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Image provided by Cheryl Bradley

The Way It Is

Gateway to Waterton Lakes National Park

Development Proposal Compromises Crown of the Continent

A proposed housing project next to Waterton Lakes National Park threatens the integrity of the park and betrays commitments made by the landowner four years ago. Cardston County Council is reviewing an application by Jim Garner, a Cardston County landowner, to subdivide two 50-acre parcels on the eastern edge of the world-famous park into about 25 lots for country residential development. In November 1997, Garner was granted permission to subdivide three 5-acre parcels from 380 acres and assured the Council that there would be no further subdivision. Wildlife advocates say the latest development proposal not only threatens water quality and wildlife but also will become an eyesore on one of the most magnificent landscapes in Alberta. Third and final reading for the proposal will take place on March 12. If this subdivision is approved, it is feared that more will follow. A more appropriate location for new homes would be Mountain View, a small town 20 km east of the park gate. In this issue is the presentation that Cheryl Bradley made to Cardston County Council in defence of the beauty and integrity of Waterton. Cheryl Bradley is past president of the AWA. She is a member of the Southern Alberta Environmental Group.



Image provided by Cheryl Bradley

Is this our desired future?

Gateway to Waterton Lakes National Park with an artistic depiction of residences on the site of the proposed development. (The buildings are not to scale, but the footprint of development is accurate.)

Editorial

(by Shirley Bray)

A new National Parks Act has been announced that places protection of ecological integrity as the top priority for all aspects of National Park management. At the same time a potential residential development sits at the doorstep of Waterton Lakes National Park. Is the ecological integrity of Waterton threatened?

One of the issues that arose with the Waterton development is the value of scenic beauty - the vista of prairie meeting mountains as one travels towards Waterton. Will a bunch of houses spoil that view? Although we may pursue this topic more formally in a future issue, let me offer my own experience of what effect manmade development can have on the senses.

I never saw Lake Louise until my late teens when I made a pilgrimage from the east westwards across the continent. My idea of Lake Louise came from postcards and from a jigsaw puzzle of a painting of this famous lake that my siblings and I poured over every year. I arrived at the Lake Louise campground one evening after several days of hiking from Banff.

The park staff were flummoxed when I said I didn't have a car to protect my food. In those days food storage for car-less hikers was seemingly not thought of. Although I went to great lengths to protect my food in a tree a bear ate it anyway. But I was not completely discouraged because I knew that this day I was going to see our beloved Lake Louise at last.

I trudged up the long road to the lake. As I neared the end I started to pass concrete buildings with stores and cafeterias, and there were paved parking lots. I was astounded. This wasn't in any picture I had ever seen. As I went further I came to the manicured shore of the lake with non-native flowers in carefully tended gardens. This wasn't in that magical wildland painting. As I stood on the shore of the lake and raised my eyes to the glacier I was at last completely dismayed - for it was not the snowy white splendor I had expected, but was streaked with brown. I felt truly let down, even if the glacier at least was natural.

Since moving to Alberta I have revisited Lake Louise several times and have had more happy experiences, but I went with no illusions and I don't linger by the lake. The Lake is beautiful but the recreational development has ruined the experience of it and has removed something vital.

As we approach Banff National Park we are greeted by a cement plant and the ever-expanding Town of Canmore. Scenic beauty is part of our natural heritage, let's not sell it all off for short-term gain. Let us not do to Waterton what we allowed by default to happen to Banff and Lake Louise. We have an obligation to do what we can to preserve the integrity of this jewel for future generations.

Editorial Disclaimer

The opinions expressed by the various authors throughout this publication are not necessarily those of the editorial board or of the Alberta Wilderness Association. The editorial board reserves the right to edit, reject or withdraw articles submitted.

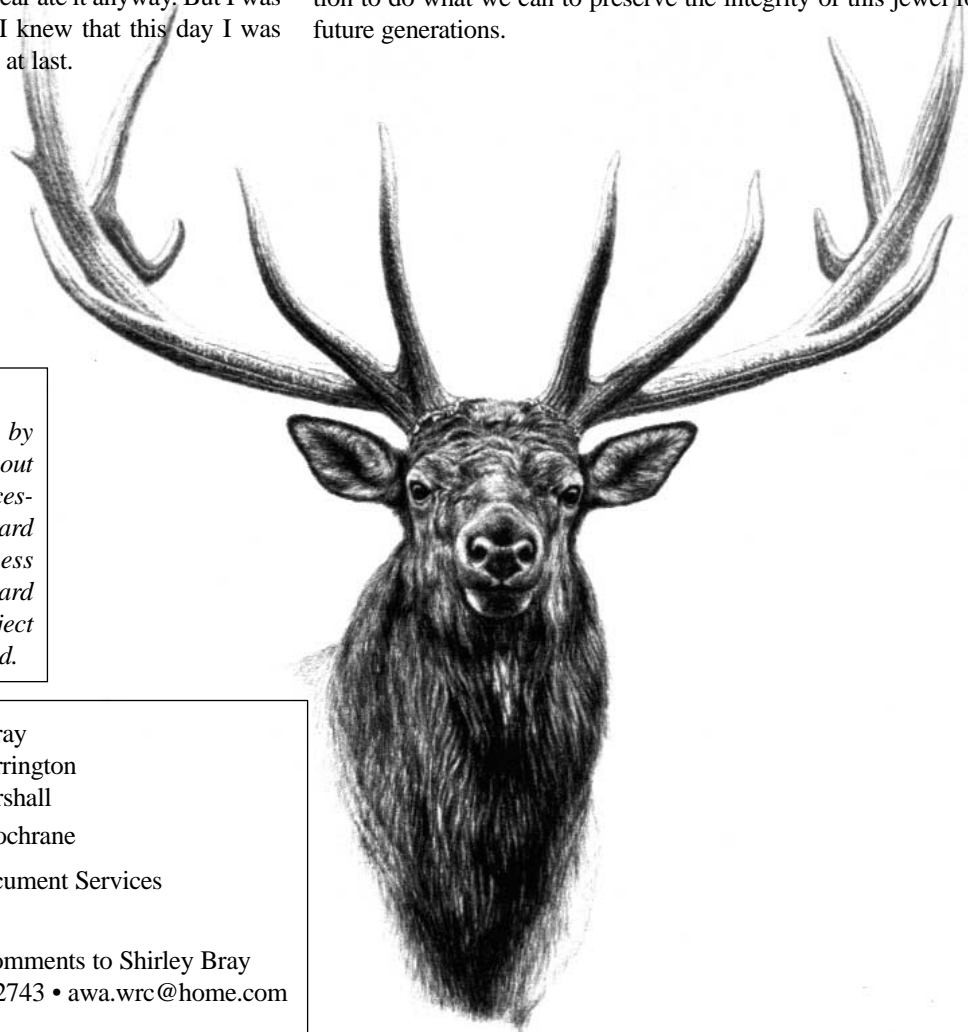
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Presentation to Cardston County Council

Concerning Development on the Boundary of Waterton Lakes National Park

February 7, 2001

By Cheryl Bradley

Re: Proposed By-Laws No. 463/2001 and 465/2001, amendments to the existing Land Use By-Law No. 443/98 which would re-designate from Agriculture to Grouped Country Residential lands in the west half of Section 22-2-29 W4, on the east boundary of Waterton Lakes National Park, between highway 5 and the Waterton River.

Preamble

I feel very emotional about the matters we are considering this evening. You may detect that from my voice. I liken my emotions to those which might have been felt by Jesus when he encountered the profit seekers in the temple of God in Jerusalem. His anger led him to cast them out - one of the most violent acts attributed to Jesus. For me, and many others, the Crown of the Continent Ecosystem, with Waterton Lakes National Park at its heart, is a sacred place. Proposals to desecrate it, in pursuit of profit, stir strong emotions, including anger.

That said, I respect your authority as a County Council. The decisions you must make to fulfill your mandate under the Municipal Government Act - to provide good government, to provide services, facilities or other things that, in the opinion of the Council, are necessary or desirable for all or a part of the municipality, and to develop and maintain safe and viable communities - are often complex and difficult.

