It wasn't long before the enterprising de Jonges thought of expanding their operation and making use of the old Willow Creek Ranger Station across the highway on the west side of Willow Creek. They thought the site would be suitable for storage, a concession, shower facilities and the location of additional campsites, especially for OHV users, that would be more attractive than random camping. Underlying all their plans was

with the Calgary Sustainable Resource Development (SRD) office, said that, unlike the others, BBWC pursued leasing the site and "were eventually told they could submit an application."

Needless to say, this did not sit well with either the de Jonges or WCSA. Of particular concern was their feeling that preference was given to BBWC because one of its founding members, Glenn Brown of Blue Bronna Guiding and Outfitting, was on very friendly terms with then SRD Minister Mike Cardinal, as intimated in newsletters of the Alberta Outfitters Association. Cove admitted that MLAs can influence the ATRL process, but that it can also work against a proponent.

The WCSA argued that the first-come, first-served system does not ensure the best use of the land and resources by Albertans. A legal review of the process proved unfruitful. Cove suggested SRD might want to revisit how ATRLs are processed, but said it would be unfair to change the rules in mid-stream for an application in process. Because the WCSA had to protect their rangeland interests and make certain their needs were met, they worked with BBWC and SRD to resolve conflicts over boundaries and fencing, and eventually signed a memorandum of understanding. However, they remain dissatisfied with the ATRL process.

Riny de Jonge said when SRD changed their minds about the site, they should have let the public know and given everyone a fair chance. Looking back through a two-inch thick file of correspondence, she reflected that the process was all wrong to begin with; it was unclear, unfair, and ultimately a waste of time for everyone.

"First-come first-served – it might work in a supermarket but not in a more complicated setting like this, because you should really look at what's best for the whole area and the bigger picture, and not say, 'Okay, well, he happened to be first so too bad.' It doesn't work."

Limiting Public Involvement

According to its application, BBWC is a 17-year-old non-profit, charitable organization run by a volunteer board of directors under the

S. Bray



The 532 runs west from Highway 22 to the Forestry Trunk Road (940) and is the boundary between Kananaskis Country to the north and the Livingstone-Porcupine area to the south.

activities including hiking, fishing, mountain biking, equestrian users, and motorized users.

Although OHVs are not allowed on the north side, the forest reserve on the south side of the highway provides an unregulated playground for random campers and motorized recreation. With no marked trails and little law enforcement, the motorized free-for-all has created a huge amount of damage to the landscape and illegal use in Kananaskis. Parts of the forest reserve are now closed to motorized traffic to protect the rangeland. The Willow Creek Stock Association (WCSA) has grazing allotments in the area, which entitles them to a certain amount of forage.

However, the beauty of the area, the numerous recreational activities, and the proximity to their Okotoks home made the venture desirable for the couple, who have two small

the desire to keep these facilities public.

Prior to the fall of 2003, other parties, including the WCSA and the non-profit Blue Bronna Wilderness Camp (BBWC), had also inquired, formally and informally, about using the abandoned site and old buildings. They were all told that the site and facilities would be reclaimed and were not available for use. But that fall, BBWC applied for a recreational lease on the site and adjacent lands. Their proposal was accepted and entered into the ATRL process.

The de Jonges and the WCSA were out of luck. ATRL rules say applications are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis and once the ATRL process starts for an applicant, it cannot be stopped. Proponents can amend their application until it is acceptable, ensuring that other applications are never considered. An email from Tracey Cove, a forester



Blue Bronna Wilderness Camp's recreation lease on the west side of Willow Creek was pared down to 22 acres from the original proposal of 140 acres. This resulted in avoidance of the riparian area next to Willow Creek and allowed for cattle movement around the lease by the Willow Creek Stock Association.

Canadian Sunday School Mission, which has seven camps in Alberta. It offers guided and supervised outdoor education and experiences, including hiking and commercial trail riding, to a variety of clients in a Christian context.

After 14 years in the Dutch Creek and Old Man River area, BBWC felt they were unable to offer their program safely amidst ongoing logging, which would also impact most of their trails. They relocated their trail riding operation further north. Then they looked for a permanent site from which to expand their operation to a year-round program, including winter activities, and settled on the Willow Creek Ranger Station. They got letters of support from the MD of Ranchlands, Spray Lake Sawmills, and Devon Oil and Gas “for using a facility already designated for this type of use.”

Curiously, two of the three letters were from private companies whose activities on the same public land base have garnered significant public concern. When did the facility become designated for commercial recreation use? According to Blairmore forestry officer Norman Hawkes, it is a matter of word of mouth as far as who learns about the availability of a site first and applies for a lease, because such sites are never advertised. Apparently abandoned ranger stations, unless specifically proscribed from development, are usually up for grabs.

After a pre-application meeting with various government staff to comment on an ATRL proposal, the proponent submits a formal application, which is referred to various government agencies for comment. The proponent

is required to place a small ad in a local newspaper for two weeks to solicit public comments. Such a system is designed to limit public involvement, and it is here that word of mouth really counts to get the word out. AWA only found out about these applications from concerned members.

AWA suggested to Cove that SRD place all applications on a webpage in a table that shows what stage they are at, along with pertinent documentation. Proponents are encouraged but not required to submit an electronic copy of their application. If only a paper copy is available, people generally must obtain it from a local MD or SRD office. De Jonge said that BBWC’s application had to be accessed at the MD of Ranchland office, which meant a day trip for her.

Cove says the system has to be fair and open to everyone. AWA does not disagree with that, but one wonders what serious business venture these days, especially one looking for a geographic diversity of clients, lacks a computer or a website. Cove said she is amenable to placing information on the web but intimated she has been discouraged from doing so by her superiors. The public is not informed as to whether proposals are accepted or rejected, nor do they receive responses to their comments. When you don’t make reasons clear to people, de Jonge remarked, you will only meet with resistance.

Once comments are received, Cove places them in an issues matrix, which has a column for comments and one for government responses. The public is excluded from the rest of the

process unless the proposal changes substantially or enough pressure is exerted to require public meetings at which further comments are solicited. When de Jonge asked why SRD held no public meetings regarding BBWC’s proposal, she was told that not many people show up so why bother.

The de Jonges had a lot of trouble being recognized as stakeholders and getting accurate information about the proposal. Although Cardinal assured them in a letter that a “number of face-to-face meetings ... held with local residents and stakeholders to discuss the proposal and listen to concerns” had occurred, the de Jonges only got to attend one and only because WECSA invited them. They felt the process tended to set people in conflict rather than encourage them to work together. For example, BBWC included offering services to Indian Graves campers in their application without first consulting the de Jonges.

Once the comments are tallied, a proposal is either rejected, or the proponent is asked for further information before decision, or a letter of intent is issued that includes a list of additional requirements before a lease is given. Cove says the latter equates to approval in principle if certain conditions are met. BBWC received their letter of intent in August 2004; by June 2005 the conditions were met and SRD was prepared to issue a lease.

Hodgepodge Planning

Every current proposal for commercial recreation in the Eastern Slopes is proceeding without an updated area management plan.

The 1987 IRP for the Livingstone-Porcupine, which includes the Willow Creek ranger station, encourages “the development and expansion of commercial and private tourism and recreation facilities, particularly by the private sector on public land,” with an emphasis on using established transportation corridors.

The WCSA felt the ATRL program did not consider current resource management issues in determining best use. They felt the area would not handle the extra pressure from additional users and uses proposed. Cove noted that Blue Bronna’s application conformed to the IRP and that without “an area structure plan dictating specific development criteria, it would be very difficult,” especially after BBWC met the WCSA demands regarding fencing and access issues, “to deny the lease.”

In June 2004 SRD was planning to start an Access Management Plan (AMP) for the area within two years, but this has now been pushed back to eight to ten years. The WCSA argued that “a long-term management plan for the area is urgent and essential” and “long-term leases without long-term plans just do not make sense.” Mistakes are costly and difficult to correct. They are particularly concerned that the potential for an OHV program remains in BBWC’s application, a program BBWC agreed to defer until an AMP was developed.

BBWC suggested that although they would introduce many more people to the area, “the positive impact would more than compensate for any

C. Olson



A view up Allison Creek.

extra use” (originally called “negative impacts”). Unsubstantiated statements are common in ATRL applications. De Jonge said it was irresponsible of SRD to give people permits to start more businesses when they haven’t solved the issues.

“At present there are no carrying capacities set for businesses in an area on public land,” said Cove. “The market is allowed to determine how many businesses an area can sustain. It has been demonstrated in other areas that like businesses attract more business if they pool their services and complement one another. This,” she claimed, “is working well in Kananaskis Valley and Panther Corners where businesses attract and share clients.”

The de Jonges noted that one of SRD’s major responsibilities, according to its website, is to optimize “the benefits (environmental, social and economic) that Albertans receive from public lands through effective, efficient planning and disposition management.” In a letter to Cardinal, they said SRD told them there were no plans for the

area, “yet your department is spending time and energy on getting rid of valuable land and facilities on a 25-year lease to a large private development initiative.”

They expected leaders to anticipate problems and take action before they grew too big and costly to resolve. They felt the ranger station could be “a key asset in the preservation of this environment and can be used to the benefit of all tourists visiting this area.” However, SRD replied that anyone can apply for a lease to use public land and there was a long tradition of approving leases for private organizations.

De Jonge said SRD should redirect the large amounts of time and energy they spend on ATRL applications to developing a proper management plan where everyone knows what the rules are. Currently, each development is considered on its own merits, which is leading to somewhat ad hoc development throughout the Eastern Slopes. Environmental and cumulative impact assessments are not required for these smaller developments. AWA does not feel that ecosystem integrity is being adequately considered.

With increasing land use impacts in the Eastern Slopes, greater control needs to be placed on exactly where permanent commercial recreation ventures can be placed. AWA continues to advocate placing permanent commercial recreation facilities in nearby communities on private land and leaving our public wild lands alone.

Adventures without Planning

Against the backdrop of the majestic Crowsnest Mountain, Western Adventures has been staging commercial trail rides into the backcountry for the past 13 years. Their 10-acre base camp lies up Allison Creek valley on a rough logging road that travels north from Highway 3 past the Allison-Chinook cross country ski area. As with other developments, this one also lies on the banks of a watercourse. As with other commercial trail riding (CTR) operators with base camps, they too want to enlarge their development to be more economically viable.



Western Adventures base camp lies in the shadow of the majestic Crowsnest Mountain and overlooks Allison Creek.

V. Pharis

Typically, their plans also include year-round activities and permanent facilities such as a campground, horse and snowmobile shelters, a cookhouse and log cabins. Also in common with many other such developments, their services would include horseback riding lessons, winter activities, weddings, and business retreats, in addition to trail riding.

The area falls under the Crowsnest Watershed Resource Management area of the Livingstone-Porcupine IRP. One objective is “to reduce negative impacts of land use activities on wildlife and wildlife habitat.” Allison Creek is one of a number of high-quality sport-fishing streams in the area, and the IRP emphasizes maintaining high-quality watershed values and protecting aquatic and riparian habitat.

The IRP recommends focusing tourism opportunities in the Municipality of Crowsnest, well south of the base camp, “due to existing infrastructure, services and facilities.” However, it also says that unique opportunities for facility development that cannot be accommodated, or are not appropriate, in the municipality will be considered.

Western Adventures’ application appears to fall into this latter category and is also in a multiple-use zone. It is likely their application will be successful. Hawkes said that there is growing public demand for such backcountry opportunities, but that is no reason for urbanizing our backcountry.

David McIntyre, a Crowsnest resident and a contributor to a recent birding brochure for the area, notes that Deadman Pass is the third lowest in the Rocky Mountain corridor between New Mexico and Jasper National Park. It is also notable for its lack of human linear disturbance (roads, railways) that interferes with wildlife movement. He believes the proposed development would be detrimental for unimpeded wildlife movement, would negatively impact surface water quality, and would disturb the tranquility and wildland character of the overly small cross-country ski area, already compromised by surrounding motorized use.

He feels that “society would be best served by curtailing the existing lease and managing the land for the

best long-term public good. The worst scenario would be to grant the proposed application, thus allowing a quantum leap in the de facto industrialization of

was slated to be cleared of trees to accommodate a hay shelter, 10 tent sites, a parking lot and office, tie stalls, a corral, outhouses, and access.



