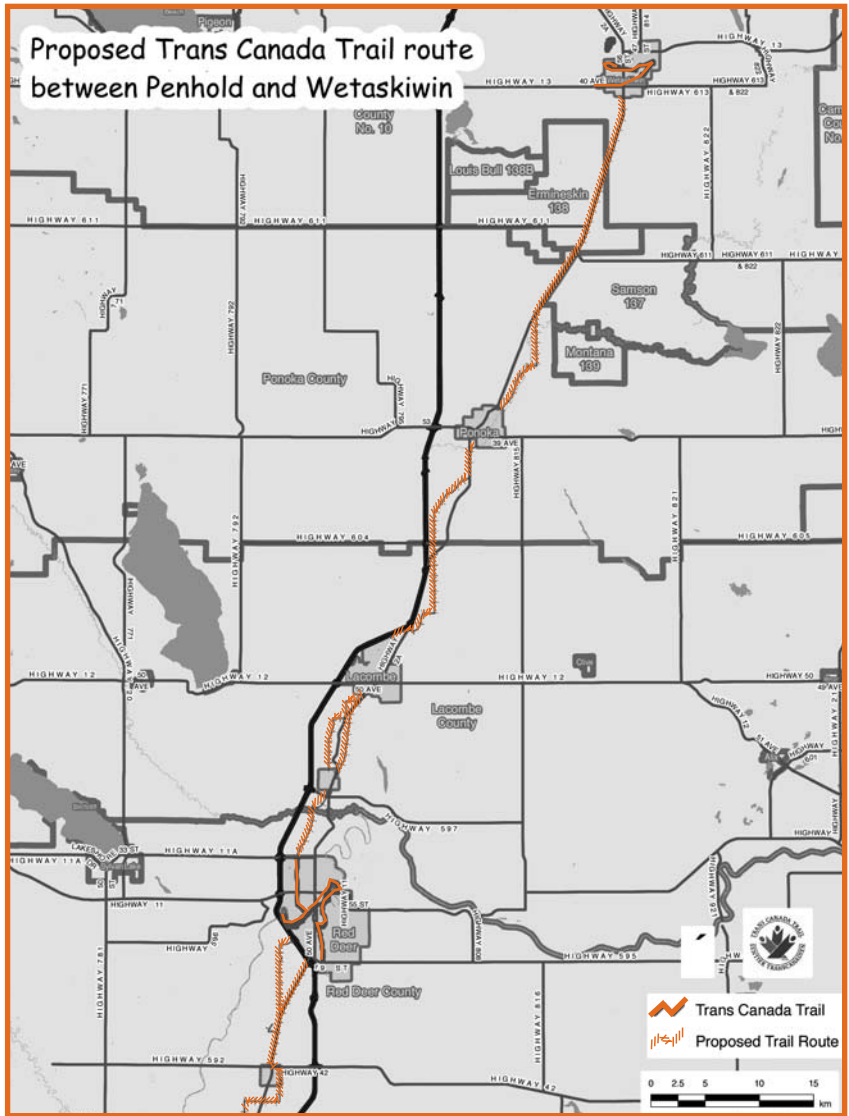


New Trans Canada Trail Registrations

Alberta TrailNet and Central Alberta Regional Trails Society (CARTS) were pleased to recently announce the registration of 70.6 kilometres of new Trans Canada Trail in central Alberta. Debbie Olsen, CARTS chair, said, "We're absolutely thrilled to be able to make this announcement. We have been working on this trail for more than 4 years now. A lot of volunteer time & community effort have come together to make this happen. Now we look forward to getting on with construction!" CARTS is a non-profit society which supports the responsible development of recreation trails in Central Alberta. CARTS also supports and promotes the Trans Canada Trail in Central Alberta. The new registrations will link communities from Penhold to Westakiwin. These registrations include:

- Town of Lacombe 7.1 kms**
- Town of Ponoka 5.2 kms**
- Red Deer County 16 kms**
- Lacombe County 23.8 kms**
- Ponoka County 18.5 kms**



TCT designation makes these communities eligible for Trans Canada Trail funding. Trail development will initially focus on building key bridges along the route. For further information contact Alberta TrailNet, or CARTS chair, Debbie Olsen at 403-782-3017 or Derry Armstrong, TCT coordinator for Central Alberta at 403-843-4351.