Introduction

Members of Council (Broyce Jacobs (Reeve), Wade Bevans, Terry Helgeson, Ida Low, Neal Miller, Bill Peterson, Floyd Smith)

My name is Cheryl Bradley. I live in Lethbridge.

It is only a week ago that I became aware of a proposed rezoning which will allow for grouped country residential subdivision on the east boundary of Waterton Lakes National Park. In that week, the conservation organizations have contacted me expressing their opposition to the proposed rezoning. They have asked that I convey their opposition to Cardston County Council. The organizations include Alberta Wilderness Association, Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, Castle-Crown Wilderness Coalition, East Kootenay Environmental Society, Friends of the Oldman River, Grasslands Naturalists, Lethbridge Naturalists Society, Predator Conservation Alliance, Southern Alberta Environmental Group and Wildcanada.net. They are based in Lethbridge, Pincher Creek, Medicine Hat, Canmore, Calgary, Kimberley (B.C.), Vancouver, and Bozeman (Montana)....

The last time I appeared before Cardston Council was on November 10, 1997 to express opposition on behalf of the South Country Protected Areas Project to a proposed country residential subdivision one mile south of the current proposal, again on the eastern boundary of Waterton Lakes National Park. Ironically, Mr. Jim Garner also attended that council meeting requesting approval for subdivision of three first-out lots from the same property for which today he is requesting permission to subdivide a minimum of 23 lots. The Council of that day, four of whom still sit as councillors, granted Mr. Garner's request, which did not require a bylaw change. I distinctly recall assurances by Mr. Garner to Council that he did not intend any further subdivision of the property. How quickly he has changed his mind.

Besides three houses being constructed on the three new lots, a large "craft shop", that started out as a tractor shed, has been built on the property within the last few years. If this rezoning of two 50-acre parcels is approved, Mr. Garner can be expected to exact

as many lots as he can (a minimum of 23) and to be back for more on the remainder of his property.

At a minimum lot size of 3 acres, his 380 acres of land at the Cardston Gate could potentially accommodate 50 or more residences. On the other hand, perhaps his next scheme will be a few condominiums, or perhaps a hotel and a gas station. Others, probably from outside the neighbourhood, will follow Mr. Garner's lead in obtaining rezoning for country residential subdivision. Where will Council draw the line? There is an opportunity now to begin drawing that line, with rejection of this application.

Who are the Affected Persons?

According to the Municipal Government Act, "in a public hearing, council must (a) hear any person, group of persons, or person representing them, who claims to be affected by the proposed bylaw or resolution and who has complied with the procedures outlined by the council, and (b) may hear any other person who wishes to make representations and whom the council agrees to hear."

I, and many others in the conservation community, consider us to be affected by the proposed bylaw. We are not directly affected in our day-to-day lives, as would be those in the immediate neighbourhood. We are not financially affected as will be County ratepayers who will share the profit of increased property taxes and bear the costs of increased infrastructure and services (road maintenance, policing, fire protection). However, we are affected. Many of us have dedicated significant time and resources to work towards conservation in the County of Cardston, in the neighbouring Municipal District of Pincher Creek and/or in the broader Rocky Mountain Bioregion, stretching from Yellowstone to the Yukon, of which Waterton Lakes National Park is a keystone area. Approval of this proposal will make our effort that much more difficult.

I, and many others in the organizations opposed to this proposal, use and enjoy Waterton Lakes National Park and environs. Approval of this proposal would diminish that experience. We buy gas, food and accommodation in Cardston and Mountain View, as well as Waterton and Pincher Creek. We may be less inclined to

travel to Waterton should there be creeping subdivision on its borders. As well, I, and many others who have contacted me, are obviously emotionally affected by this proposal.

Waterton Lakes National Park and environs - known as the Crown of the Continent - is a significant part of our national heritage. The national and international heritage stature of the Crown of the Continent has been confirmed through the designation of Waterton Lakes National Park in 1911, the International Peace Park in 1932 (assisted by the Cardston Rotary Club), the International Biosphere Reserve in 1979, and the World Heritage Site in 1995. There is a moral imperative, reflected in the federal Historic Sites and Monuments Act and National Parks Act and in the provincial Historical Resources Act and proposed Natural Heritage Resources Act to protect national and provincial treasures - be they landscapes, buildings or artifacts - undiminished for future generations.

One could argue that all Canadians are affected by threats to a national heritage and should have opportunity to voice their views. Canadians did voice their concerns to the Ecological Integrity Panel when it visited national parks across the country a few years ago. Their input resulted in a recommendation by the Panel "that the Minister require Parks Canada to maintain and enhance the ecological integrity of the parks by working in co-operation with adjacent landowners, and by participating in regional land use planning, environmental assessments, and other decision-making processes where outcomes are reasonably expected to affect the ecological integrity of a national park" (Unimpaired for Future Generations, p. 9-10). Parks Canada's concerns regarding this proposed development should carry a lot of weight with County Council, if the views of Canadians are to be respected. I am one of few affected Canadians who have the opportunity to participate in this municipal decision-making process and to express my views directly to Council.

Waterton Lakes National Park and environs recently has also been recognized as a keystone area for the Yukon to Yellowstone Conservation Initiative. This initiative promotes a comprehensive conservation strategy for the Rocky Mountain bioregion that includes sufficient protected core areas, connective wildlife movement corridors, and insulating transitions zones. Its goal is to ensure the long-term survival of wide ranging wildlife species. Y2Y also works cooperatively with communities desiring to create a future of both prosperity and harmony with the natural landscape.

Environmental Implications of the Proposed Development

Waterton is a little Park with a big job to do in conserving significant features of the Rocky Mountain bioregion. Allowing major residential subdivision on the park's boundary will only magnify the conservation challenges and could, ultimately, spell failure. We have identified three key threats from this development to the ecological integrity of Waterton Lakes National Park. None of these aspects has been addressed in the Area Structure Plan.

- **Threat to the integrity of a corridor for wildlife movement along the Rocky Mountains:** Alberta's and British Columbia's Rocky Mountains pinch to one of their narrowest points at the US

border. The pathways within which wildlife, such as grizzly bear, can move are limited. A major development on the boundary of Waterton Lakes National Park risks further minimizing that narrow passageway.

- **Increased wildlife-human conflict and impacts on critical wildlife habitat:** Large wildlife, including grizzly and black bear, wolves, cougar, elk and mule deer exhibit seasonal movements eastward out of the park onto neighbouring lands, including Mr. Garner's property. There is little doubt that allowing major residential subdivision on the Park's boundary will increase conflicts between wildlife and people, which occasionally result in harm to people and usually result in death to wildlife. Mr. Garner is not known for his tolerance of wildlife on his property. Even though I do not know him personally, stories have reached me concerning his bragging about shooting bears, elk, deer and other wildlife, which have had the misfortune to pass onto his land.

- **Increased risk to property from fire:** Native vegetation and biodiversity were shaped by fire, a significant natural process since melting of the glaciers over 10,000 years ago. Suppression of fire in the Park over several decades has increased fuel loads. Use of prescribed burning is suggested to reduce the hazard. A residential subdivision on the park boundary would limit options for fire management. It also would place those living in the residences at risk to loss of property and perhaps life.

There are other outstanding issues regarding the potential environmental impacts of the proposed development.

- **Visual Environment:** The viewscape of prairie against towering mountains is unique to southwestern Alberta along the Rocky Mountain Front and nowhere is it more dramatic than on the approach to Waterton Lakes National Park from Cardston. The proposed development, along with others which are sure to follow should this one get approved, will degrade the outstanding scenery, which currently draws so many visitors to this area. If the County is unwilling to do an area structure plan, which determines where development can occur, it is highly unlikely that there will be effective measures taken to ensure subdivision planning and architectural design that protects aesthetic integrity. This particular development proposes a row of 10 residences adjacent to Highway 5, currently an area of open prairie. It will be highly visible and an eyesore, just as is the "craft shop" constructed at the Park gate. According to the Area Structure Plan, the Garners would dictate any architectural controls, although I am not aware they have experience with this.