S. Bray

Just north of the base camp for Western Adventures, run-off flows down the west side of the road and through a culvert to the east side. The water pools in the meadow below the horses in the riding arena just above Allison Creek.

this recently ‘wild’ public land base.” Opponents are concerned that owners of such developments will continue to desire expansion for economic reasons and that similar developments in the area will follow, as happened in the Panther River valley.

If You Build It, Permission Will Come

After 11 years of setting up adventure training services in the backcountry for the British military, Lazy H Trail Company owner Richard Blair decided to expand the company’s public business by opening an equestrian campground, called Trappers Hill Lodges, in the Ghost River area. He chose a site eight km along the TransAlta Ghost River Diversion Road, on a ridge overlooking the Ghost River to the south.

In 1998 he obtained a CTR permit and in 2000 he acquired a 10-year Miscellaneous Lease (MLL) for a 15-acre base camp, originally described as an “adventure tourism backcountry camp.” The site was composed of a predominantly pine overstorey with limited grazing for wildlife or livestock, requiring that Blair import feed for the horses. About one acre

However, because the site is on public land in the MD of Bighorn, an MD development permit, in addition to provincial approval, was required before any buildings could be erected. Development applications are supposed to be advertised in a local newspaper. Greg Birch, a planning and development officer for the MD, said Lazy H did not follow this process.

“This was an exception,” he said, as the owners had established one or two cabins on the site without any approvals in 2000. The province issued two stop orders before development eventually halted and the owners began to apply for approvals. In 2003 they advertised their equestrian camp and spent the next two summers hosting clientele.

Like other trail ride operators, not only was their base camp allowed to be more elaborate than the CTR policy indicates, but they soon had plans to have a year-round operation with a 50-bedroom lodge, 10 fully serviced cabins, 30 additional tent sites, 100 RV sites, a recreation centre, and other amenities on a quarter section (160 acres). They have another MLL for a base camp in the mountains.

Like other applicants for this

type of development, the intent changed from a “backcountry camp” to a centre for corporate functions and conferences, as well as a wide range of winter and summer (in this case non-motorized) leisure activities and interpretive programs. British and Canadian Forces personnel continue to be key clients.

While the main site is perched on a ridge above the river, the suggested location for the RV sites is on the lowest bench adjacent to the river. The application notes the steepness between upper and lower benches, with smaller benches in between that are heavily treed with poplar, but says “these benches offer ideal locations for septic fields and access roads top to bottom.”

Lazy H submitted an ATRL application in 2005 after two years of preparation. Not surprisingly, AWA missed the one notice placed in a local Cochrane paper in August 2006 for public comments, but Cove allowed AWA to make comments past the deadline but prior to a final decision.

While the MD is keen to have lower impact developments like the equestrian camp, Birch says the year-round operation is pushing the limits of the MD’s comfort zone, as it does not fall within one of the development nodes they have recently established with their new Municipal Development Plan. The nodes allow developments such as hotels and group camps, while outside of the nodes, scattered trail riding operations are permitted. Birch said the MD is unlikely to allow other larger random developments like the Lazy H’s, although this resolve could change with a new administration.

Panther River Adventures Appeals

The first three parts of our series followed the trials and activities of Panther River Adventures (PRA) owner Terry Safron, who had done some controversial trail maintenance and then applied through the ATRL process to expand his lease on the banks of the Panther River. The application received significant negative public comment before and after an open house.

Cove was reluctant to say that the application had essentially been denied and that Safron was appealing. She finally told AWA that the application was still in process. We heard that both

M. MacQuarrie



Although Western Adventures maintains that they clean up horse manure every day, this January 2006 photo shows a large amount of manure left at their base camp over winter.

Safron and his local opponents were consulting with their respective MLAs.

The FOIPed documents, however, answer some important questions that came up over the course of our investigation: specifically, how the buffer on the site was reduced from the 150 metres recommended in the CTR Policy to 20 metres.

In October 1988, a couple of years after the original lessees acquired the lease, Forestry noted in an inspection report that there were facilities outside the lease boundary and that there were developments within the 100-metre buffer designated for the site. In 2002 when the lease was transferred to PRA, these issues had to be cleared up.

Cove wrote that “a file review uncovered the department’s intention to amend the lease to include facilities outside of the lease boundaries and, among other changes to the conditions, agreed to reduce the buffer between the camp and the river to 20 m from 100 m.” Although discussed

V. Pharris



A campsite at Western Adventures overlooks Allison Creek.

with the original lessee in 1989, the amendments and changes were never processed until the lease was assigned to PRA in 2002.

Private Paradises

In early 2004 Safron brought up the issue of separating his CTR permit from the MLL to make the MLL more attractive to prospective buyers if he decided to sell out. With the CTR attached, a buyer would have to be eligible to work in the business in order to buy the MLL. Cove noted that the MLL was originally issued for a permanent base camp for a CTR operation. “The MLL has evolved into a four-season operation,” wrote Cove, and although trail riding was still an important activity, some guests preferred to do other activities or simply stayed on site.

After much discussion, SRD has decided that CTRs will not be separated from MLLs. They are well aware that it is easier to put infrastructure on a base camp or get ATRL approval for a development by going through an easily obtainable CTR permit and MLL for a base camp. In PRA’s case, a manager’s residence and additional lands and uses had been approved on the lease without going through an ATRL process.

Rick Blackwood, the SRD Area Manager at the time, commented that CTRs should remain tied to MLLs and that any change in business direction and intent should trigger an ATRL process. He was concerned that MLLs must be tied to some realistic commercial activity; otherwise “we

are opening the door for any and all interested parties to apply for their own little piece of paradise without a true purpose (hidden behind something else on the application). This could cause [a] flood of these kinds of applications from the OHV community and those with their own favorite camp sites.”

Blackwood hit the nail on the head. How is the department to determine if a legitimate commercial operation is present and the lease is not being used for a private getaway? It is government policy that developments are not permitted for the purpose of gaining a private residence in public lands in the Green Area. However, SRD does not check the books of these operations. Economic Development reviews the business section of an application and provides advice to help those whose financial summary may be inadequate to make the operation viable. Cove says it is up to the individual leaseholder to decide if the

S. Bray



The Lazy H Trail Co.'s equestrian camp, Trapper's Hill Lodges, lies on a ridge overlooking the Ghost River.

business remains profitable enough to continue.

If the operator cannot afford to continue, he or she can assign the lease to someone else who can buy the business. Safron paid over \$200,000 for the Panther River operation. With recreation properties at an all-time high, there is concern that the highest economic value of these leases will not

be producing a wanted service, but will be a piece of real estate whose value is increasing every year.

Cove said she has noticed a shift in attitude in senior SRD administrators toward land use. She no longer feels compelled to accept all commercial recreation proposals. Taking a lot of the discretion out of the process by proper land planning would help achieve the clarity and fairness of which Riny de Jonge spoke.

One possibility is to try to infuse the Land Use Framework the government is developing with a strong public land and wilderness ethic. The government needs to de-emphasize tourism development in the Eastern Slopes, which can detract from the area's wilderness character and compromise watershed values. Public support and involvement is essential if citizens are to save these precious wild lands for our future and the public good.

PETER SHERRINGTON: LINKING PEOPLE TO RAPTORS AND NATURAL WORLD

By Leslie Beaton Hedley

Imagine standing on a mountainside buffeted by 100-km-per-hour winds. Now imagine doing that for 11 hours straight in rain, sleet, snow or hail, with weather ranging 30 degrees on either side of zero. Daunting? Not if you're Peter Sherrington. It's just a typical day at the "office" for Sherrington, who will receive an Alberta Wilderness Defender Award this year.

On a fateful day in 1993, a passion for the majestic raptors sunk its talons into the Cochrane man. A decade and a half later, the magnificent obsession shows no sign of relinquishing its hold. Even after a full day of observation, followed by time at the computer to update a daily log (see www.eaglewatch.net), enthusiasm warms Sherrington's voice as he discusses the eagles and their significance – not only to the ecosystem, but to humankind.

"They are important portals to the natural world," he says, noting that the birds are predators at the top of their

food chain and "as the eagles go, so will we." The sight of the majestic, "totemic" raptors also reawakens our primal ties to the natural world, he says. Seeing them "reminds us our veneer of domestication has not completely taken over."



P. Knowlton Cockett

Peter Sherrington

Before Sherrington's interest in golden eagles hatched a second career, he worked in the oil and gas industry for 30 years. At the time of the Gulf War, he decided to leave that field "for various reasons." He'd taken a year off and was helping friend Des Allen, a steward of the Mount Lorette area in Kananaskis, with research at Hay Meadow. "Des was focusing mostly on plants and I was helping him out" by recording observations about the avian population of the area.

On March 22, 1993, at about 11:30 a.m., Sherrington spotted a lone golden eagle rising on a thermal current. It was joined by a second eagle, and the researchers assumed the birds were a resident pair. But when a third eagle joined the circling pair and the expected fighting didn't begin, Sherrington's curiosity was piqued.

As more birds became visible, it was apparent much more was going on in the area than researchers had dreamed. Sherrington and Allen began

keeping count. By the end of the day, they'd spotted 103 golden eagles. The next afternoon, they noted 250. Sherrington had made an incredible find: the migration route of golden eagles, traveling from their winter habitat in the U.S. and northern Mexico to their breeding grounds in Alaska and Yukon. Until then, it was believed the majority of golden eagles didn't migrate.

S. Bray



Peter, the host of the AWA Annual Lecture for several years, congratulates Cliff Wallis on receiving the Wilderness Defender Award in 2004.

Sherrington's discovery opened a door to a new understanding of the birds' breeding and migration habits, and utterly changed our understanding of the magnificent birds. As well, his careful chronicling of the golden eagles' dwindling numbers has lent further weight to concerns about climate change as it affects North American wildlife. Global warming may be leading to drought conditions in the birds' winter areas, which would limit their food supply.

"Changing agricultural practices may also be a factor," says Sherrington, noting that the reason for the population decrease of about one-third is probably a complex of many factors, including human encroachment on wild areas and the birds' value to European collectors, who may pay US\$65,000 for a single specimen. "We're not sure

how big the trade in these birds is," he says, noting that eagle feathers are also prized by First Nations for spiritual ceremonies and are "very hard to come by legitimately."

Since that pivotal moment at Hay Meadow, Sherrington, now Research Director of Rocky Mountain Eagle Research Foundation, has dedicated himself to observing the eagles as they ride thermal winds along the mountains that run like a spine down western North America. He estimates that 19,700 golden eagles have been spotted by himself, Des Allen, and a host of volunteers at Mount Lorette and Bellevue in the Crowsnest Pass.

"The value of the [program's] volunteer work for the last year is \$103,000," notes Sherrington, estimating about 1,500 people per year. Although such input is always important, this year saw a particularly generous donation of time and labour as volunteers stepped in to act as observers while Sherrington attended his wife, Barbara, through a difficult illness.

The public's curiosity about golden eagle migration has enabled Sherrington to bring the environment to the notice of "hundreds of thousands of people through dozens of newspaper articles and radio interviews." Similarly, during the Canmore Festival of Eagles, 1,500 to 2,000 people annually learn more about the great birds. This festival takes place the weekend after Thanksgiving and is entering its twelfth year.

Sherrington, a past president of AWA, has been a member for 30 years and served on the board for 10 years. He has given an estimated 250 presentations on golden eagles, at the festival and elsewhere. These, he says, "help the public take the next step. It brings in people who would not otherwise become involved in the environmental movement. ... In the past, we have spent far too much time in meetings. It's much more important to get out and interface with people, so they know how to see the landscape – to read the landscape, rather than just use it as a playground."

If he had his way, the public would be better educated in environmental issues from childhood. He believes that environmental literacy should be the fourth R. "I don't know how you get an R out of that, but it should be reading, writing, arithmetic and environmental literacy." Such steps are needed, he says, because "the majority of people don't go into the wild at all." "It's a question of values," he adds. "If you don't understand it, you don't protect it." He is adamant regarding the solution: public education. "We have to re-teach them."

Although his tireless efforts on behalf of the eagles has allowed Sherrington less time with his grandchildren than he would have liked, he has worked to ensure a legacy of stewardship that he hopes will benefit generations to come. "As long as these birds have a future," he says, "so do we."