Higher FINES focus on stewardship and RESPONSIBLE behaviour

Edmonton... It will soon cost more for those who ignore the laws when they set out to enjoy a weekend of recreation in the woods. Effective May 1, fines will increase for offences such as improper waste disposal, careless use of an off-highway vehicle or starting an open fire in or near a Forest Recreation Area.

"Fines are intended to deter people who abuse the environment or ignore safe practices," said Sustainable Resource Development Minister Ted Morton. "Higher fines will help drive home the message that stewardship and responsible behaviour are expected from recreationists on our forested public lands."

The fine for starting and maintaining an open fire within one km of a Forest Recreation Area has increased from \$50 to \$500; removing firewood from a Forest Recreation Area will increase from \$75 to \$250; and operating on- or off-highway vehicles or snow vehicles outside of designated areas will increase from \$75 to \$250.

The fines are enforceable in Forest Recreation Areas, on Forest Recreation Trails and in Forest Land Use Zones such as in the Ghost and Bighorn areas near Calgary and Rocky Mountain House.

The Alberta government has begun an information and awareness campaign that will include public service announcements,

fact sheets and other information handed out to visitors and placed at designated entrance points to forest areas.

Implementing an aggressive strategy to protect the health of Alberta's forests is an important action under Premier Ed Stelmach's plan to manage Alberta's growth pressures and improve Albertans' quality of life. Other priorities for the government are to govern with integrity and transparency, build a stronger Alberta and provide safe and secure communities.

A map of the affected areas, backgrounder and list of the increased fines can be found at www.srd.gov.ab.ca by clicking Lands.

RAILS TO TRAILS CONSERVANCY MAGAZINE TO FEATURE IRON HORSE TRAIL

Jennifer Kaleba, Director of Communications/Editor in Chief of the US Rails to Trails Magazine visited the Iron Horse Trail at the end of December. Jennifer and representatives from the Iron Horse Trail hiked in the Beaver River Trestle area, stopped at Pyrogy Park for pictures and toured various communities and other attractions along the trail. Jennifer even rode a snowmobile for the first time during her visit. Jennifer will be doing a four page spread on the Iron Horse Trail in the Winter 2008 issue of Rails to Trails. The magazine reaches over 100,000 members in the U.S. **For more information on the RTC visit their website at www.railtrails.org.**

Jennifer Kaleba with Rails to Trails Conservancy getting last minute instructions from Jerry Bidulock before heading out to snowmobile on Alberta's Iron Horse Trail from St. Paul to Elk Point (Photo: Courtesy of Riverland Recreational Trail Society).



Hike Alberta

Where are the walkers of Alberta? They are known to abound in every city, town and hamlet, treading the pathways across the province for reasons of health and fitness, recreation and relaxation.

If you know of a group, or are a member of one, Hike Alberta is interested in registering it for free on its website. Most of the larger hiking clubs and organizations are already listed. It is the informal and private groups such as naturalist field trips and running clubs which we hope to also include, since

the interests of hikers and walkers in general can and should have greater influence on shaping trail development programs locally and regionally.

Please take a look at the various styles of current group entries on website www.hikealberta.ca and draft a brief entry with description of activities, and email to natrailc@telusplanet.net. If requested, contact information will be omitted where new membership is not invited.

Hike Alberta is a provincial wing of Hike Canada en Marche, the operating name for the National Trail Association

of Canada. The Association has been actively engaged over many years in establishing the National Hiking Trail route coast to coast to help preserve our heritage of natural landscapes and to promote general fitness through hiking activities. Further particulars are found on website: www.nationaltrail.ca Please pass on word of the availability of this listing to known group members or officials.