- **Water Supply and Sewage Disposal:** There are questions about adequate water supply, the suitability of the site for septic fields and potential impacts on groundwater and the Waterton River. Information on these aspects of the proposed development are very sketchy in the Area Structure Plan. The report states that domestic water will be provided through individual wells; however, no information is provided on the aquifer (e.g. depth and flow rates). EBA Engineering did not do a subsurface investigation, but relied on a 1973 hydrogeological map, a 1958 surficial geology map (neither of which are site specific) and a visual assessment of eroded areas. They observed coarse-grained till (gravels up to 15 cm) with interbedded layers of fine to medium grained sands. What is the depth to bedrock? Does the site have suitable substrate

for 23 septic systems on 100 acres? The proposed development surrounds a 10-acre wetland/intermittent lake. Is there potential for movement of contaminants from the proposed septic fields into the wetland especially given that septic fields on the lots north of the wetland may have to be placed in the front of the residences to meet setback [requirements] from the river bank? How would stormwater flow be managed (note: there is a recommendation to direct drainage away from the river slopes)? What is the wetland's rate of recharge? Is there movement of water from the wetland to the Waterton River?

- **Riparian Habitat along the Waterton River:** The developer is proposing to extend six lots to the edge of the Waterton River allowing only a 6 metre swathe as environmental reserve. It is becoming common practice among ethical developers to exclude from development all riparian areas subject to the 1 in 100 year flood flow and place them in an environmental reserve. According to EBA, the development should have a 4 m setback from the top of the bank, but even this may result in a general increase in the degree of saturation of the site subsoils which may cause sloughing of the top portion of the slope (especially in areas of septic fields). What are the implications for riparian habitat and water quality of the Waterton River?

- **Archaeological/Historical Resources:** According to Dr. Brian Reeves, Professor Emeritus, University of Calgary, the area is significant from a traditional and archaeological perspective, including the following:

- The historical Old North Trail (Waterton branch) runs through the property.
- It is the locale of two major battles between the Piikani and the Salish and K'tunaxa, which occurred in and near the river valley. The locale is known to the Piikani as "Where We Killed the Kutenai", one of the traditional Piikani place names for the Waterton, and to the Kutenai as the "Battle of Copper Mountain". This place also is known to the K'tunaxa as "Darken Eyebrows" in reference to a large stand of conifers along the Waterton River.
- There may be ethnobotanically significant plants on the lands proposed for subdivision.
- There may be archaeological sites/features which relate to bison driving and trapping.

An assessment of historical resources, including First Nation Consultation, is needed according to the Cardston County Land Use Bylaw.

Economic Considerations

So far this presentation has focused on the environmental impacts of the proposed development on Waterton Lakes National Park, but it is important to remember that the existence of the Park is the very reason grouped country residential developments are being proposed along the Waterton front within the County of Cardston and the Municipal District of Pincher Creek. A study of economic trends in the Yellowstone to Yukon Region has found that "in aggregate the region has grown beyond a dependence solely on resource extraction, and much of the growth is stimulated by business owners, retirees, and entrepreneurs who have decided that living in the Rockies, close to recreation, spectacular scenery and wildlife, is important to their quality of life. However, the faster communities grow, the more they seem to destroy the

very qualities that stimulated the growth in the first place. Bozeman, Montana and Canmore, Alberta are good examples of what can happen when a community grows beyond its base of agriculture or resource extraction. The key challenge is to manage growth in a way that protects both the values of the community and the integrity of the ecosystem."

Will allowing grouped country residential subdivision sprawl on the eastern boundary of Waterton Lakes National Park protect the values of the community and the integrity of the ecosystem? We think not. It may not even help the community economically. Research in Montana has found that poorly planned growth stresses taxpayer and community budgets. Two fiscal impact studies completed in Gallatin and Broadwater Counties in Montana found that farmland and open space provide local governments with a surplus of revenue from property taxes and other revenue sources while residential development drains local government coffers.

Alternatives

Mr. Garner may argue that his rights to property and to profit from it are being threatened. In answer to this I would like to quote William Kitteredge, who grew up on and then managed his family's cattle ranch in eastern Oregon: *"The truth is, we never owned all the land and water....and we don't own anything absolutely or forever. As our society grows more and more complex and interwoven, our entitlement becomes less and less absolute, more and more likely to be legally diminished. Our rights to property will never take precedence over the needs of society. Nor should they, we all must agree in our grudging hearts. Ownership of property has always been a privilege granted by society and revocable."*

I am not suggesting expropriation of Mr. Garner's land, which, by the way, our forefathers saw fit to allow under the Municipal Government Act. I am, however, suggesting that Mr. Garner has alternatives, which would allow him a reasonable profit from his investment in the land, while allowing its conservation and maintenance of the ecological integrity of Waterton Lakes National Park for the benefit of future generations. Y

For more information see www.AlbertaWilderness.ca
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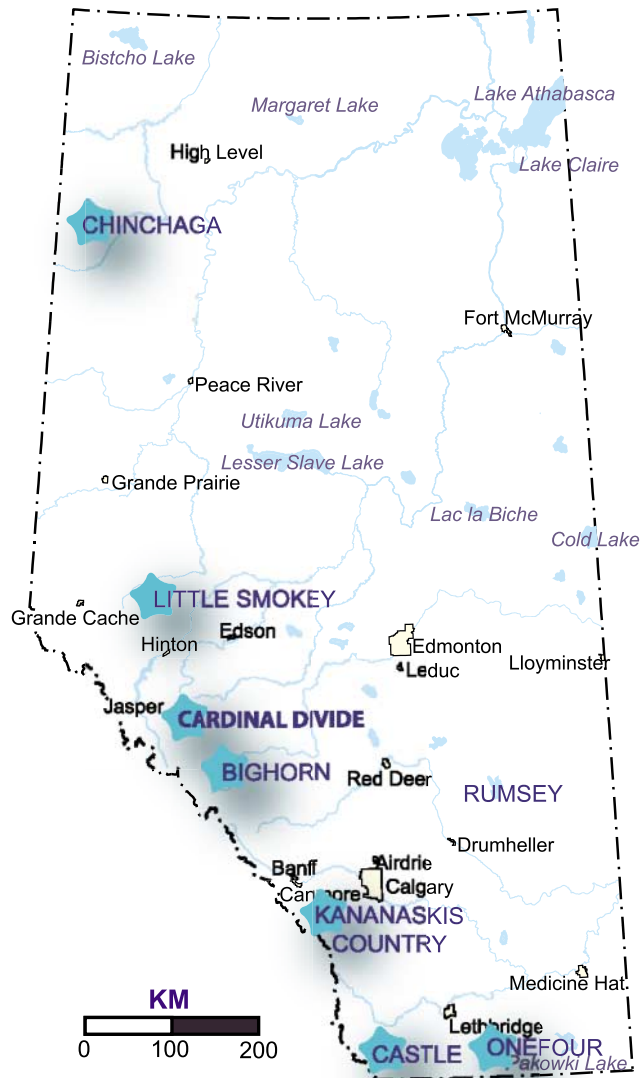


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ALBERTA WILDERNESS WATCH

The Provincial Election

Our members expect AWA to take an active roll in the election. AWA has launched a three-pronged effort to alert our members and the public to important issues during the election. Firstly, AWA has sent an election action alert to all members emphasizing that our health, our economy and deregulation are environmental issues. Secondly, AWA and Wildcanada.net are making the protection of wildlands and wildlife an election issue by focusing on the failure of the Alberta government to protect the Castle-Crown Wilderness. Thirdly, an action alert has been issued for Bighorn Country, which is discussed in this issue of the Advocate. All 3 alerts can be viewed on our website.



Bighorn Country

The following letter was received in response to the AWA action alert on Bighorn Country (www.AlbertaWilderness.ca/News/Alerts/2001/BH20010201.htm) and was published in the Red Deer Advocate.

Dear Editor:

If you want to bend the ear of government, the best time is just before an election.

The preservation of Bighorn Wildland Park is high on the list of everyone who values a heritage that includes pristine foothills at the foot of the Bighorn Range, west of the Forestry Trunk Road (734) and north and south of the David Thompson Highway.