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GOVERNMENT HOG-TIES COMMITTEE FOR CARIBOU RECOVERY

By David Samson, AWA Conservation Specialist

The Alberta Caribou Committee (ACC) – charged with enacting a recovery plan for woodland caribou, a threatened species in Alberta – appears to be woefully under-resourced by the provincial government to accomplish that task.

“In a nutshell, I think we’re making progress, but not at the pace that many of us would like,” says Dr. Luigi Morgantini, a member of the ACC, a wildlife biologist with Weyerhaeuser, and an adjunct professor with University of Alberta. Morgantini has spent more than 25 years researching and mitigating the impact of human activity on wildlife and biodiversity.

“It is an issue of resources; that is, people. Everybody [on the committee] has other jobs.” Morgantini acknowledges it is a difficult and challenging process to start with, but not having the proper resources exacerbates the problem.

Cliff Wallis, an AWA director and ACC member, echoes those sentiments. “We are seeing glacial movement on the ACC. It’s been one year since the committee was established and the first concrete recommendations from a sub-committee are not expected until October. In the meantime, the ACC is on hold, it is business as usual in places like the Little Smoky, and wildlife continues to suffer.”

The ACC is a committee made up of well-intentioned and highly qualified people, but is apparently not provided with sufficient resources or tools to complete the job for which it has been commissioned. Only one of an intended seven caribou range (or landscape) teams has been established. Wallis attributes the lack of progress to the government “dancing around the budget, not providing adequate human resources to accomplish the goals, and not providing sufficient funds for the committee and its sub-committees to

make progress in woodland caribou recovery.” He deems this to be a “critical failure.”

Alberta classified woodland caribou as “threatened” under the 1987 *Wildlife Act* and as “endangered” under the 2000 *Wildlife Act*. Federally, COSEWIC and the *Species At Risk Act* listed the species as “threatened” in 2000 and 2002 respectively. In 2005, the ACC was established by the provincial government from an amalgamation of two previous committees and a woodland caribou recovery team to ensure Alberta has a caribou recovery plan in place by 2007.

The government has recognized since the 1970s that an effective provincial management plan is necessary to stem the long-term decline of woodland caribou in Alberta. At least three separate government-commissioned strategies have come and gone (1986, 1993, and 1996) with few recommendations being adopted. The fear is that this committee could become the fourth to suffer such a fate.

Alberta Sustainable Resource Development’s own website states clearly what it believes is currently happening to the caribou and why: “Among North American ungulates, the woodland caribou appears to be least able to adapt to the magnitude of environmental changes associated with agricultural, urban, and industrial development over the past 100 years. ... These caribou are likely to become extirpated in Alberta if the factors causing their reduction in numbers are not reversed. ... There is little data on past and current population size of caribou in Alberta.”

The inaction of the provincial government in ensuring adequate resources are in place to properly address and implement a woodland caribou recovery plan reflects the low priority it has given to woodland caribou recovery, even though it

knows what is happening and why. The government appears to be acting as if extirpation is a *fait accompli* by feigning interest in caribou recovery.

In our roaring economy, it is clearly a matter of political will, not money. Public sentiment appears to be siding with the caribou. A recent Alberta Forest Products Association survey found that over 80 percent of respondents believed that access and use of forests should be based primarily on preserving and protecting the environment and sustaining wildlife habitat at the expense of sustained economic benefits and jobs.

In the meantime, with the ACC on a glacial-paced course, and government intransigent in considering a deferral or moratorium on industrial activity, industry continues with a “smash and grab” for oil and gas in the Little Smoky woodland caribou herd’s habitat. Industry is now expanding that activity into the relatively pristine caribou and grizzly bear habitat in the Kakwa region – virtually assuring the imminent extirpation of the Little Smoky herd. Time is becoming increasingly short for woodland caribou, the ACC, and according to Cliff Wallis, ENGO support for the committee.



Woodland Caribou

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CUMULATIVE EFFECTS STUDY FILLS GAP IN SOUTH EASTERN SLOPES PLANNING

By Nigel Douglas, AWA Conservation Specialist

“They were right about not having a plan...There wasn’t a plan.” When he uttered these immortal words recently in his farewell to the Alberta legislature, Premier Klein was referring to the province’s unprecedented economic explosion. But these words could just as well have referred to the absence of any sort of long-term land-use planning in the incremental development of Alberta’s Eastern Slopes

In the absence of proper land-use planning, the default for the Livingstone Porcupine region and many others has become a chaotic process where gas well applications are decided on a well-by-well basis, forestry and other industries operate on the same landscape but with minimal cooperation, and the bow-wave of population growth looms ominously on the horizon. There is no long-term vision for where we are heading or how we are going to get there.

As we all learned in high school physics, Nature abhors a vacuum. This is where the Southern Foothills Study (SFS) steps in. “The Southern Foothills Study was initiated to bring people together,” says Alan Gardner of Southern Alberta Land Trust Society (SALTS). “At the moment there is a continuing fight between developers and landowners which will end up with frustration and anger. This is not an efficient way of carrying out land-use planning.”

SFS is a broad alliance of municipalities, landowner groups, industrial representatives and environmental groups that formed in 2005 to study current and future trends of land use in this area and to provide a base upon which local landowners and government can plan for the future. The study area is 1.22 million hectares of fescue grassland, foothills, forest and mountains, stretching from the B.C. border east to Highway 2, and from Turner Valley south to the Crowsnest Pass.

Many people are familiar with the gently rolling grasslands alongside the highway as one drives south out of Calgary down Highway 22, the “Cowboy Trail.” But it is much more than this: this is a landscape that contributes a tremendous amount to



The Oldman River, part of the South Saskatchewan River Basin, supports some of Alberta’s largest Engelmann spruce and whitebark pine trees, and is home to a diverse range of animal and plant species.

the quality of life in Alberta. It is the foothills and forests that clean and filter clean water for communities across southern Alberta; home to a wide array of wildlife, including grizzly bears, flying squirrels and bull trout. It is a ranching community that has shown itself to be sustainable for over a hundred years; the breathtaking backdrop to the movies *Unforgiven* and *Brokeback Mountain*.

And it has oil, gas and timber. Unfortunately, particularly in recent years, development of the (non-renewable) oil and gas resource has been allowed to trump everything else, including southern Alberta’s water source. In Alberta we tend to value only those things that we can put a dollar value to. Developing the oil and gas reserves in the region or cutting the forests brings a direct measurable financial input to the Alberta treasury. But how do we put a dollar value on clean water? On sustainable communities or on beautiful landscapes?

SFS was born out of a growing frustration with the status quo: decisions were being made that will

have major long-term effects on the landscape and on communities living there, but local people are being given no opportunity to have a say.

John Lawson of the Livingstone Landowners Group refers to the “Circle of Denial” of energy leases. Alberta Energy decides to sell leases on the underground mineral resources, often at the prompting of energy companies but with no opportunity for public input. Alberta Energy Utilities Board (EUB), as the regulator, decides *how* the mineral resource will be developed, but the decision on *whether* to develop it has already been made by then.

Local residents and landowners can only get a say if they can jump through the considerable hoops needed to trigger a public hearing. The energy companies point out that they are only trying to develop what the Alberta government has told them can be developed. And so the circle continues: everybody denies responsibility, and the Alberta public has no chance to have a say.

In an April 2006 pre-hearing for one more well application by Compton Petroleum, one of up to

N. Douglas

880 wells Compton plans to drill across 110 sections, the EUB denied standing to AWA and three landowner groups (the Pekisko and Livingstone Landowners Groups and the South Porcupine Stewardship Association) in any future hearing. These groups and neighbouring landowners were deemed to be not “directly affected.”

This led to a protest letter delivered by the groups to the EUB stating that “the regulatory system in this province has become irreparable and no longer supports the interests of ordinary Albertans or the rights of surface owners.” At a subsequent meeting between EUB staff and representatives from AWA and the three landowner groups, EUB Chairman Neil McCrank acknowledged that “there are a lot of things that have to be changed.” The SFS study is an attempt to get the ball rolling on these changes.

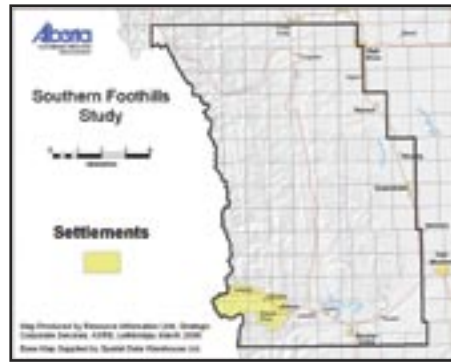


L. Pharis

A long-term vision and effective land use planning, now seriously lacking, are crucial to keep places like the Porcupine Hills from becoming increasingly fragmented by industrial activity.

Phase 1 of the SFS study has focused on the production of a detailed, science-based cumulative effects study of the region. To this effect, Brad Stelfox of Forem Technologies was commissioned to produce a cumulative effects study, using the renowned ALCES (Alberta Landscape Cumulative Effects Simulator) model. ALCES is a “user-friendly landscape simulator that enables resource managers, industry, society, and the scientific community to explore and quantify dynamic landscapes affected by single or multiple human land use practices and by various natural disturbance regimes” (SALTS).

But even before this study was undertaken, the diverse groups involved went through a lengthy process to identify what they thought were the essential values of the area, and what



The Southern Foothills Study, which examines current and future land use trends, covers 1.22 million hectares of grasslands, foothills, forests and mountains.

were the threats to these values.

Stelfox’s study acknowledged that the landscape we see today if we drive down the “Cowboy Trail” is considerably changed from the landscape that our grandfathers would have seen. So his ALCES model aimed to look back over the last 100 years and measure the changes that have occurred to get us where we are today. From here, the model then uses a huge amount of data, including population trends, mineral reserves and recognized planning projections, to predict where we are heading. The end result includes a series of predictions about where business-as-usual will lead us in 50 years time.

Phase 1 of the SFS aimed to demonstrate, in very clear terms, exactly where we will end up 50 years from now if we carry on with business-as-usual. “It is important to have a basis of sound science when we discuss, as we must do, the future of this specific landscape,” says Gardner. “We must do so on the basis of science, not just opinions. The goal is to find a way to share the landscape so essential elements of value, in terms of ecological goods and services, are maintained.”

The results from Phase 1 of the study (see table) paint a startling picture. “From an ecological point of view we are not standing still; we are

walking backwards,” says Gardner. “We think there is a cliff behind us, but we don’t know where it is.” Or as Lorne Fitch, recently retired from Fish and Wildlife, describes it, “We’re backing into the future with our eyes fixed firmly on the past.”

So the science of the Phase 1 study tells us where we are heading in the region. The next phase will be to look at whether people are happy with where we are heading. What are the things that people value about this region and are we doing enough to protect them? If not, then what do we need to change? Is it possible to use long-term studies such as the ALCES model to define exactly where we want to be in 50 years, and then to establish what land-use decisions we need to make to get us there?

As part of Phase 2 of the SFS study, a series of open houses will be held this fall in communities throughout the region. For more information on the Southern Foothills Study, see www.salts-landtrust.org/sfs/.

Key Findings from the Southern Foothills Study

Using the 2006 ALCES (Alberta Landscape Cumulative Effects Simulator) projections, the table below shows predicted levels of disturbance in the 2055 southern foothills landscape if we continue with business-as-usual.

	2006	2055
OIL AND GAS WELLS		
Conventional Oil	44 wells	378 wells
Conventional gas	160 wells	1,104 wells
Coalbed Methane	0 wells	1,972 wells
Other	0 wells	1,500 wells
TOTAL	204 wells	4,954 wells
PIPELINE	401 km	6,360 km
ENERGY SECTOR FOOTPRINT*	4,092 ha	11,460 ha
ENERGY SECTOR FOOTPRINT EDGE*	6,000 km	23,000 km
ROADS*	7,136 km	16,224 km
GRIZZLY BEARS	Present	Absent

**These figures use an extremely conservative model of instant reclamation of abandoned sites, so the real figure will be much higher.*



ALL ROADS MUST LEAD TO ALBERTA'S MECCA: PROPOSAL FOR HIGHWAY THROUGH LAKELAND PARK RESURRECTED

By Joyce Hildebrand, AWA Conservation Specialist

Picking our way carefully across the beaver dam, we pause to admire the exquisite white calla lilies against the placid blue reflection of the sky. We are surrounded by the music of migrant songbirds and a thousand shades of green: it's a relief to forget for a few hours the many pressures on this lake-studded piece of boreal forest, and simply to absorb its beauty.