Alberta TrailNet endorses this effort and encourages individuals, groups and municipalities to respond by listing their groups or by forwarding this request to pedestrian trail user groups in their area.



ALBERTA Recreation Corridor Coordinating COMMITTEE

As recommended in the final report of the Alberta Recreation Corridors Legislative Review Committee, a provincial Coordinating Committee, previously chaired by MLA Ray Danyluk (now Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing) has been established to develop criteria, standards, policies and guidelines for an Alberta Recreation Corridor Designation Program. The Alberta Recreation Corridor Coordinating Committee is a diverse group made up of stakeholders with knowledge of the various aspects of recreation trail planning, design and operation, and encompasses a range of perspectives on use, operation and impacts of trails. The Committee will address a number of key areas: liability; safety and policing; operation, maintenance and accountability; privacy and access; and environmental stewardship. MLA David Coutts has recently been appointed as the new Chair of the Committee.

Key outcomes for TrailNet include insurance relief for volunteer trail groups; programs promoting responsible use; mechanisms supporting trail development, operation and maintenance.

Trail Building Goes to College

International Mountain Bike Association (IMBA) Canada's Mark Schmidt and Lora Woolner recently spent a month on British Columbia's Sunshine Coast, teaching the first course in Park and Trail Design offered as part of Capilano College's new Mountain Bike Operations Certificate Program. The program is the first of its kind in North America and around the world, and is preparing the next generation of mountain resort managers, government officials, and non-profit leaders in mountain bike programming and infrastructure.

For more information on this and other IMBA news, please visit their website at www.imba.com

Source: IMBA Canada eNews – December 2006

Northeast Alberta Recreation Corridor Pilot Map Initiative

Approved recreation trail map and tourism information resources are important to those interested in accessing the variety of trail experiences available throughout the province. This information may not be available for areas outside of the mountain park region. There is also a need to identify and inventory approved trails and to understand patterns and impacts of unmanaged access on Crown land. This information would assist towards developing a provincial trail database that will facilitate future land management activities and recreational access planning and design, and also promote and support trail stewardship and responsible use.

Alberta TrailNet Society has consulted with government and other stakeholders regarding a provincial trail mapping project to provide provincial maps locating trails and supporting services and related information as part of the larger Alberta Recreation Corridors and Trails Designation Program. The project will include identifying tourism/recreation products and broad

interpretive themes along specific trails identified in each of the subject map areas. This information would be included in written and pictorial format on the final map products.

A project partnership including Alberta Tourism, Parks, Recreation and Culture, Alberta Sustainable Resource Development, Alberta TrailNet Society, Alberta Off Highway Vehicle Association, Alberta Snowmobile Association (the NE Alberta Pilot Map Project Steering Committee) has been formed to take this initiative forward. These maps will form the basis for communicating the location and approved uses of recreation trails designated under the Alberta Recreation Corridors and Trails Designation program.

The initial focus will be on developing and testing a prototype map targeted on the pilot project area in northeastern Alberta.

**Watch for this new
map in early summer!**

Highlights 2006

By Shannon Maliteare, ATN Staff

Pavilion Opening at Mulhurst Bay

Being new to Alberta TrailNet, I was very excited when Norm and Karol Froom of the Pigeon Lake Regional Trail Society graciously invited me to attend their Pavilion Opening at Mulhurst Bay on June 10, 2006. What a great opportunity to explore the Kiskayo Trail at Pigeon Lake for the first time! The Kiskayo Trail is a part of the Trans Canada Trail in Alberta and is presently based on existing roadways, road allowances and open landscapes through the summer villages surrounding Pigeon Lake, Alberta.

I started my morning by biking with my chocolate lab Daisy on the trail near the Village of Pigeon Lake. I then stuffed my big dog and bike into my small car and drove around the perimeter of Pigeon Lake, so as not to be late for the ceremony at 3:30 pm. Oh how I wish

I was as physically fit as the members of the Pigeon Lake Bike Club, who had little trouble (except for a flat tire) making their way all around the lake to Mulhurst Bay in time for the ceremony. The pavilion at Mulhurst Bay is one of two red roofed kiosks established by the Pigeon Lake Regional Trail Society to acknowledge supporters of the Kiskayo Trail. The second pavilion is located at the Village of Pigeon Lake.