Studies by the (Conservative) government since 1986 document the rarity and importance of these high-elevation foothills. At that time they announced the "Bighorn Wildland Recreation Area." However, it has no legislated protection. It is smaller than the size advocated by the conservation organizations and recommended by government studies completed in 1986 on Environmentally Significant Areas. Industrial roads, logging and oil and gas activities are poised to move into the area. Talisman Energy's application is currently before the Alberta Energy and Utilities Board. It is for a sour gas (poisonous) pipeline and associated facilities in the northern part of the proposed wildland park. This is a pristine area, a rarity in all of Alberta's foothills. More roads and drilling would follow if Talisman gets the green light to proceed.

Shell Canada is considering oil and gas activity.

Alberta Forest Service has issued logging agreements, right up to the Jasper National Park boundary, to Weyerhaeuser (a U.S.-based multi-national) and Sundance (People's Republic of China multi-national). Forests outside these agreements have now been offered to other companies.

The province is initiating an access management plan for off-highway vehicle use inside the proposed park. This includes the present "Prime Protection and Critical Wildlife" zones which government policy says are off-limits to motorized use due to the "environmental sensitivity" of the area.

Residents at a meeting held at Nordegg Community Hall oppose plans to log about 350 hectares a year in Bighorn.

Small, local tourist operators in the Nordegg-Sundance area are threatened by plans to increase land allocation to the forest industry. Proposed logging will push away tourists who visit the area to enjoy the wilderness. Every year, new businesses are moving into the Bighorn Country region, almost exclusively tourist-oriented. They are not looking for sour gas wells and logging trucks.

Why does the Alberta government favour oil and gas and logging over commercial eco-tourism, which will provide lasting economic benefits and preserve the character and ecological integrity for wildlife and future generations of visitors and people who live in Alberta.

Sometimes letters to the editor can provide a dual purpose.

First to inform and then provide the desire to do something. In this case, it is easy.

The Alberta Wilderness Association, Friends of West Country, other environmental activists and the Council of Canadians know the only way to make a change is through the democratic process of pressuring governments to legislate change.

Do we herald oil and gas development for export until the map of Alberta looks like a giant checkerboard with all squares filled in with belching (and in some cases) toxic fumes and call it economic progress? Or do we look at the sky, the earth and the mountains and be guided by the will to preserve a precious Alberta heritage of pure air, clean water, unspoiled terrain and say this is the legacy we leave for the future?

How will this generation be remembered?

If this tugs at your heart and you are moved to do something, write Premier Klein, 307 Legislative Building, 10800 - 97 Ave. Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6. Fax 1-780-427-1349; phone: 310-0000. Send a copy to your local MLA as well as Debbie Carlson, Liberal MLA, Legislature Annex, Edmonton, AB T5K 1E4 and to Dr. Raj Pannu, NDP MLA, Legislative Building, Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6.

Dorothy Corney
for the Council of Canadians
Red Deer

Evan Thomas, Kananaskis Country

A local advisory committee, established to identify options and make recommendations for the Evan Thomas planning area, will be forwarding its recommendations to the government planning team at Alberta Environment in March. The committee consists of Calgary Area Outdoor Council, Kananaskis Improvement District, Kananaskis Area Residents for Economic and Environmental Sustainability, Alberta Economic Development, Environmental/Naturalists, represented by Gareth Thomson of CPAWS, and Alberta Environment.

Dianne Pachal of AWA, ecotourism operators, and representatives from other conservation groups and government conservation agencies have made presentations to the committee. Alberta Environment will consider the recommendations in drafting the Evan Thomas Management Plan. The draft plan will be available for further public review in the summer or fall of 2001.

Pachal believes that the committee is stacked in favour of more development and against a government recommendation that the area be upgraded to a provincial park. Hunting and fishing groups also believe that the committee is stacked to exclude their considerations.

Evan Thomas is located between and abutting Spray Valley Provincial Park and the Bow Valley and Elbow Sheep Wildland Parks. It contains a significant and diverse array of facilities and recreational opportunities, including Kananaskis Village and Nakiska Ski Hill, a campground, horse-riding concession and a government service centre. However, wildlife research has established the area as important habitat for several species, including grizzly bears, and as part of major regional wildlife movement corridors.

The purpose of the management plan is to balance natural

values with public recreation and business opportunities. However, Albertans have clearly stated, through surveys on the new recreation policy for Kananaskis, that they want more protection, not more development, for Kananaskis.

Little Smokey/Solomon Valley

Black Cat Guest Ranch is one of the stakeholders concerned about logging plans in Solomon Valley, just northwest of Hinton. The area is in Weldwood's FMA and is due to be logged. Black Cat Guest Ranch has launched the following appeal for letters in their latest newsletter. See their website at www.agt.net/public/bcranch/home.htm

"The local pulp mill is proceeding slowly with their plans to log an area between the Ranch and the front range of the Rockies. This forest, which contains some of the oldest spruce and fir around here, is visible from the Ranch and several of our trails run through the compartment, Athabasca 4. Much of the logging will be clear-cutting. For two years, we sat on a committee called the "Forest Resource Advisory Group" lobbying to have this forest preserved for recreation and tourism.

"Last fall, the majority of members approved Weldwood's logging plan, which was then forwarded to Alberta Environmental protection for approval. It was expected that road construction in the compartment would take place this winter, with logging commencing in the winter of 2001-2002. However, to this date, only preliminary approval has been granted. Thus, any letters you send over the next month or so could still have an influence on Alberta Environmental Protection. We ask you to mail, fax or e-mail letters to us [Box 6267, Hinton T7V 1X6, Ph: 780-865-3084, Fax: 780-865-1924], which we will forward to Weldwood and the government. Letters should be addressed to: Hon. Halvar Johnson, Minister of Environment."

Cardinal/Mountain Park/Cheviot Mine

The Cheviot mine has been shelved, but the companies still want federal approval for it and the government's response is expected shortly. In late January, Dianne Pachal of AWA and representatives from Canadian Nature Federation and Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society met in Ottawa with senior officials from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Canadian Heritage and the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency. They discussed the forthcoming federal response to the report of the panel which recommended approval of the mine again last September after a second hearing.

Since September, Cardinal River Coals has shelved the development and disbanded their Cheviot team as letters of intent from Japanese customers had expired, eliminating the market for the coal. The various government departments were awaiting the conclusions of their lawyers and of Justice Canada as to whether the federal government can approve a development that has been shelved. Anne McLellan, Justice Minister, had previously supported the Cheviot Mine project as Minister of Natural Resources Canada. According to Pachal the meetings "were very productive, frank and open." Letters to Prime Minister Jean Chretien should ask that the mine not be approved and that a park be established instead.

The AWA coalition has submitted a request to the Alberta Energy and Utilities Board to revoke the permit for the Cheviot mine. A decision is expected shortly. The Board updated the permit at the end of December.

Some Hinton residents formed the Alberta Council of Sustainable Communities and the Environment (CCSE) in January 2000 in response to the controversy surrounding Cheviot and concerns that any natural resource development in the area would undergo similar scrutiny. Their purpose is to protect resource-based economies and the environment. Their website is www.albertaccse.homestead.com.

Chinchaga

Murphy Oil Company Limited applied to the National Energy Board (NEB) to build a 17 km 12 inch pipeline to cross into Alberta from B.C. The proposed pipeline cuts right through the middle of the Chinchaga candidate area, the Chinchaga caribou range, although outside the new park. The NEB scheduled a public hearing for February 15. Mike Sawyer, of the Citizen's Oil and Gas Council, attended the hearing and assisted Lee Morin, a trapper from northwestern Alberta. Morin was concerned about the pipeline and the 21 oil and gas applications that were proposed through his trapline.

Murphy wants to build the pipeline during this winter season and requested an expedited hearing process. In compliance with the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act (CEAA), the NEB must establish the scope of the project and define the scope of the factors to be considered. Unfortunately, the larger context of the project was not considered. The scope of the project was narrowed to include just the pipeline and related activities under federal jurisdiction. The 7 wells and a 27 km pipeline constructed under B.C. provincial jurisdiction and the 21 oil and gas applications in the Chinchaga area under Alberta provincial jurisdiction were not considered. The spatial scope of the project was constrained to a 1 km buffer zone around the pipeline and any cumulative effects assessment was constrained to this narrow zone.