That peaceful moment ebbs away as reality floods back in a few months later. Despite being a so-called protected area, the fate of Lakeland Provincial Park and Recreation Area still hangs in the balance. The area is now facing a new challenge: a resuscitated proposal for a major new highway slicing through the Provincial Recreation Area (PRA).



J. Hildebrand

While the "Wetlands Management" fact sheet on the government's oilsands consultation website emphasizes the importance of wetlands such as this, slashing a highway through Lakeland would have a huge impact on the wildlife, rivers and lakes of this boreal jewel.

As oilsands fever continues to burn up the boreal, all roads must lead to Fort McMurray – and as directly as possible. A few northeastern communities, led by the Town of St. Paul, support a proposal for the extension of Hwy 881 north from where it meets Hwy 55, about 60 km east of Lac La Biche. The highway would go through the east side of the PRA to join Hwy 881 near Conklin, providing a more direct route from the

St. Paul-Cold Lake area to Alberta's Mecca. Clearly, the oilsands tentacles extend far beyond the 23 percent of the province underlain by reserves.

While support for the highway extension slowly grows, Lakeland County is "emphatically opposed" to the proposal, as is the Lac La Biche town council, according to the *Lac La Biche Post*: "Absolutely not," said Coun. Brydon Ward when asked whether the council was one of the communities in support of the proposed project." St. Paul mayor John Trefanenko, on the other hand, enthuses about the increased public access to the park that a highway would provide for "fishermen, ATV riders, camping enthusiasts and nature-lovers."

Highway Proposal Opposes Management Plan

How this proposal relates to the still-to-be-finalized Management Plan for Lakeland is an intriguing question. Although the government announced in 1996 that it was "entering the final phase of public consultation before the Management Plan is implemented," 14 years after the park's official designation, we are still waiting.

The Draft Management Plan (1996) states, "Access into the Park is a fundamental management tool. With increased industrial activity around and within the Park, more routes are available for people to move within Lakeland. An immediate concern by management is the accumulated effects and damage to the Lakeland environment. ... Control of access into Lakeland is the cornerstone upon which successful future management is founded."

Among the Access Management Guidelines in the Draft Plan are the following:

- "Minimize the creation of new access routes whenever possible."
- "When making access decisions, err on the side of caution and conservation."

- "Keep in mind Lakeland's value for environmental protection, not just recreation."

Is the finalization of the management plan for Lakeland being delayed to avoid a conflict between approved government policy and the extension of Hwy 881? In a recent meeting with Ray Danyluk, MLA for Lac La Biche-St. Paul and a self-described "parks fanatic," he assured AWA that approval of the Management Plan is imminent. When we noted the familiarity of this tune, he declared that he would not "rush" the plan through at the risk of compromising the ecological integrity of the park.

Highway Proposal Opposes IRP

In the Lakeland Subregional Integrated Resource Plan (IRP), approved by a Cabinet Committee in 1985, access into the park is addressed as follows:

- "No transportation and utility corridors will be permitted within RMAs A – H except those necessary to service developments within the zone."
- "No major transportation or utility corridors will be permitted to transect the heart of the Lakeland planning area."



J. Hildebrand

Enjoying the serenity of Lakeland Provincial Park on an AWA outing in June, led by Ian Urquhart and Tom Maccagno (far right).

As defined in the IRP, both of these areas include what is now Lakeland Provincial Park and PRA.

Highway Proposal Opposes Water Policy

What's more, slicing a highway corridor through the PRA would be a

Land of Lakes May Become "Ralph Klein Park"

Before he is even out of office, the headlong rush to glorify Premier Ralph Klein is leaving logic in the dust. One proposal seems particularly irrational: renaming Lakeland as Ralph Klein Provincial Park and Recreation Area.

Although MLAs in the area insist that the name change has the support of a large majority of the region's residents, letters opposing the renaming have poured into the local papers. "This must be a joke," writes one St. Paul resident. "[Klein] has done nothing for the environment, wildlife, fish, lakes and forests in this province and especially in this area. Instead, it has been cut, slash, tax and cash grab every which way he can."

An editorial in the *Lac La Biche Post* proposes that although the name change would probably be accompanied by a large financial infusion, "Klein and his government are responsible for the public-to-privatization of our province's parks, [and] they've been responsible for reduced budgets in our Environmental departments and personnel down-sizing."

Klein's legacy is appropriately summed up by Dick Auchinleck, former CEO of Gulf Canada Resources, quoted recently in the *Calgary Herald*: "One of the real strengths of the oil business is that we've been able to manage ourselves without government intervention." Indeed. Perhaps a much more fitting legacy than changing the sign outside Lac La Biche welcoming visitors to the "Gateway to Lakeland Park" would be a billboard next to one of the gaping holes in the ground north of Fort McMurray where boreal forest used to thrive: "Welcome to Ralph Klein Oilsands Country."

serious violation of the government's recently approved *Water for Life* strategy, accepted as policy in 2004. The strategy declares that "healthy aquatic ecosystems are vital to a high quality of life for Albertans and must be preserved," and then makes this promise: "Albertans will be assured that the province's aquatic ecosystems are maintained and protected."

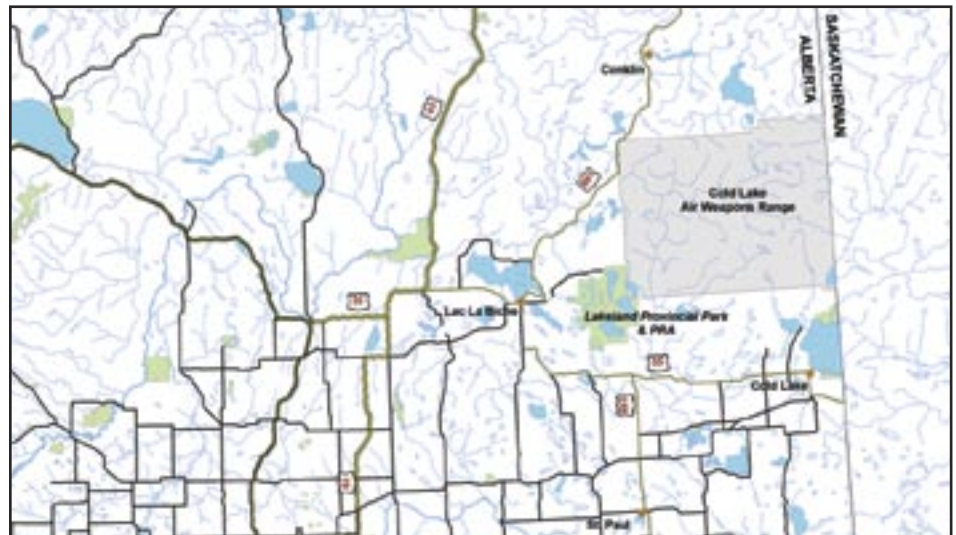
In another document, the *Draft Wetlands Policy* released this year, Alberta Environment stresses the importance of wetlands for Albertans: "It is the policy of the Government of Alberta to protect and conserve wetlands for the ecological, social and economic benefits they provide, thereby helping to ensure a safe and secure drinking water supply, healthy aquatic ecosystems, and reliable quality water supplies for a sustainable economy."

Will this simply be another case of the government ignoring its own policy, giving in to business interests, and rendering meaningless the phrase "protected area"?

fragmenting the park and leading to disturbance and mortality of wildlife, we have a long way to go before Lakeland is restored as a healthy, intact ecosystem suitable for low-impact recreational activities. The Park is being touted by some Albertans as a potential "Kananaskis of the North." What a waste this would be of one of the best examples of central mixedwood boreal forest in Alberta, filled with pristine lakes, long sandy beaches, old-growth forest, many species of orchids and other flora, and an astounding diversity of fauna – and all this within easy access of most Albertans.

Lakeland Not for Sale

On an encouraging note, this boreal treasure is finally being discovered and appreciated, despite the lack of fairways and fancy resorts – or maybe because of it. Jane Palmer, the assistant manager of economic development and tourism at Lac La Biche's Regional Community



Lakeland map

Not only is this highway proposal opposed to government policy and recommendations, but it also makes little sense. Lakeland is called Lakeland for a reason: it's a wet place, laced with rivers, creeks, lakes, and wetlands. Highway construction would be prohibitively expensive and would shorten the trip to Fort McMurray by a mere 70 to 80 km. Given the plan to twin Highway 63 to Fort McMurray, very little time would be saved by a two-lane highway through the PRA.

Even without a highway further

Development Corporation, reported a large increase this summer in the number of inquiries about the park and area. A questionnaire showed that visitors to the area ranked camping as their preferred accommodation and fishing, hiking, and wildlife watching as their primary interests.

By the end of August, Palmer estimated a seasonal 2006 revenue of about \$1.24 million, indicating that economic growth and the preservation of Lakeland as a wilderness area are not incompatible. The Park's canoe circuit,

already in use, could be improved and maintained to rival the world-famous Bowron Lakes circuit in B.C., bringing sustainable economic benefit to the region.

“Albertans are becoming more aware of the sad and steadily deteriorating state of many of our lakes

and rivers,” says Tom Maccagno, the former Lac La Biche mayor who has championed Lakeland for decades and who calls the highway proposal a “hare-brained scheme” in a letter to MLA Ray Danyluk. He adds that “a transportation corridor would, among other things, severely compromise the

integrity of Lakeland.” Some things, Maccagno notes, simply cannot be considered commodities: “Surely there are certain areas which should be regarded as treasures, which we care for and look after. They are NOT for sale. They are part of our birthright.”

STUDY SHOWS CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE MAY SPREAD THROUGH SALIVA, BLOOD

A new study out of Colorado State University shows for the first time that chronic wasting disease (CWD) may spread through saliva and blood of infected deer. The study suggests that CWD may spread by blood-sucking insects, social contact, such as grooming among deer in nature, and environmental contact. The study also reinforces that no tissue from an infected animal can be considered free of prions, the disease-causing agent.

“Although no instance of CWD transmission to humans has been detected, these results prompt caution regarding exposure to body fluids in prion infections such as CWD,” said lead researcher Edward A. Hoover, a Colorado State University Distinguished Professor in the Department of Microbiology, Immunology and Pathology.

The research tested the blood, saliva, feces and urine of deer infected with CWD to determine ways the disease may be transmitted from animal to animal, which has remained a mystery to scientists. Researchers biopsied tonsils to detect infectious CWD prions, showing that CWD infection could be detected as early as three months after exposure to saliva or blood from an infected deer.

“Interactions among deer and elk, especially in high density situations, intensifies cross-contact among animals. This contact includes salivary exchange, which provides potential for CWD transmission,” Hoover said. “Such things as grooming, licking and nuzzling are important in the social interactions of deer.”

The researchers recommend that all elk and deer be tested for

CWD before being consumed. Recent research at the University of Wyoming led by Dr. Jean Jewell found CWD in the heart muscle of some infected animals, not just the brain and spinal column. Colorado state wildlife agencies have also recommended that hunters wear gloves when dressing animals as a precaution. However, the Alberta government does not feel the health risk to hunters is significant enough to warrant such precautions.

CWD now has been detected in deer in 14 states and two Canadian provinces, including Alberta. CWD is contagious to a higher degree among deer, elk and moose than other transmissible spongiform encephalopathies. To date, there have been 13 confirmed cases of CWD in wild deer in Alberta. The government is continuing its program to kill deer along the Alberta-Saskatchewan border in an attempt to reduce the numbers of infected deer. The Expert Scientific Panel on CWD concluded that CWD in wild deer is “spillover from infected game farms,” and “there are no known barriers to stop it.”

North America’s remarkable system of wildlife conservation had, until the mid 1980s, prohibited commercial domestication of vulnerable wildlife. That policy not only rescued our wildlife from the brink of extinction, it precluded the emergence and spread of significant disease problems. Over the explicit protests of scientists, governments reversed that policy to allow and encourage game farming. As predicted, a massive TB epidemic emerged in less than five years, the CWD epidemic in less than ten years.

The Alliance for Public Wildlife and AWA are asking leadership candidates — for both the Alberta Conservative, and federal Liberal parties — to commit to:

- The complete dismantling of game farming.
- A full public inquiry to determine fair compensation for game farmers, to determine how such disastrous policy was enacted, and how to ensure that it never happens again.