In cross-examining Murphy's panel at the hearing, Sawyer was not permitted by the NEB to ask questions about anything outside the 1 km buffer zone or within provincial jurisdiction. The NEB could have chosen to accept arguments that the scope must be broader and either deny Murphy's application or adjourn the hearing until the company refilled with further material. Instead, the NEB chose to accept the narrow scope of the review and granted Murphy its licence to proceed with the pipeline.

Sawyer believes that this latter course "emasculates the spirit and provisions of the CEAA, particularly the cumulative effects provisions." As for Morin, the Alberta Energy and Utilities Board would not give a direct response as to whether the 21 oil and gas applications under provincial jurisdiction would affect his trapline directly or indirectly. A positive answer would have required a hearing. Instead, the EUB referred him to the Trappers Compensation Board for compensation.

Castle

AWA and Castle Crown Wilderness Coalition (CCWC) are campaigning to make the Castle Wilderness a Wildland Park during the election. The two groups are recommending that: (1) the core immediately be designated as a Wildland Park, with the remainder placed under Provincial Park Reservation with no new industrial disturbance permitted; (2) the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers and Environmental Non-Government Organizations (CAPP-ENGO) agreement to phase out existing oil and gas dispositions be implemented; and (3) the Castle be nominated for World Heritage Site designation by UNESCO, as an addition to the Waterton and Glacier World Heritage Sites. See AWA's website for more information.

Special Places Program

Alberta Environment provides updates on newly designated areas under the Special Places Program on their website. Since December 20, 2000 the following sites have been designated: Lesser Slave Lake Wildland Park and six other wildland parks in the Boreal Forest Natural Region; six new sites in the Foothills Natural Region, including Chinchaga Wildland Park, Grizzly Ridge Wildland Park and Sundance Provincial Park; and the Onefour Heritage Rangeland in the Grasslands Natural Region. The areas are relatively small and are not completely protected from industrial development.

The Onefour Heritage Rangeland consists of 3 small sites designated as Natural Areas totaling 112 sq. km within AWA's proposed 680 sq. km Milk-River-Lost River Wildland Park. The area is adjacent to the southeast Alberta-Montana border. The first site is in the Pronghorn Grazing Reserve, west of the Kennedy Coulee Ecological Reserve. The second is within the southern part of Agriculture Canada's Onefour Research Station and overlaps the Lost River Valley. The third is in the eastern part of the Sage Creek Grazing Reserve.

National Parks

The AWA has joined with other environment groups in congratulating the Federal Government and Canadian Heritage Minister, Sheila Copps, for bringing the new Canada National Parks Act into force. Key changes make the protection of ecological integrity the first priority for all aspects of National Park management.

Prairie Conservation Forum

The draft Prairie Conservation Action Plan is now available for review at www.AlbertaPCF.ab.ca

Time and space are constantly changing. 10,000 years before the present, Alberta was under ice. Our environment is temporary. The only question I have is: What environmental conditions do you prefer?

- Steve Swettenham (Director)

A Scientist's Perspective on the Grizzly Bear Hunting Moratorium in British Columbia

By Dr. Brian L. Horejsi

I'm a wildlife scientist who has been involved with bear research and conservation issues beginning a few years before 1980 when I placed my first radio collar on a temporarily immobilized male grizzly bear. I write today from that perspective about the grizzly bear hunting moratorium recently announced in British Columbia. I can't speak for other parties involved in this issue, but whether they have an economic, social or ethical view, all have a legitimate right to participate, as do I as a member of the public. I want to present some points that establish a basis for the moratorium and address some misinformation that keeps surfacing.

Grizzly bears have been exterminated from about 20% of the province already. Not all remaining grizzly bear populations in B.C. are threatened or endangered. But all populations in the "High contact" zones, areas where dense human populations and intense agricultural and/or logging activity exist, are threatened or endangered and most, but not all, are acknowledged as such by the Ministry of Environment. These areas include all of southern B.C. and the central interior. Coastal bear populations appear to be from one third to one fifth the density of benchmark populations in Alaska, a decline that should be viewed as threatening.

In British Columbia, grizzly bear populations and their habitat are facing unprecedented human induced pressures. The human population has escalated from 2.9 million in 1980 to 4.1 million today. The Ministry of Environment reports the interior of B.C. has warmed at 2 times the global average. The implications for forest recovery and overall habitat productivity are not positive. The province leads every jurisdiction in North America with its rate of deforestation - an unprecedented assault focused on remaining intact and unroaded watersheds, the last secure areas for grizzly bears. Official estimates state that 340,000 km of forest roads criss-cross the province. Independent analysis of three ecosystems reveals that the government has underestimated the density of these ecological fractures, which provide for every possible form of human access from foot travel to mountain bike to off road vehicle, perhaps by as much as 50% in some areas. Oil and gas exploration is fragmenting previously intact northeast ecosystems; industry drills over 500 wells each year, two times the average number in the 1980's. Oil and gas and logging activities and road building are specifically exempted from environmental assessment.

Roads act as barriers to bear movement and the habitat near them acts as a mortality sink. Research reveals that grizzly bears within one km of a road die at 3 to 11 times the rate for bears that can avoid roads. But avoiding a road has its consequences too. Habitat is alienated. Greater than 90% of bears die at the hands of

humans. Many of these people are licensed hunters, known as the "regulated" population. As road density increases, more people use bear country and the proportion of "unregulated" users climbs. There has been a sharp increase in the use of off road vehicles, bringing even more people into grizzly habitat; some are careless with food and garbage and many are also armed. People hunting wildlife species besides bears use these access routes and routinely find themselves in conflict with bears. The upshot is that bears continue to die.

As contact between humans and bears escalates, mortality cannot be sustained and bear numbers and distribution decline. Greater than 4 human caused deaths per 100 bears (excluding cubs) leads to decline. This is a pretty fine line! And it has to be maintained forever! Imagine then, if the population estimate of 100 bears is uncertain or unreliable? What if there are only 80 bears, or 60? This is where involvement by independent scientists

has become important. For over 25 years the occasional government biologist has warned of overkill and yet these red flags were systematically ignored by the Wildlife Branch. During this period most government biologists remained committed to hunting and continued to legitimize it. In the mean time grizzly bear populations were exterminated or became threatened or endangered. There are at least 9 such population units in B.C. today - almost all hunted until the 1990's.

Like it or not, part of the moratorium issue is population estimates. In the mid 1990's the grizzly bear population estimate

for all of B.C. was doubled, based almost entirely on one, and possibly two studies. For more than 80% of the province the doubling of population estimates was a paper exercise. Let me give an example of how population estimates have been manipulated in a wildlife management unit in the Caribou region. Between 1989 and 1996 the population of grizzly bears was estimated at 55; in 1996 the estimate was increased to 73, and in 1999 it was reduced to 31. The changes were attributed to "redefinition" of occupied habitat and a change in density "assignments", all considered "consistent with Ministry Policy". Note the absence of reference to scientific evidence. No surprise since there has never been a field study of bears in this area or this region. What kind of confidence should we then place in the application of a precise 4% mortality limit to a roller-coaster like this? And why should we have any confidence in the estimate of 31 bears? Could it be 21, or 41?

Much ado has been made about the professional wildlife managers in the Ministry of Environment. I know some of them and have no reason to believe they are anything but decent people. But does a Ministry with few resources, few personnel, no legal mandate to protect habitat, and a long history of preferential treat-



ment of hunting interests, allow a professional level of performance to be expressed? Can the public interest in grizzly bears in a province the size of British Columbia be effectively served by committing 1 full time and 2 or 3 part time people to grizzly bear issues? If superman lurks within, perhaps. I suspect most (but not all) wildlife staff in B.C. try to conduct themselves with integrity, but like a flock of two geese, direction is easily lost, diversity of opinion is absent or rejected (recall the suspended habitat biologist with another view), capacity to incorporate the best available science is limited, and resistance to internal and historical pressure is near impossible. This is an organization that has bitterly protested, and so far successfully resisted, public release of grizzly bear kill locations. Why? Apparently because it will compromise their relationship with the bear guiding and hunting community. While individuals may try to act professionally, the real issue is, has the Ministry of Environment collectively met professional wildlife conservation standards of performance? And can or will it do so in the future?