The study results can be found in the Oct. 6, 2006 issue of Science.



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PUBLIC INTEREST GROUPS PREPARE FOR HEARINGS ON ENCANNA'S SUFFIELD DRILLING PROJECT

By Shirley Bray

The environmental assessment (EA) of EnCana Corporation's proposed shallow gas infill drilling project in the Suffield National Wildlife Area (SNWA) is moving ahead with a public hearing expected next year. In the absence of prohibitions against industrial development in our National Wildlife Areas, the public must step forward to speak for protection whenever industrial projects threaten what should be a non-industrialized protected area. At least three conservation groups are prepared to put in the time and effort needed to bring forward expert witnesses and hire lawyers to make a case for protection of the SNWA in the public interest.

Located in southeast Alberta about 50 km northwest of Medicine Hat, the 458-km² SNWA is an area of unploughed native grassland along the South Saskatchewan River. It is one of the last six remaining large native grasslands left in the glaciated northern plains and is of national and international significance. EnCana is proposing to install up to 1,275 shallow gas wells within the SNWA over a three-year period, essentially doubling the number of wells already in the area, as well as 220 km of pipelines.

In April, federal Environment Minister Rona Ambrose announced that the project would undergo an EA by an



C. Wallis

The setting sun over the Suffield National Wildlife Area highlights the serene beauty of this endangered – and protected – prairie landscape, now facing the possible installation of 1,275 new gas wells.

independent review panel, based on a track report and recommendation by the Department of National Defence (see WLA June 2006).

When the SNWA was created in 2003, a Regulatory Impact Analysis Statement (*Canada Gazette*, April 12/03) said: "NWA designation offers long-term security as a federally-protected wildlife refuge. ... Not designating the area would signal that the federal government does not value the ecological significance of CFB Suffield NWA and would leave the area at future risk to development and potentially increased military use." What this means, however, is not that development is prohibited, but that projects are required to undergo an EA.

In July the Canadian

Environmental Assessment Agency (CEAA) developed a draft Agreement for a joint federal-provincial panel for how the EA will be conducted and sent it out for public comment. The joint review panel is expected to be announced this fall and will include members appointed by the Minister of the Environment and by the Alberta Energy and Utilities Board. Also in July CEAA established a Participant Funding Program of up to \$150,000 to help the public take part in the joint review.

The three applicants – Alberta Wilderness Association (AWA), Nature Canada, and Grasslands Naturalists – received a total of \$140,430, which will assist the groups to review guidelines for the Environmental



S. Bray

These photos, both taken in September 2006 on a field trip with EnCana, show the difference in disturbance from ploughing in (left) and trenching in (right) a pipeline. Although both can recover naturally, this trenched-in pipeline must be reseeded because of the proximity of crested wheatgrass, an invasive species. EnCana's infill project in the Suffield National Wildlife Area plans 180 km of 5-inch plastic pipeline that can be ploughed in and 40 km of 16- to 20-inch steel pipe that must be trenched in.

Impact Statement (EIS), to review the EIS, and to participate in the public hearings. While the groups will be working conjointly, they will focus on different aspects of the project, including biodiversity and ecological issues, and economic and legal issues.



S. Bray

An example of a sunken well head in the Suffield block. The wellhead is covered with sturdy metal bars and plywood that can withstand the weight of passing tanks.

Once public comments have been received on the EIS guidelines and they are finalized, EnCana must prepare the EIS, which is a statement of the anticipated environmental effects of the project. The guidelines identify the issues EnCana will be required to address in the environmental assessment of the proposed project, as well as direction on how to describe and assess them. The EIS, which will be submitted to the joint panel, is a statement of the anticipated environmental effects of the project.

Going Beyond PR to Real Solutions

AWA has informed EnCana several times that we completely oppose their infill project, which we believe is not appropriate for a protected area and which will further erode the ecological integrity of one of our last remaining native prairie habitats. AWA has attempted to engage EnCana to work on developing life-cycle plans for the wells already in the SNWA, including timelines for their termination, identifying specific on-the-ground issues and developing detailed plans on restoration. To that end, AWA is interested in getting down to business and solving problems that are known to exist. AWA is concerned not only with the SNWA, but with the whole Suffield block, which includes a large portion of the Middle Sand Hills.

At an August meeting between the company and conservation groups,

EnCana provided an overview of their “best practices.” When asked to provide an equally well-prepared list of environmental problems that needed solving, they looked innocently at each other and said they didn’t know of any. Yet they said they continue to improve their best practices, which are subject to ongoing review. Why improve if there are no problems?

Clearly this sort of attitude is not going to get problems identified and solved. EnCana would do better to be honest about the nature and extent of the problems so we can deal meaningfully with the issues in Suffield.

For example, the lack of remote metering means weekly visits to wellsites, resulting in a large amount of unregulated traffic, rutting on highly traveled routes and introduction of invasive species. Vehicles can and do easily venture off designated routes without penalty. Although EnCana says they have a fairly aggressive approach to problem solving and are trying to reduce traffic in the block, this problem has been around for a long time.

Outside the SNWA, wellheads are placed below ground in large upended covered culverts so they are safe from military tanks. However, they have been known to trap small animals, which then die there, being unable to escape from the pits. The solution may be as easy as providing a way out with a long plank acting as a ladder.

What is EnCana doing about it? Studying the situation by asking operators who visit the sites for anecdotal information about what dead wildlife they find (not much apparently). “There’s mortality everywhere,” says EnCana. They want to find out which species are affected and how many individuals are killed before they do anything, and they noted that salamanders love these cool dark spots.

The company is a leader in sound environmental practices, according to itself. But if, as EnCana says, they are doing more than is required, why did they fight the comprehensive EA? While they say they are “open to new ideas,” this clearly does not include the ideas of not operating in a nationally protected and endangered native prairie area or waiting until new technology

allows them to obtain the gas without disturbing the surface.

On a September field trip to the SNWA, a company representative showed us a wellsite from the 1980s that had been reclaimed with the notorious crested wheatgrass. He noted that that had been “best practice” back then, leaving us wondering what might be “best practice” in the future that could save this area from further industrial impact.



S. Bray

At this point the South Saskatchewan River flows (right to left) past a historic sentry cabin where people can be warned not to proceed further on some days because of live firing.

Why does EnCana want to drill more gas wells in the SNWA, essentially filling in between wells already in place? At an open house, conservationists were told by an EnCana representative that all of the gas can come out of existing wells, and the purpose of the infill project was to accelerate production.

At the August meeting, EnCana first said that 80 percent of the gas will not come out of current wells because the formation is so tight. Later they said it would take up to 200 years for all the gas to come out of existing wells. They said they don’t drill wells to accelerate production, but admitted that drilling more wells would increase production and have more environmental impact.

EnCana said their shareholders would prefer that all the gas be taken out as soon as possible; however, we have been contacted by shareholders who disagree with EnCana’s infill project. The SNWA is public land and a protected area that is being held in trust for all Canadians. Whose values should take precedence?

Make your views known, write to The Honourable Stephen Harper, Office of the Prime Minister, 80 Wellington Street, Ottawa K1A 0A2; Fax: (613) 941-6900; E-mail: pm@pm.gc.ca.

RONA AMBROSE SERVED WITH LEGAL NOTICE OVER SPECIES AT RISK

By Shirley Bray

Will the federal government do what it takes to protect species at risk? That's what a coalition of conservation groups aims to find out. In August they served Federal Environment Minister Rona Ambrose with a petition giving her 60 days to step in and protect two endangered plants in Alberta or face a lawsuit.

The Sierra Legal Defence Fund filed the petition on behalf of the Alberta Wilderness Association, the Federation of Alberta Naturalists, the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, Nature Canada and Sierra Club of Canada to test the federal government's intention to protect Canada's endangered wildlife.

The petition argues that tiny cryptanthe (*Cryptantha minima*) and small-flowered sand verbena (*Trypterocalyx micranthus*) are listed as endangered on Schedule 1 of the *Species at Risk Act* (SARA) and Alberta's laws do not effectively protect them. The decline of these species is in part due to degradation of Alberta's native prairie region, most of which has been lost to agriculture, industry and urbanization.

"Given its wealth, lack of endangered species protection and the loss of prairie land, Alberta is a key province for this legal test," said Cliff Wallis of Alberta Wilderness Association and Nature Canada. "We think it tells you something when the richest province does the least for endangered species."

Although a national law, SARA does not apply in the provinces unless the federal cabinet orders it to, which it will do only on the recommendation of the federal Environment Minister if she considers provincial laws inadequate. But Minister Ambrose has failed to make such a recommendation for Alberta despite the fact that the province has no endangered species legislation and does not protect national endangered species. Yet when SARA was enacted in 2003, the federal government assured Canadians that all of Canada's endangered plants and animals would be protected.



Tiny cryptanthe

Gerry Boudrais, a spokesperson for Alberta Sustainable Resource Development, told the media that Alberta has a long history of protecting endangered species, that the *Wildlife Act* is strong legislation, and that SRD is developing recovery plans for both plants, although he could not say when they would be completed (*Edmonton Journal* Aug. 9/06).

The petition describes various Alberta laws that may protect endangered species or their habitat. It notes that the *Wildlife Act* contains a process for evaluating the status of species at risk in Alberta through the Endangered Species Conservation Committee (ESCC). Its Scientific Subcommittee assesses the risk of extinction or extirpation for Alberta species that have been identified as potentially at risk based on status reports. The ESCC then decides what recommendation to make to the minister regarding the legal designation and management and recovery of species; however, the minister has discretion regarding whether to adopt the recommendations.

The *Wildlife Act* requires that plants be prescribed as endangered, but none have been so far. The petition also points out that the Act "enables but does not require identifying critical habitat, nor does it require preparation and implementation of strategies to recover populations. It also does not require the automatic listing of SARA listed species that live in Alberta."

On these bases, says the petition, "the *Wildlife Act* cannot be said to effectively protect the tiny cryptanthe or the small-flowered sand verbena."

The petition concludes, "Even if one were to cobble together various Alberta laws, they do not as a whole address any of the SARA elements of identification, protection and recovery to ensure effective protection of endangered species."

In her reply to the petition, Ambrose said she would respond by December 1. "This will allow for sufficient time to review biological records and consult with the Alberta government on conservation and legal protection matters," she wrote.

The conservation organizations stress that simply listing the species as endangered under the *Wildlife Act* will not count as sufficient effective legal protection. They are fully prepared to challenge in the courts any such failure to act responsibly.



Small-flowered sand verbena

Wallis says listing of the Woodland Caribou hasn't helped that species in Alberta, where clearcut forestry and massive new oil and gas developments are destroying critical habitat. "All these species need effective legal protection of the species and their critical habitats if populations are going to recover. This is not some bureaucratic paper exercise. We are demanding that Minister Ambrose fulfill her duty and protect these species with federal intervention to achieve real results on the ground."

Visit our website under Issues/Wildlife.
Write to The Hon. Rona Ambrose, Minister of Environment Canada, House of Commons, Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6; Fax: (613) 996-0785; E-Mail: Ambrose.R@parl.gc.ca

OPPOSITION TO CLEAR-CUT LOGGING PLANS IN KANANASKIS HIGHLIGHTS NEED FOR NEW VISION

By Shirley Bray

Concerns over Spray Lake Sawmills' (SLS) forest management plans for Kananaskis and Ghost-Waiparous areas were highlighted again at a September town hall meeting hosted by Alberta Liberal MLA Dr. David Swann in his Calgary riding. A common theme was the failure of the multiple-use philosophy that guides activities on this land base, the lack of a broader comprehensive land use plan that would guide decisions on resource use, and the lack of adequate public consultation.

The socio-economic scene continues to change in southern Alberta. People have different ideas and expectations for the south Eastern Slopes. Not only is it a major recreation area for a burgeoning population, but people are much more attuned to the need to protect their sources of water, the potential effects of climate change, and the values of the forest beyond timber production. The government is lagging behind in policy and action resulting in growing conflicts between different users of the land base.

It is clear that a new vision is needed for this part of Alberta, and that a new conservative leader will have

to take on that challenge. People are concerned that SLS's plan will likely be approved prior to other major planning processes in the region, including the government's proposed Land Use Framework (LUF) slated for public input early next year. The government describes the LUF as "a shared, overarching, values-based vision for land use in Alberta."

The public consultation aspect of the LUF is supposed to be based on the same format as the Water for Life Strategy, which was considered highly successful. However, no one was allowed to discuss the water allocation system, even though it is critical to any real discussion on water conservation and even though a number of rivers in southern Alberta are over-allocated. It is unlikely that the forest allocation system (the FMAs) will be up for discussion during the LUF consultations.

At the town hall meeting Swann asked a number of pertinent questions: What is the best use of the watershed? Should we be clear-cutting? Is Mountain Pine Beetle (MPB) being handled properly? Should there be an Elbow Wildland Park?

Alberta prides itself on being innovative, but maybe learning from others and from our own past would help us make better and quicker decisions. Doug Sephton, a Bragg Creek resident and one of the presenters, pointed out that New York City and Vancouver have both recognized the value of upstream watersheds and have moved to protect those that supply their water. But in Alberta the public's values, other than forestry, are taking a back seat, he said.

Déjà vu Forest Planning

SLS was required to prepare a Detailed Forest Management Plan (DFMP) within five years of obtaining their Forest Management Agreement (FMA) in 2001. Opposition to the FMA was strong for a number of reasons, chief among them was a lack of updated land use planning for the area. The FMA effectively transferred land use planning responsibilities for the area from the government to SLS.

Many objected to placing land use planning for critical watershed areas in the hands of a private company. It is the government's responsibility to manage public land, with effective public input and with the public interest, not industry profits, as the priority. But the government failed to live up to its 1999 commitment, endorsed by Premier Klein, for a publicly developed Regional Sustainable Development Strategy for Kananaskis Country that would address "continuing development pressures." Instead of being managed for a variety of public values, such as watershed protection, recreation, and wildlife habitat, opponents argued the FMA would make timber production the priority.

Lawyer Shaun Fluker, then a director with CPAWS, noted that the FMA threatened to violate key aspects of land use planning for public lands including transparency and accountability to the public and effective public participation. There have been endless complaints about the

N. Douglas



Cresting the hill, these hikers are greeted with a view of clearcuts in the Upper Oldman area south of Kananaskis.

lack of effective public consultation throughout the life of this FMA. SLS excluded AWA from its Public Advisory Group (PAG) because it doesn't support industrial logging in the south Eastern Slopes. So those with a different vision and different ideas had no seat at a table where discussions on major land use planning on public lands was taking place.



Pileated Woodpecker
© Grace Buzik

Fluker suggested the FMA would endanger watershed protection, a planning priority for the region as specified in the Eastern Slopes Policy and the regional Integrated Resource Plans, and would “entrench suspect multiple use strategies contained in outdated land use planning policies governing these areas.”

He warned that under the FMA “integrated forest and water planning is likely to resemble a private sector negotiation of ‘give and take,’” instead of a broad, open planning process that is supposed to be the basis for government-led integrated resource management.

It is unreasonable to expect logging companies to choose public values like watershed protection over profits. Their main objective is to obtain a consistent yield of timber. While it is the job of SLS to make money from cutting down trees, the Alberta government is responsible for designing a framework for forest management that includes all of the other non-forestry values. Government

documents at least as early as 1927 state that watershed protection in the Eastern Slopes should have the highest priority, but in recent years it has taken a back seat to resource extraction.

New Problems Adding to Old

The town hall meeting echoed similar sentiments about the DFMP and the lack of planning and outdated Integrated Resource Plans. Sephton noted that no where else in North America is a forestry company responsible for managing the drinking water of a major city. Calgary depends on drinking water from the Elbow and Ghost watersheds. He predicted that the recreation areas, which were only “small parking lots” would eventually be merely access points to trails going through clear-cuts.

Sephton criticized SLS for failing to adopt the new guidelines in the 2006 Alberta Forest Management Planning Standard. The Standard has a discretionary clause that allows the government to refer FMPs to independent experts for review. Sephton criticized the DFMP, among other things, for not taking population growth or climate change into account and not assessing cumulative effects.

SLS used computer generated models to predict the effects of logging on wildlife over 200 years. But models are only as good as the information plugged into them. SLS was criticized for not doing any field studies, or incorporating other major and relevant wildlife studies into the DFMP. SLS's own models show that the great grey owl, pileated woodpecker, western tanager and elk will be eliminated due to habitat conversion.



Elk
© Grace Buzik

Dr. Ralph Cartar of the Bragg Creek Environmental Coalition criticized the government for being “mono-focused” on economic priorities. He pointed out that the multiple land use policy doesn't work in the FMA because the priority is removing timber, and that the DFMP did not address the effects of clear-cutting on water quality and quantity and recreation.

The report, he said, is silent on fire and forest insects. He criticized SRD's “maniacal” approach to MPB which is “Remove the forest!” Cartar said the government should extinguish clear-cut logging rights and called for an immediate moratorium on the plan.

John Jagorinec, Senior Water Quality and Regulatory Analyst for the City of Calgary, criticized the 1000 page report for having only three-quarters of a page on water quality, which was summed up with “efforts taken to ensure water quality.” The plan, he said, failed to consider climate change and did not focus on watershed boundaries. He also expressed concern about the inadequate buffers around waterbodies.

Three of the four presenters objected to the inadequate time period for public input – a mere six weeks for a huge complex plan that took professional foresters and professional consultants five years to write. Some have pointed out that the public should not be expected to have the expertise to interpret a long and highly complex document and want funds for an independent review. AWA also noted that many suggestions from a 2003 workshop were ignored, including adopting Forest Stewardship Council standards and using a true watershed approach.

Former Cochrane mayor, Judy Stewart, a member of SLS's PAG, said that if the public feels they were not properly consulted, they are “entitled to that perception.” She agreed that SLS's management philosophy and objectives are for landscape management with sustained timber yield. She said SLS did its job, according to legal requirements, and if the public doesn't like what they did, they should “fire” the government, not SLS.



Great Horned Owl
© Grace Buzik

Past Practices Led to Unhealthy Forest

AWA pointed out in its submission that that fire suppression for the last 50-100 years has allowed thick forests of predominantly lodgepole pine to dominate the southern foothills forests. These largely monoculture forests, relatively even aged at around 80 years, are ripe for health problems like MPB and dwarf mistletoe. Their resinous fuel would burn hot and fast when on fire.

AWA, and others, are criticizing SLS and SRD for proposing surge cutting as the solution, a clear-cutting plan with a higher than normal annual allowable cut over 20 years designed to eliminate older pine forests and replace them with new pine forests. SLS says more uneven aged tree stands could provide some safeguards against new beetle invasions, but admits it will do little to reduce future fire risk. It will also do little to regulate access with many more roads expected through an already fragmented landscape.

In the next two years SLS plans to clear-cut five massive parts of the planning area including two built-up areas in West Bragg Creek and the Waiparous Benchlands, north of the Bow River, in order to protect the communities by “FireSmarting” them. However, FireSmart is based on the work of U.S. researcher Jack Cohen, which showed the principal cause of building losses during forest fires is how ignitable the buildings are. AWA said FireSmart applies only to the immediate area around homes and the

homes themselves. It should not be used as an excuse to clearcut a 10 km radius around communities.

SLS is delaying submitting its finalized DFMP until it receives more information about where MPB is located.

Public Excluded from Implementation of Plan

The public will have no opportunity for involvement during the implementation of the DFMP even though this is when the all important operating ground rules and logging plans will be detailed. The next public review is slated for 2016 when SLS is required to present an implementation report.

AWA argued the *Alberta Timber Harvesting and Operating Ground Rules* need to be updated using new science. Discussions about their “renewal” have been going on since at least 2000 when a potential renewal strategy was circulated to FMA and quota holders. The strategy proposed minimizing the impact of human activity in the forest on water quantity and quality, incorporating research results, and providing clarity, specificity, constant review and updating.

SLS’s draft DFMP is based on the current outdated ground rules and whether renewed ones will be used during its implementation is uncertain. AWA says SLS has suggested they will not likely go beyond the minimum standards of the basic ground rules.

SLS and SRD both admit there has been no coordination with other important planning efforts in the region such as the Ghost-Waiparous Access Management Plan. Broader land planning initiatives that are in the works, which should come before detailed forest management planning, are the Sustainable Resource and Environmental Management Initiative (SEM), the Southern Alberta Sustainability Strategy (SASS), the draft Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan, and, of course, the LUF. AWA noted that the DFMP would severely limit the ability of the grizzly plan to facilitate grizzly recovery.

Sandra Foss, President of Nature Alberta and a member of SLS’s PAG, publicly chastised opponents of SLS’s

Plan for spreading misinformation. She said SLS has been logging in the area for 52 years and always seeks to improve. In her enthusiasm for the DFMP she said the reason there is diverse wildlife and pristine water coming out of the forest reserve is because logging has been taking place.

Foss says a “no logging option” was discarded for McLean Creek because computer modeling showed it would decrease wildlife habitat and increase the likelihood of forest fire and disease. She acknowledged that fires kill off insects and disease, but argued that with homes and other infrastructure encroaching on the forest, letting fires burn was no longer an option. She also felt there had been ample opportunity for public input over many months and “all relevant comments will be incorporated into the Plan.”

Who will decide what is relevant on these public lands? Clearly this Plan is not going to resolve current or future conflicts. Nor is it the place of a logging plan to do so. Some are lobbying the government to do overarching land use planning prior to launching this critical 200-year plan. Some think planning is too important to be left to government.

It remains for the public to organize and articulate what it wants and stake its claims vigorously and persistently to these public lands. Whenever citizens get involved in public lands issues, whenever they speak up, write letters, attend meetings, research the facts, they are moving to reclaim their forests, lands and water.

For more information on this issue, visit our website (Issues/Forests) or www.braggcreek.ca.



American Marten
© Grace Buzik

Glenbow Ranch a Welcome Addition to Parks System

By Nigel Douglas

A new provincial park has been created along the Bow River between Calgary and Cochrane. The 1,314 hectare Glenbow Ranch Provincial Park will cover 14 km of river bank and will protect native grasslands, wetlands and wooded areas.



C. Olson

The Alberta flag flies over the new Glenbow Ranch Provincial Park, announced August 23, 2006.

The park comes from a generous donation by the Harvie family, which has a 70-year history of charitable donations to the people of Alberta, including the Glenbow Museum and the Banff Centre for Performing Arts. The four children of the late Neil Harvie sold the piece of land to the province for \$40 million – around half its market value – and also donated \$6 million to the Harvie Conservancy Foundation to build and operate the park.

AWA welcomes the generosity and vision of the Harvie family. As Calgary continues to sprawl at an alarming rate, it is encouraging that there is one parcel of land that will withstand the spread of acreages and subdivisions.

Future plans for the park are uncertain, but there are likely to include a footpath network that will eventually link Calgary and Cochrane. It is expected that it will be at least a year before the park opens its doors to the public.

It is encouraging that the government is willing to spend money on protected areas and on efforts to protect the Bow River corridor, which is so vital for maintaining a clean and healthy water supply for the City of Calgary and other communities along the Bow River. Hopefully this is a sign of things to come.

Ghost-Waiparous: Is there life after GAMP?

By Nigel Douglas

Following the release of the Ghost-Waiparous Access Management Plan (GAMP) for motorized access in May 2006 after a 15-year on-off stakeholder consultation process, the Alberta government is now looking at how to implement the long-awaited plan.

Central to this implementation will be the GAMP Stewardship Committee, and the inaugural meeting of this committee was held in September 2006, attended by 25 different stakeholders, including AWA, outfitters, ranchers, industry and a number of motorized vehicle groups. “Stewardship” and “cooperation” were the popular themes of the day. While involvement in previous processes necessitates a degree of caution in committing time and energy to such a process, AWA plans to be involved in the committee as it develops.

There are some good signs, including emphasis on water quality and wildlife (the City of Calgary is one stakeholder, correctly viewing the region as an important water source for the city). Suggestions from SRD

that enforcement of regulations may be less necessary if we promote good stewardship ethics is naïve, however. Access management in any area can only work if people who blatantly ignore the regulations know that there is a good likelihood that they will be caught and fined.

H. Unger



The new multi-stakeholder Stewardship Committee plans to meet over the next few years to come up with ways to implement the Access Management Plan for the Ghost-Waiparous area, which has sustained serious ATV damage such as this.