The stature of the wildlife Branch, including conservation officers, within the bureaucratic structure is an indication of their overall ability to serve the interests of not just wildlife, but all British Columbia residents. With an annual budget of about \$30 million for wildlife, out of the province's \$20 billion expenditures (= .002 %), what message should we be getting? And this is in a province that saw \$622 million spent on wildlife related recreation in 1996, \$392 million of which was on direct wildlife related events. In recent years the province has apparently spent several million dollars on DNA studies of select bear populations, and that is a step in the right direction, but this has come at a huge cost to the integrity of bear habitat. Almost all the money was blood money paid by the forest industry through Forest Renewal BC. As long as bear country was being logged and fragmented, money was available but even then it came with the condition industry must be a partner. Can the results be free of influence?

How Many Bears Should Alberta Have?

A brief look at the history of grizzly bear numbers in Alberta
By Dr. Brian L. Horejsi

When Europeans arrived in what is today Alberta (the first was Anthony Henday in 1754), the area (661,190 km²) was occupied by grizzly bears. Any estimate of historical numbers is speculative. But even a conservative estimate using a range of 15 to 25 bears per 1000 km², the upper end of bear densities now reported across interior North America in ecosystems substantially altered by man, would produce a crude estimate of between 9,920 and 16,525 grizzly bears. There were obvious "hot spots" of abundance (Cypress Hills, Swan Hills, Rocky Mountain Foothills) that would have contributed substantially to overall population size and may have meant that even more bears were present.

Presently delineated bear management units (Grizzly Bear Management Plan, 1990) and National Parks occupy about 354,425 km² and are estimated by the author to support about 400 ± 100 bears greater than 2 years of age. The Government of Alberta estimates, without supporting scientific study, that this vast area supports about 800 grizzly bears. These two population estimates indicate a density of one or two bears per 1000 km².

I don't mean to absolve the Ministry of Environment wildlife staff from providing a biased and unacceptable level of resistance to the hunt moratorium and subsequently to managing grizzly bears in the interests of all British Columbians, but they have, partly of their own doing, few tools at their disposal. Professionals do not have, and should never have, an entitlement to make policy decisions on behalf of the public. Their role is to provide scientifically sound technical advice to the public and decision makers. When they're unable to do that, and their role and that of the Wildlife Branch become blurred, even the most tolerant public will eventually lose patience. It may well be that their consistently declining stature is a consequence of their unwillingness to embrace the broader vision of wildlife conservation expected by today's society.

In the face of all these human and environmental impacts, the Ministry of Environment's dubious scientific ability to manage and monitor wildlife populations, the Ministry of Forests absolute and jealously guarded control over wildlife habitat, and a major evolution in public expectations, it was inevitable that bear hunting, a licensed (= controllable) and deliberate source of bear death, would be a casualty. Under present circumstances, when it is possible to manage and remove a major source of mortality, there is virtually no option but to do so.

The three year hunting moratorium provides the Wildlife Branch an unprecedented opportunity to open the doors to the majority of British Columbians and thus significantly strengthen their constituency, to incorporate the best available wildlife conservation science, to become accountable to the people of British Columbia, to benefit from the expertise of independent scientists, and to capitalize on the intent of the moratorium, which is to allow a sober reexamination of all the issues in this letter. Or will they pull closer the barriers, hunker down and continue to court the ghosts of the past? Herein may lie the last and best test of professionalism. Y

What would be a reasonable expectation for present day bear numbers? If the province managed public lands according to Biodiversity Conservation Legislation, whose foundation was ecological sustainability, whose working principles and practices required the use of the best available science, and whose specified objective was to manage wildlife and ecosystem services, such as wilderness and intact habitat, as resources of value equivalent to those commodity values presently being used under the existing strategy of preferential access by special commercial interests, what might we expect would be a reasonable management target for future bear numbers?

If we were to use the province's estimate of 354,425 km² in present day Bear Management Areas and had a very moderate expectation of only 7 bears per 1000 km², a density at which grizzly bear populations may not be viable in the long term, the province could support 2,480 bears. If we used a density estimate of 15 bears per 1000 km², an estimate associated with bear populations that are in some jurisdictions considered threatened, then a reasonable expectation would be 5,310 bears in Alberta.

Various permutations and combinations are possible in any estimation exercise, but let's make a very generous concession that only one half the area now in Bear Management Units were to be managed for the maintenance of biological diversity. In other

words, a huge piece of publicly owned land would be sacrificed to special interest uses such as oil and gas exploration and exploitation, industrial scale recreation, agriculture, off-road vehicles, forestry and mining. Only 168,962 km² would be available for grizzly bear occupation. Under these significantly modified circumstances, and using a density of 15 bears per 1000 km², the province could support 2,530 grizzly bears.

With higher standards and greater regard for the public interest in management of public lands, and with an ecologically sound and visionary conservation strategy, more public land would be available and a higher degree of habitat effectiveness would be mandated, bringing a management target for grizzly bears in Alberta back towards a reasonable expectation of somewhere in the vicinity of 2,480 to 5,310 grizzly bears projected above.

Given these kinds of numbers it should be obvious the Government of Alberta, and the people of Alberta, have a lot of work to do. It should be equally obvious that, in setting its management target for 1000 bears in Alberta, the equivalent of as little as 6 to 11% of historical numbers, the province has set its sights on the basement.

(Dr. Brian Horejsi is a former vice-president of the AWA and a wildlife scientist. He is currently working on the Recovery Plan for Grizzly Bears in Southern Alberta for the Castle-Crown Coalition) √

Getting Along With The Neighbours: The Cougar As Peaceful Adversary

Imagine tracking a cougar for 7 days through the mountains in the dead of winter. This was one of the scenes Ian Ross described to an intent audience at the first AWA Open House 2001 on February 6. Ross, a wildlife biologist who has worked in Alberta since 1982, described his work on the Sheep River Cougar Project, the most comprehensive cougar study ever done in Canada.

The Alberta cougar project started in 1981 under the direction of Orval Pall, a biologist with Alberta Fish and Wildlife. The purpose of the project was to collect information on cougar population characteristics, food habits and habitat use in southwestern Alberta. This area is one of the best cougar habitats in the province due to the Chinook winds and high populations of deer, elk and moose.



© Ian Ross

Ian Ross joined the project in 1985. When Pall died in a plane crash in 1986, Ross and his partner, Martin Jalkotzy, both of ARC Wildlife Services Ltd., continued the project and completed the 3 phases and all the reports and publications.

Ross described the way cougars were captured and radio-collared for the study by his small team. Cougars were treed by specially trained dogs under the command of technician and partner Ralph Schmidt. Ross would shoot a tranquilizer dart into the cougar. Then, Jalkotzy would carefully time his ascent into the tree where he harnessed the sleepy cougar and lowered it to the ground. Ross proudly noted that in nearly 200 captures they never dropped a single cougar. He attributed this record to the exceptional teamwork among the three of them.

The cougar is a shy and elusive predator long admired for its strength, beauty, grace and speed. Ross led us through specific characteristics of cougars, some of the important data obtained in the study and the reasons why cougars might occasionally turn against humans. Among the salient points were the following:

- Cougars do not climb trees except to escape danger; they are particularly sensitive to aggressively barking dogs.
- Cougars bear litters throughout the year.
- Cougars are hunted in Alberta and the numbers killed are increasing each year. But without continual monitoring of population numbers, a difficult, expensive and time-consuming task, annual allowable take permitted by the Government is based only on best guesses of total population numbers.
- Cougars eat mostly ungulates. Habitat that supports good ungulate populations can support cougars. Ross noted that the diet of males consists largely of moose (about 90%) while that of females is only about 20% moose, the rest consisting mostly of mule deer, elk and bighorn sheep. His theory for this difference is that "males are fat and lazy" and have lower energy needs. They can afford to take advantage of hunting opportunities that suit them. Females, however, must feed kittens as well. They must take advantage of every opportunity to hunt and cannot afford to be choosy. Ross pointed out that their data showed that individual cougars have very individual preferences for particular food sources, some preferring much more deer than bighorns, for example.
- The foothills of southwestern Alberta support one of the highest cougar densities ever recorded.
- Carefully managed clear-cutting, oil and gas activity, recreation and grazing are not necessarily bad for cougars. What is destructive are the accompanying roads that allow greater access traffic, including armed humans.
- Residential development is the worst thing for cougars; not just city expansion, but the rural subdivisions that take away extremely important wildlife habitat. Residences represent permanent year-round human presence and carnivore displacement. They also lead to disruption of ungulate populations or behaviour. A lack of food forces cougars to search for other sources, such as domestic pets.

- Cougars are normally afraid of humans. But, if attacks occur they are usually predatory and not defensive. In an attack, be aggressive and fight back. Most people survive a cougar attack.
- Cougars which attack people are most likely to be recently independent young cats.
- Land is limited; if humans continually encroach on wildlife habitat, where are the displaced animals supposed to go? This encroachment has increased human-cougar conflicts, although the numbers are still extremely low.

Ross presented the following statistics to put cougar attacks into perspective and show that we accept much greater risks with much less thought:

Each year in North America:

Cougars attack 3.8 people and kill 0.2.
Dogs attack 222,000 people and kill 20.
Rattlesnakes bite 5,000 people and kill 12.
Bees sting 100,000's of people and kill 40.
Lightning strikes 100's of people and kills 80.
Cars kill 45,000 people.
Total strangers murder over 1000 people.

To coexist with cougars, Ross believes we need an attitude shift. We need to examine what we think we really need. Do we really need a 10-acre parcel of land for our dream home? We don't need to exploit every last piece of land - let's leave enough for wildlife. The true wildlands that remain are too small to sustain viable populations of cougars and other large carnivores. Conservation of these species will require that we share additional space. Y

(Ian Ross is currently working on a status report for grizzly bears in Canada for COSEWIC, a grizzly bear management plan for southern Alberta, grizzly bear and bighorn sheep projects in B.C. and Alberta and various environmental assessment projects in the Arctic.)

Association News

Wild Lands Advocate Readership Survey Results

We received almost 100 responses to our readership survey. More are arriving every day. Ian Fabris, one of our volunteers, tabulated the responses and listed the comments. Over 95% of respondents said they read the WLA. Those who did not, said they did not have time or found it too boring.

Most respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the majority of the statements. Over 90% felt the WLA was valuable to them, keeps them informed about important wilderness issues, helps them feel more connected to AWA, is relevant to their interests and is easy to understand. 80-89% believed what they read. 70-79% agreed that WLA is a good name for the Journal, the information encourages them to get involved, they looked forward to receiving it and would like related website addresses in articles.

Although 61% found the former graphic design appealing, we received many positive comments about the new graphic design. 72% wanted to read contrary opinions; however, rest assured that we do not intend to make the WLA a forum for anti-wilderness propaganda. We would like to include the comments from government and industry spokespeople in articles so that our readers can more easily evaluate all relevant opinions.

There was mixed response to the statements regarding the types of articles. In general respondents were more or less evenly divided (40-50%) between agree/strongly agree and neither agree nor disagree for wanting more original material, philosophical articles and opinion articles. But 75% wanted to see more investigative reporting, with the rest neither agreeing nor disagreeing. The most division of opinion was for people-focused stories with 36% agreeing, 43% neither agreeing nor disagreeing and 18% disagreeing. The reasons for this are unclear; however, we will be applying journalistic principles from our expert consultants as much as possible. We are interested in making the WLA a more interesting and relevant news journal for a wider audience.

The majority of respondents would like to read an editorial,

president's message, updates from conservation managers (to be found in the Alberta Wilderness Watch section) and Board of Directors, stories about volunteering, volunteer opportunities, correspondence, conference ads, activity reports and stories about outdoor adventures in Alberta. Opinion was divided concerning memorials with 40% agreeing, 48% neither agreeing nor disagreeing and 8% disagreeing.

Almost half of the respondents would like to receive the WLA every two months, with the others divided largely between one and three months. One person wanted to receive it weekly. 55% have Internet and email access at home but only one third were interested in an email subscription. Over 80% of respondents were over 45 and 15% were between 30 and 45 years of age. Two thirds live in southern Alberta, one quarter in central Alberta and the rest in northern Alberta. About two thirds live in an urban centre, one third live in a rural area and a few are in small towns.

Overall, most respondents seemed happy with the WLA but would be interested in improvements. We received numerous comments that we will be taking into serious consideration as we go ahead with future issues. Many comments reflected our current opinions and we were happy to hear others thinking along the same lines.

One issue that has been mentioned both in the survey response and in daily conversation is the desire for more and regular meetings. We intend to deliver this through our Open House program, which we have started again in Calgary and will be starting in Edmonton. Open Houses from September to May and Walks and Talks through the summer will take place in both centres. We would like to expand to the smaller cities of Red Deer and Lethbridge and are looking for organizers. See our upcoming events section for details on future activities.

We would like to thank everyone who took the time to respond to our survey. Your responses and comments have been very helpful and we hope to hear from you regarding future issues of Wild Lands Advocate. If you have not filled it out, please do and send it in - it is not too late. Y

Wild Lands Advocate

We are very pleased to welcome Dr. Peter Sherrington (past-president) and Andy Marshall, an experienced journalist formerly with the Calgary Herald, to the Editorial Board. An editorial board and a list of professional writers are essential for the success of a more investigative journal. We apologize for not captioning photos and drawings properly in the last issue and we assure you that this will not occur in future issues. The drawing of the coyote on page 2 was by Garry Hackler. The Great Horned Owl was by Robert Savannah, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. We are going to great lengths to get permission from artists for use of their work, and photos without proper identification will not be used. We ask for your patience as we adjust to a new format and get people in place to deliver a great news journal for Alberta wilderness.

Am I Still A Member? YES!

This is a question that our office manager, Ava Morasch, has had to deal with frequently ever since we changed our membership rules. Previously when you joined the AWA you received a membership that renewed annually. Then lifetime memberships were given to all members and an annual subscription fee was charged for the Wild Lands Advocate. Now, with a free subscription to the Advocate, we are going to a supporter-based organization. You become a supporter by a minimum donation of \$25. Everyone who donates to the AWA is a supporter. Many supporters also choose to be members. As members, they are able to vote in any elections for Board members, should a position be contested. Other people prefer to be non-member supporters. What was the purpose in offering life memberships to all members, old and new, and being a supporter based organization? According to Cliff Wallis, AWA president, "the key is to grow our membership base. Many "members" did not specifically renew their memberships so we saw membership numbers drop despite the fact that many of these people continued to be supporters both financially and through volunteering. We need to look at our supporters as one large group but with diverse needs and interests. Some may choose to donate time or money several times a year, while others, for various reasons, may only choose to give periodically. They are all supporters and part of the AWA family that is working to protect wilderness."



Alberta Wilderness Resource Centre

"Wow! That practicum went by so quickly. Hi, my name is Jackie Tessaro and I am currently taking the library technician program at the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology. I just finished a 3-week practicum at the Alberta Wilderness Resource Centre (AWRC) located at the Alberta Wilderness Association office in Calgary. I chose to do my practicum at the

AWRC because I am very interested in protecting the natural environment. I did some research on the AWA before I decided to do my practicum there and after looking at the information on the web page, I knew I wanted to be around a conservation group. It was an ideal placement because I was surrounded by wilderness and wildlife information, while gaining valuable experience in the resource centre. Shirley Bray was a wealth of information and I

learned many new things from her, which will be valuable to me in the future. During my practicum I was responsible for cataloguing the audio-visual materials and I found the experience to be very enjoyable and educational. I would like to thank Shirley Bray and the AWA for allowing me that wonderful learning opportunity." - **Jackie Tessaro**

We would like to thank Jackie for the wonderful job she did at the AWRC and for her endlessly cheerful disposition. Thanks also to Mark Fabris who took on the important job of sorting through a mass of photos and placing them all in protective sleeves. We would like to thank Alberta Sport, Recreation, Parks and Wildlife Foundation for the donation of This Living World collection of videos.