There is a feeling amongst some conservationists that the Ghost-Waiparous is a lost cause; it has been so damaged by unregulated motorized access for so many years that it will never again be a healthy watershed or a peaceful recreation venue. But others are more optimistic. AWA Director Vivian Pharis was pleasantly surprised on a recent visit along the Transalta road that, after years of abuse, “it was actually a pleasure to be out there!” Pharis observed that “in the wet areas, you could see the old damage, but it was already repairing.” She cautioned, though, that “the steep slopes will take a considerable time to repair.”

AWA is pleased that the bad old lawless days of “anything goes” in the Ghost-Waiparous seem to be coming

to an end. This area is likely to be the template for future access management plans, so it is critical that we get it right here.

Oil Sands Multi-stakeholder Panel Hears from the Public

By Joyce Hildebrand

Between September 13 and October 4, Albertans expressed their ideas at seven public consultation meetings about how the province's oil sands should be developed. The Panel members who heard the presentations comprise a subcommittee of the recently formed Oil Sands Multi-stakeholder Committee, which is to use the collected input to develop recommendations on future policy directions by the end of November 2006 and on implementation in the spring of 2007.

AWA member Dr. Ian Urquhart spoke to the Panel in Edmonton.

D. Horton



The McClelland Lake Wetland Complex, which includes this world-class patterned fen, was approved for oilsands mining after being stripped of its protective notation due to the discovery of oil under the fen.

S. Bray



Tailings ponds such as these north of Fort McMurray generally contain toxic amounts of many heavy metals as well as huge concentrations of highly carcinogenic benzene, toluene and xylene. The constant boom of airguns keeps birds from landing on these deadly lakes of oilsands residue.

He focused on three areas: the need to reform the royalty structure; the importance of establishing protected areas in portions of the Athabasca Oil Sands area identified by this government as Environmentally Significant Areas – the Athabasca River Reach, the Firebag River, and the McClelland Lake Wetland Complex; and the need for a central government agency to set landscape-level objectives and insure that provincial officials work toward realizing them.

I spoke in Calgary on behalf of AWA, stressing the importance of developing the oil sands only after identifying and legally protecting irreplaceable watersheds in our boreal forests. To illustrate how oil sands development has trumped protection, I told the story of McClelland Lake Wetland Complex, now destined for strip mining despite having been slated for legislated protection in the late 1990s.

The gap between government rhetoric about the importance of watersheds and wetlands and their contradictory action is growing with each new government document on water. One of the many government fact sheets made available to the public at these hearings is entitled “Wetlands Management” and stresses the importance of “managing human activities so both wetlands and people benefit.” Despite the grim outlook for the McClelland Lake watershed, which contains one of the most spectacular patterned fens in the world, AWA continues to work for its protection.

Joyce Hildebrand's presentation is on our website under McClelland Lake/Archives.

Cheviot Mine Back under United Nations' Spotlight

By David Samson

The adverse environmental impacts of the controversial Cheviot mine continue to raise concerns and apprehension within the international community. At a meeting this summer, the UNESCO World Heritage Committee expressed concerns about Canada's Rocky Mountain Parks and zeroed in on the Cheviot mine specifically.

The Committee requested Canada “to ensure that adverse impacts of the operation of the Cheviot mine on the integrity of the property are minimized and mitigated” and that Canada “keep the World Heritage Centre and IUCN informed of any important changes in the state of conservation of the property.”

The persistent international environmental concerns expressed by UNESCO are due to the mine's location east of Jasper National Park, part of the UNESCO Canadian Rocky Mountain Parks World Heritage Site. The mine is also adjacent to Alberta's Whitehorse Wildland Provincial Park.

Owned by Elk Valley Coal Corporation, the Cheviot mine has been the subject of intense public and media interest from local to international levels. AWA has been involved in the public and regulatory review of the environmental impacts of this project over the past decade. Along with other ENGOS, we filed legal objections and appeals, which failed to halt the project. Our legal actions ended in 2006 and the mine is now operating.



Cougar
© Grace Buzik

GRACE BUZIK: ARTIST'S ATTENTION TO DETAIL BRINGS WILDLIFE IMAGES TO LIFE

By John Geary

Chances are pretty good that if you've picked up a book about Alberta's natural history in recent years, you've probably seen some of Grace Buzik's artwork. That's because the Calgary-born artist has contributed artwork to 12 different books during the course of her career.

Probably one of the best-known publications among that group is Michael Kerr's *Canadian Rockies Guide to Wildlife Watching*, published by Fifth House Books in 2000. Buzik's talent is obvious before you even crack open that book; the image of a moose on the front cover appears to be a photograph – but it's actually a drawing so realistic and so detailed that you would be forgiven if you thought your eyes were playing tricks on you.

Others on the list include *The Prairie Gardener's Book of Bugs: A Guide to Living with Common Garden Insects*, written by Ruth Staal and Nora Bryan, and *Mountain Journal*, which is just what it sounds like: a special journal to help one write down memories of a visit to the mountains, or any other region in Canada. It contains 16 of Buzik's illustrations of marmots, elk, weasels, ducks and many other birds and mammals found in the Rockies.

Some of her illustrations showed up most recently in Wayne Lynch's book, *Wild Alberta: A Visual Celebration*.

While appearing in a book with Wayne Lynch's name on it is certainly gratifying for an artist, one of Buzik's favourites is the bug book. "It's one of the ones I'm most proud of," she says. Her illustrations in that book got rave reviews; log on to Amazon.ca or iCanGarden.com to read some of them.

While she works in many different forms of art media, pastel is her medium of choice. "Mainly pastel, pastel pencil, with some oil paint," she says. "I dry brush it [the oil] on top. But I work mostly in pastel pencil. It's especially good for doing animals, because of the amount of hair detail



Grace Buzik

I can get with it. It's also soft enough that it's nice for blending."

She can also work in ink quite comfortably. "For the gardening books I kept getting asked for ink etches, which produces more of an impressionistic, black and white look to the art."

Buzik is a self-taught artist with no formal training, but plenty of desire. She's been keen about picking up a piece of paper to create an image on it with a pencil or paintbrush since she was six years old.

She says she's not quite sure what the attraction is, but even from an early age she was drawn toward natural history subjects. It's probably not a long shot to bet it had something to do with growing up so close to the Rocky Mountains. "When I was growing up, we went there countless times," she says.

She hasn't focused completely on the natural world. She has produced quite a collection of impressionistic images, but publishers always seem to want her realism, because of the rare expertise she brings to it.

Her artistic endeavours are not limited to two dimensions, either. Last winter, she made a life-sized sculpture of a polar bear out of white styrofoam

for the Calgary Zoo. Making that leap showed a streak of courage. "It was the first time I ever sculpted," she says.

Buzik got into the professional end of art almost by accident. One of her co-workers at Chevron was Bob Leatherbarrow. "One night, his wife, Liesbeth [with Lesley Reynolds, co-author of *The Calgary Gardener: Beyond the Basics*], came home complaining that they could never get an artist. My walls at work were always plastered with art, so Bob told her he knew someone who could do it."

That was in 1992. Her artwork in that book led to more work from the book's publisher, Fifth House, and it took off from there. She worked on *It's a Dry Cold*, and shortly after that, the *Canadian Rockies Guide* project came up, providing her with the first opportunity to publish her work in a full-colour format. That involved quite a bit of work, as she had to produce a lot of images in a very short time frame.

"I've never forgotten that – I actually missed the turning of the millennium working on the art for that book," she chuckles. "I was so busy, I looked up and it was five minutes after midnight, but the lights were still on, the world didn't end, and there I was in the middle of painting a moose!"

Buzik does not have any projects looming on the immediate horizon, and this past summer, she was in the middle of taking a hiatus from drawing. But the artist in her will probably impel her to once again pick up her pastel pencils and create, some time in the future.



© Grace Buzik

STEWARDSHIP ETHIC MARKS ASSOCIATION'S WORK

Each year, in addition to AWA's general advocacy and educational work for wilderness, staff members and volunteers participate in specific stewardship activities, both government sponsored and those initiated by AWA. These include Alberta Community Development's Volunteer Stewards Program, Alberta Sustainable Resource Development's (SRD) Adopt-A-Trail, and AWA's rare plant surveys in the Castle Wildland, recreation monitoring in the Bighorn Wildland, and trail maintenance for the Great Divide Trail.

AWA encourages all citizens to be stewards of our wilderness and we are always looking for volunteers to help with our stewardship work. For more information, please contact Nigel Douglas, AWA Conservation Specialist at (403) 283-2025 or 1-866-313-0713, or visit our website, www.albertawilderness.ca.

AWA Receives Stewardship Award By Nigel Douglas

This year AWA was one of the recipients of a Volunteer Stewardship Award given to those who have participated in the government program for 15 years. AWA's stewardship work in protected areas began with the Beehive Natural Area, shortly after its designation in 1987. Since then AWA has added Plateau Mountain Ecological Reserve (2001) to its volunteer steward portfolio.

Stewardship duties include carrying out regular site inspections and sending in inspection reports, detailing activities, changes in status and wildlife records. With the help of a generous grant from Alberta Stewardship Network, AWA recently produced a brochure about the Upper Oldman Headwaters, including the Beehive Natural Area.

Final Field Season Wraps Up for Bighorn Recreation Monitoring Project

By David Samson

The final field work phase of AWA's four-year study of recreation impacts in Bighorn Wildland's



The Beehive Natural Area, an oasis of old-growth forest in an increasingly industrialized landscape, is in the headwaters of the Oldman River, which eventually flows into the South Saskatchewan. Protection of these water catchment areas is increasingly being recognized as essential to maintain water quality across southern Alberta.

Hummingbird Recreation Area wrapped up in September with the final report due to be completed by the end of this year. In order to aid SRD's management of the area, AWA provided the department with some preliminary observations of the most seriously damaged and susceptible areas, and data on some continued occurrences of illegal ATV activity.

AWA has observed some significant changes in the study area over the past four years. Some changes have been positive from a human management perspective, with SRD closing a heavily damaged section of trail and relocating another sensitive and damaged section of trail. Some other things have, unfortunately, not changed. There is still some illegal ATV activity occurring in the area despite increased signage and posted information. Nature has also had its say in the past two years by delivering extraordinary rain events in June each year, contributing to the erosion of trails in this dynamic area.

AWA Gives Bighorn Historic Trail Some Needed Attention

By David Samson

After being shut out of the Bighorn Historic Trail in 2005 due to record rain and flood events, AWA continued trail maintenance this summer despite further significant rain this spring. Vivian Pharis – along with three other volunteers, equipment and nine horses – spent seven days in July cutting and removing trees from the trail, fixing the trail-bed and doing clean-up where needed. They also observed trail and camp conditions along the way.

The rains did not cause as much trail erosion as anticipated. However, invasive weeds at campsites continue to be a problem along with the accumulation of human trash and “temporary” infrastructure at many sites. Trails around many campsites, like the George Creek Headwaters Camp, are showing continued erosion from normal trail use, and many trees near the camp are being cut.

The Bighorn Historic Trail is an equestrian trail that runs through the Bighorn Range of the Eastern Slopes from the Bighorn River to Wapiabi Creek to the Blackstone River to Chungo Creek. AWA has invested 22 years of maintenance and stewardship in the trail starting in 1984 and formally became a trail steward in 1994 under the Adopt-a-Trail program. AWA provides annual reports of the trail to the provincial government.



D. Samson

Heinz Unger, an AWA director, helps measure OHV damage in the Bighorn.

Volunteers Spruce Up New Section of Great Divide Trail

By Nigel Douglas

Another 12 kilometres of the Great Divide Trail (GDT) in Kananaskis Country are now spick and span, clear of deadfall and overhanging branches, thanks to the efforts of volunteers from AWA, the Great Divide Trail Association (GDTA) and Pathway Connectivity.

Every summer for the past three years, AWA and the GDTA have been running trail work trips on the Great Divide Trail. This year's work focused on Baril Creek in the Highwood area of Kananaskis Country.

The GDT is an informal 1,200-km trail running along the Continental Divide from Waterton National Park on the Canada/U.S. border to Kakwa Lake, north of Mount Robson in B.C., covering some of the most stunning landscapes in the whole of the Canadian Rockies. It passes through six National Parks (Glacier, Waterton Lakes, Banff, Kootenay, Yoho and Jasper) as well as the Willmore Wilderness Park, White Goat Wilderness Area and numerous other protected areas, including Mount Robson and Mount Assiniboine Provincial Parks.

AWA's involvement in the GDT dates back to 1971, when it sent a proposal for a long-distance trail in the National Parks to Minister Robert Stanbury, Minister Without Portfolio. Plans for the trail broadened to include land outside the parks, and in the 1970s a huge amount of work, including considerable volunteer input, was carried out to establish the GDT.

Interest in the GDT waned somewhat throughout the 1980s and 1990s, but in 2003 a few keen volunteers breathed new life into the Great Divide Trail Association, which then joined with AWA to begin urgently needed trail repair work.

This year's work focused on replacing a derelict footbridge across Baril Creek, and trail clearance to clear deadfall accumulated over a number of years. Some sections of trail were regraded where they had eroded away, and trail blazes were repainted to make the route of the trail more obvious.

Many of the volunteers working on the trail in 2006 were involved when



Peter McTaggart and Reg Ernst conduct a survey of whitebark pine in the Castle area.

the original trail work was begun in the 1970s. But this year it was encouraging to have a substantial amount of new young blood helping out as well. It seems that the Great Divide Trail truly does have a future.

Growing Concern over Decline in Whitebark Pine

By Nigel Douglas

In recent years there have been growing concerns for the future of two species of "five-needle" pine tree in southern Alberta: the whitebark pine (*Pinus albicaulis*) and limber pine (*Pinus flexilis*). As part of a broader-scale survey of the ecology and health of whitebark pine, AWA's Reg Ernst and research student Peter McTaggart

N. Douglas

spent the summer of 2006 carrying out surveys throughout the Castle region.

Whitebark pine is an important species of the upper subalpine ecosystem, providing food, cover and breeding habitat for a range of wildlife species. It can be a major food source for grizzly bears and is intricately linked with the life cycle of the Clark's nutcracker.

Whitebark pine is known to be declining across around half of its range in western North America, due to a combination of mountain pine beetle, pine blister rust and suppression of natural fire cycles. Ernst and McTaggart's studies found whitebark pine in several areas, but with very high rates of blister rust infection.

Blister rust infection leads to very low cone production and ultimately renders the tree non-reproductive. In the Castle whitebark pine tended to occur either in mixed stands of fir and spruce, where it was suffering from competition, or in pure stands consisting of a large proportion of dead or diseased trees. Initial results suggest that only 16 percent of trees found in the Castle were healthy.

The long-term survival of whitebark and limber pines in Alberta is a concern, and studies such as this will be crucial in tracking the status of these signature species as we look at ways to halt the decline.

AWA's work on whitebark pine has been supported in part by a grant from the Alberta Conservation Association.



N. Douglas

Trail work in Baril Creek along the Great Divide Trail in August.

Backpackers Share Many Gifts of White Goat Wilderness

Dear Editor:

I was lucky enough to be one of four participants, along with my husband, Eric, Steve Fitzjohn and Heinz Unger, on the AWA backpack trip into the White Goat Wilderness. Don Wales, with his elkhound, Saya, was our incredible leader – full of knowledge, enthusiasm and fun.

We headed to the Nigel Creek trailhead early on Monday morning. We were very lucky to have clear sunny skies for our hike up and over Nigel Pass. Our route then took us up to the rocky Cataract Pass, where we entered the White Goat Wilderness. Our destination for the day was the lovely meadow in the valley below where we happily took off our packs for the last time and set up camp in the shelter of the krummholtz. The late evening and night brought an exhilarating thunderstorm to our valley, testing the tents with its downpour of rain and wind.

Amazingly enough, the next day and the remainder of the days dawned clear and bright. We spent two nights at the Rumbling Rock campsite, so named because of the rock showers falling from the cliff and moraine above us. We hiked with light packs on the second day to a 9,000-ft ridge with views into the wild Valley of Lakes and behind us to the Snowdome. On our way down from the ridge, we explored an ice tunnel under a rock-covered glacier, trying to imagine the age of the ice above our heads.

Starry night skies resulted in frosty tent flies as we packed up on our third morning. We headed up through the meadows to Cline Pass, taking pictures on the way of the red-leaved fireweed – a sign of the coming fall. Two beautiful lakes greeted us at the pass and we spent a leisurely time here enjoying the view of the valley we were about to explore and the view around us of mountains and glaciers. We picked up an old trail from time to time as we descended, first through open meadows and then through trees.



H. Unger

Hikers ford the cold waters in the spectacular White Goat Wilderness.

Our camp that night was on the shore of the creek in a lovely wooded area.

We broke camp in record time on our fourth and last morning, and descended through the trees out of the White Goat Wilderness and into the Brazeau River valley. The river crossing was cold, but happily uneventful, and we then followed the beautiful Brazeau River upstream to complete our loop at Nigel Pass. We descended Nigel Creek to the cars, our wonderful trip at an end.

What an experience! A trip shared with great companions, perfect weather and best of all, time spent in our mountain wilderness.

— Cathy Lloyd

The Good, the Bad and the Ugly

Dear Editor:

It was a beautiful place. I can still picture it, cast in the misty glow of yesterday's sunrise. The Calliope Circuit, as I came to call it, was a divine, through-the-woods pathway that hugged the ragged, farthest reaches of the 1903 Frank Slide. My wife and I experienced its beauty and charm for more than twenty years. We traversed its serpentine byways many thousands of times. That sinuous, tree-lined path, winding through a mosaic of forest, shrub and grassland, provided us with hope and inspiration. It also served as a refuge, a place where we could escape the frenetic pace of the peopled world.

Springtime revealed the Calliope Circuit's greatest splendour. The trail flaunted phenomenal floral diversity, and with it, a remarkable concentration

of displaying male calliope hummingbirds, North America's smallest hummingbird. Eight tiny calliope males had perches there, each just a stone's throw from a competing, fiercely territorial neighbour.

During past decades, I've used the Calliope Circuit to publicly showcase the rare birds and butterflies that are attracted to the Crowsnest Pass's rare-in-Alberta assemblage of flowering plants. Many of the people who participated in these activities drove hundreds of miles to experience this surprising diversity. At least two of these individuals subsequently began to lead their own tours into the area, one coming from Edmonton, the other from coastal British Columbia.

The trail comprising the Calliope Circuit wound through a staircase of conglomerate cliffs, some affording spectacular views out over the century-old expanse of fractured boulders known around the world as the Frank Slide. Standing on one of these rock promontories, near a beckoning waterfall, you could look across this sea of rock to the haunting eastern ramparts of Turtle Mountain.

One conifer growing along this idyllic pathway grew in sharp contrast to the rest. It wasn't the oldest, nor the largest. It was the most beautiful. The tree, a sublime and stately subalpine fir, grew in the valley at trail's edge, far from its high-mountain relatives.

My wife and I always stopped at "her" tree to savour its exquisite, out-of-place, out-of-this-world charm. We'd admire its perfect form and quintessential fragrance. The tree was, quite simply, my wife's favourite. It offered much more than its immaculate, deep-green foliage and stunning, symmetrical beauty. It represented power and strength. It was a tree to look up to in times of exuberance, a tree to embrace in times of sorrow.

Several weeks ago my wife called me from work. Choking back tears, she told me that the tree was gone. FortisAlberta had bulldozed it out of their way, smashing it into oblivion. I learned that her tree and hundreds of

other trees lining the Calliope Circuit had been crushed into a thousand splintered pieces. I learned that fractured stumps and discarded trees lined this path of needless destruction. What happened to the nesting hummingbirds? What other wildlife did Fortis kill?

I've visited the Calliope Circuit several times since learning of its tragic and unexpected demolition. I haven't seen a single hummingbird. Instead, I've found a denuded pathway lined with dead trees (perfect tinder), littered with Fortis-discarded metal bailing bands. Dirt bikers and quaders have entered this ravaged landscape. They've gouged out additional roads and created

a criss-crossing litany of erosional scars, a veritable field of opportunity for the spread of noxious weeds.

Within this scene of wholesale destruction I've found a surprising, tenuous, thread of life: a female nighthawk (a ground-nesting bird, extremely rare in the Crowsnest Pass) deposited two eggs on an exposed patch of conglomerate rock where two new roads converge. More surprising is this: two nighthawks have hatched from these eggs at the very edge of this intersection. Will the two fledglings survive to fly from their perilous footprint of existence? Nature can occasionally deliver improbable outcomes.

The good news: if you call the Government of Alberta and ask about the land in question, you'll find that it's your land. It belongs to each and every one of you. And best of all, it's protected. By whom? The Government of Alberta.

— David McIntyre
Crowsnest Pass



© Grace Buzik

EVENTS

Open House Program

Calgary

Location: AWA, 455 12th St. NW

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Cost: \$5.00 per person

\$1.00 for children

Contact: (403) 283-2025

Pre-registration is advised.

Tuesday, October 3, 2006

Wolves, Sheep, Cattle and People Ecological and Economic Considerations

With Marco Musiani

Tuesday, November 7, 2006

Things That Go "Boing!" in the Night

The Ord's Kangaroo Rat

With Andy Teucher

Saturday, February 24, 2007

Sheep River Valley Winter Hike

With Nigel Douglas

Cost: \$20 per person (AWA members)

\$25 per person (non-members)

Contact: (403) 283-2025

<http://shop.albertawilderness.ca/>

Alberta Wilderness and Wildlife Trust

Annual Lecture and Awards

Friday, November 17, 2006

Water in the Western Prairies: The Basis for Conflict

With Dr. William Donahue



The lack of long-term environmental planning for industrial development, decreased funding of monitoring programs, and political interference in environmental research, is endangering our freshwaters and forests and our ability to adapt in a changing world.

Dr. Bill Donahue, an independent environmental researcher in Edmonton, will discuss his recent work on changing climate and water supply in western Canada, and how they combine to magnify the negative effects of development decisions.

He also will provide a glimpse at new governmental strategies in Alberta, and what they may mean to the future health of our natural environment.

Location: 455 12th St NW, Calgary

Time: Reception 6:00 p.m.

Lecture and Awards 7:00 p.m.

Cost: \$25

Reservations: (403) 283-2025

1-866-313-0713 or on-line

<http://shop.albertawilderness.ca/>





The Prairie Mountain Fiddlers kept toes tapping.



Emcee Roger St. Fort, accompanied by a bevy of lovely ladies.



KC the Bear, shown here with Calgary alderman Barry Erskine and his wife, patiently posed with guests all evening.



Will Davies was given special mention for his many AWA volunteer hours.



Kevin Dunford and Bill Peris of Topline Printing accepted recognition for Topline's continuing generosity to AWA.




AWA thanks our guests, volunteers, and donors for a wonderful and successful evening.




Auctioneer Larry Graham of Graham Auctions.



Many unique auction items caught bidders' eyes.



Auctioneer Jesse Starling of Graham Auctions.



Shell bought the canoe donated by Ghostpine Environmental Services Ltd.



Bob Blaxley and his wife, Brenda Naylor. Bob was honoured as a long-time volunteer with AWA.

WILD ALBERTA – MAKE IT YOUR LEGACY!

Each one of us can make a difference. A gift to the Alberta Wilderness and Wildlife endowment fund supports wilderness programs and research that contribute to the protection, understanding and appreciation of wilderness and wildlife. The fund is growing with the help of everyone's gifts.

Whether you make a one time gift, give annually to the fund, or have planned a bequest, you will be recognized as part of our *Legacy Circle* and your name will be included on our plaques in the Hillhurst Room of our Calgary office.

The Wilderness and Wildlife endowment fund, managed with the Calgary Foundation is one way AWA is planning for the future and ensuring strength in our ability to *Defend Wild Alberta!*

YES! I WOULD LIKE TO LEAVE A LEGACY FOR WILD ALBERTA.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ PROV: _____ POSTAL CODE: _____ PHONE (HM): _____

PAYMENT INFORMATION: CHEQUE VISA M/C AMEX AMOUNT \$ _____

CARD # _____ EXPIRY DATE: _____ SIGNATURE: _____



EVERY GIFT WILL MAKE A DIFFERENCE. THANK YOU!

CHEQUES MADE OUT TO THE ALBERTA WILDERNESS AND WILDLIFE TRUST
WILL BE FORWARDED TO THE CALGARY FOUNDATION AND YOU WILL RECEIVE A RECEIPT FROM THEM.

Return Undeliverable Canadian Addresses to:



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