Casino

December 10th and 11th, 37 AWA volunteers worked during some of our coldest winter weather at Stampede Casino. The funds raised at this event support the operations and work of the AWA. Proceeds from casinos are pooled for three-month periods and divided with all the charitable organizations that work during that period. As a result of the pooling, this casino netted almost \$30,000.00 for the AWA! Casino volunteers work long hours and their dedication to this event, year after year, makes a significant difference to our association. Thank you very much to all of the volunteers and staff participating in this year's casino. A great deal of thanks is owed to Mel Dunford (AWA member and volunteer) our Casino Manager, who organized our participation in the casino. While the dust had barely settled on this casino, we made application for the next one, to be held in the first quarter of 2002 at the Elbow River Inn Casino.

From the Board

As part of the January 27th meeting of the Board of Directors in Edmonton, an Open House was held to recognize our volunteers and have an opportunity for members and others to meet the board and our Northern Conservation Manager, Jillian Tamblyn. The Board of Directors usually meets five times per year and alternates locations throughout the province. Please check our Website for a listing of our Board Members for 2001.

Interim Executive Director Appointed

The Board of Directors recently appointed Christyann Sloan as the Interim Executive Director for the Association. Christyann has been doing part of the role of Executive Director for the past year on a part time volunteer basis and has brought tremendous enthusiasm and growth to various parts of the organization.



© Charles Lacy

Annual Tower Climb

This year we are pleased to have Chevron Canada Resources as a sponsor for the Tower Climb. This is their first year and they are looking forward to the challenge and will be entering a team or two. Charlie Stewart, Manager of Communications and External Affairs at Chevron, says, "supporting community organizations and initiatives to improve environmental awareness is Chevron's top community investment priority."

Chevron supports a variety of activities that promote environmental education and learning through the company's long-standing Protecting People and the Environment Program. The Chevron Open Minds Zoo School, the Chevron/Cross Conservation School and Field Day and the many activities of its employee volunteer Green Team, such as planting trees, highway clean-up and park beautification, are examples of how Chevron partnerships support community activities.

Stewart says, "the AWA's annual Canada Life Climb for Wilderness is an excellent partnership where, through a very creative special event, we are helping highlight environmental awareness and raise funds for wilderness conservation in Alberta." Stewart applauded the efforts of the AWA and its partner CPAWS adding "Chevron and its employees are very pleased to play a supportive role and we hope that everyone has a lot of fun!" Y



Photo Credit: Ken Meisner

Why Do I Do It Year After Year?

I'm not the oldest Tower Climber but at 77.8 I'm getting up there! In fact, I am hoping to get up there 10 times this April, just as I have for the past several years.

Why do I do it? Well, as a cross-country skier and a backcountry hiker, I get much pleasure from my days in the unspoiled Alberta wilderness. By raising money for my climb, I know that I'm helping AWA to keep it unspoiled. Most of the money I raise comes from fellow seniors in the outdoor clubs to which I belong and from the inhabitants of the Geological Survey of Canada building where I have a volunteer office. Donating annually to my climb helps remind them that we must be vigilant in protecting our treasured outdoor spaces. I am also part of the Unitarian Church team - it's a challenge to try to keep up with teammates as much as 70 years younger than I am, but a pleasure to realize people of all ages love our wilderness.

Is it fun? Maybe after the fact, but I have to admit it is a bit of a grind after the first 4 or 5 ascents. Frankly, what keeps me going is the cheering of the lovely ladies who staff the Starting Gate and mark the scoreboard - they are inspirational! I'll see you and them on April 21. - Ward Neale Y

Collect, pledge money, climb the 802 steps of the Calgary Tower, and be eligible to WIN great prizes!

Canada Life Climb for Wilderness

pre-registration have fun! when?

Help AWA and CPAWS Keep the WILD in Wilderness . . .

Go Wild 2001

Saturday, April 21, 2001

Public Climb:	9:00 am to 2:00 pm	Environment Fair:	9:00 am to 3:00 pm
Corporate Climb:	9:00 am to 2:00 pm	Awards Ceremony:	2:30 pm

Entry forms available March 5 . . .

off our website www.towerclimb.ca and:

- Calgary Tower
- Bankers Hall Club
- AWA Office
- Westlands Bookstore (Cochrane)
- Running Room
- Good Earth Cafes
- Cinnamon Spoon (Bragg Creek)

Pre-registration & information

Pre-registration March 26 to April 18. Pre-register and get more information from the AWA office at 455 - 12 Street N.W., (403) 283-2025. **Visa & Mastercard accepted.**

By April 18 \$15/person Day of event \$20/person

Win Great Prizes!

First 175 pre-registered climbers will receive a limited edition collectors pin!

Sponsored by:

CANADA LIFE

Wilderness Insiders Network

For a number of years, Dianne Pachal has been cultivating an idea for encouraging and assisting the members of the Alberta Wilderness Association to participate directly in the work we do - from their home. Based on a model developed by the National Audubon Society, the AWA officially began formulating a programme of participation tailored to the AWA late last year. The development team has included Cliff Wallis, Wendy Adams, Dianne Pachal, Margaret Chandler, Pat Gidora and Jillian Tamblyn.

This will be an exciting opportunity for our members to learn more about the issues the AWA is involved in, as well as how to participate in those issues by voicing opinions and concerns

from home. The programme is called Wilderness Insiders Network (WIN). The team has adopted the motto "Consistent Pressure Strategically Applied" and hopes to have as many as 250 participants in the programme. WIN will provide timely and accurate information and strategies for the network of participants on a regular basis. WIN participants will connect to decision makers, media and other activists through e-mail and the internet, telephone calls and letter writing.

During the next few weeks all AWA members will be receiving a brochure in the mail that describes the programme in detail. Watch for this opportunity to be part of the network of Albertans who have a vision for a protected wild Alberta and are willing to take action to make it a reality.



Photo Credit: M. Judd

South Castle

SUPPORT ALBERTA WILDERNESS

"Our quality of life, our health, and a healthy economy are totally dependent on Earth's biological diversity. We cannot replicate natural ecosystems. Protected areas are internationally recognized as the most efficient way to maintain biological diversity" - **Richard Thomas**

The Alberta Wilderness Association (AWA) is dedicated to protecting wildlands, wildlife and wild waters throughout Alberta. Your valued contribution will assist with all areas of the AWA's work. We offer the following categories for your donation. The Provincial Office of the AWA hosts wall plaques recognizing donors in the "Defender" or greater category. Please support Alberta's wilderness by supporting the conservation work of the AWA.

Alberta Wilderness Association	
<input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor	\$25
<input type="checkbox"/> Supporter	\$50
<input type="checkbox"/> Defender	\$100
<input type="checkbox"/> Associate	\$250
<input type="checkbox"/> Sustainer	\$500
<input type="checkbox"/> Philanthropist	\$1000
<input type="checkbox"/> Wilderness Circle	\$2500 - \$5000

Alberta Wilderness Resource Centre	
<input type="checkbox"/> Friend	\$100
<input type="checkbox"/> Partner	\$500
<input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor	\$100
<input type="checkbox"/> Patron - greater than \$1000	



Wild Lands Advocate Journal

☐ Research and Investigative Reporting, Publication and Distribution \$ _____

Alberta Wilderness Trust - an endowment fund established with The Calgary Foundation to support the long-term sustainability of the Alberta Wilderness Association. For further details, please contact our Calgary office (403) 283-2025.

The AWA is a federally registered charity and functions through member and donor support. Tax-deductible donations may be made to the Association at:

*Box 6398 Station D, Calgary, AB T2P 2E1. Telephone (403) 283-2025 Fax (403) 270-2743
E-mail a.w.a@home.com Website <http://www.AlbertaWilderness.ca>*

☐ Cheque ☐ Visa ☐ M/C

☐ I wish to donate monthly by automatic withdrawal from my bank account.

I have enclosed a void cheque for processing. Amount \$ _____

Card #: _____ Expiry Date: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/Prov. _____ Postal Code: _____

Phone (home): _____ Phone (work): _____

E-mail: _____ Signature _____



The Alberta Wilderness Association

Box 6398, Station D
Calgary, Alberta T2P 2E1

Upcoming Events

Open House Program

March 15
7:00 - 9:00 pm

Dragonflies
with Christine Rice

April 3
To be announced

May 8
7:00 - 9:00 pm
**Gardening in
Calgary's Climate**
with Ken Girard