The ceremony started as the Pigeon Lake Bike Club rode into Mulhurst Bay with a Canadian Flag in tow. The programme

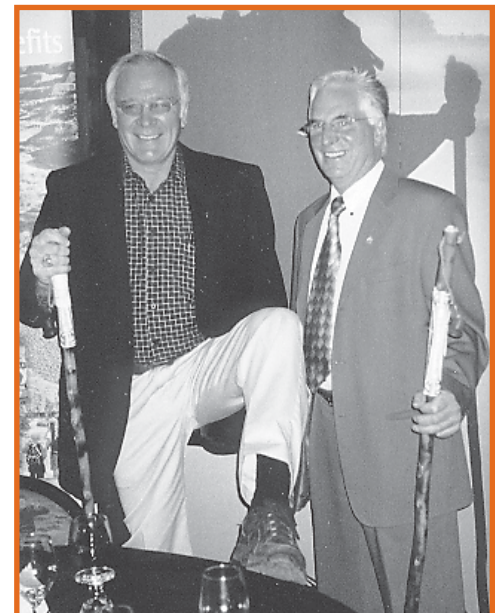


Pavilion opening ceremony at Mulhurst Bay, Pigeon Lake. (Photo: Norm Froom)



featured a ribbon cutting and speeches by Karol Froom, President of the Pigeon Lake Regional Trail Society; Rick Wilson, of the County of Wetaskawin; Art Trace representing the Pigeon Lake Provincial Park as well as myself on behalf of Alberta TrailNet. Everyone snacked on juicy watermelon and enjoyed fellowship after the ceremony.

If you wish to donate or find out more about the Kiskayo Trail at Pigeon Lake, please contact Karol Froom at (403) 389-4370.



Larry Henkelman, Mayor of Ponoka and Ray Prins, MLA for Lacombe-Ponoka show off their new TCT walking sticks at TrailNet's AGM. (Photo: Louisa Rich)



Deputy Mayor Madeleine King congratulates Former Calgary Mayor Jack Leslie on his receiving a special panel inscription at the Calgary TCT Pavilion.

Alberta TrailNet and TCTF Recognize Trail Contributors

A ceremony recognizing contributions of new donors to the Trans Canada Trail was held at the Calgary pavilion on June 24, 2006.

Special guests included Madeline King, Deputy Mayor of the City of Calgary, and Jean and Jack Leslie. Ms. King brought greetings on behalf of the City of Calgary and recognized the contributions of former city mayor, Jack Leslie, whose vision led to the preservation of the Bow Valley as parkland and to the development of Calgary's marvelous pathway system along the Bow River, including the section which is now the Trans Canada Trail.



TrailNet President Betty Anne Graves presents TCT Kilometre Club Award to McElhanney Land Surveys Ltd.

The event highlighted the outstanding contributions of McElhanney Land Surveys Ltd. of Calgary and their appointment to the elite Trans Canada Trail Kilometre Club (Donors who have contributed over \$36,000). McElhanney has been contributing survey and other professional services towards building the Trans Canada Trail in Alberta for over 5 years. Craig Hughes, Assistant Branch Manager-Calgary, accepted a Kilometre Club certificate on behalf of the company. Larry Loomes, Director of Business Operations for the Calgary branch, also attended the ceremony. We were pleased to recognize Alberta's latest inductee to the Trans Canada Trail Kilometre Club.

2006 TRAIL BLAZER AWARD WINNER Louisa Rich

The Trail Blazer Award winner of 2006 was Louisa Rich. The award, which recognizes individuals who have dedicated a significant portion of their lives in support of trail development and stewardship, was presented at the Alberta TrailNet Annual General Meeting at the Wolf Creek Golf Resort. According to ATN President Betty Anne Graves, "Louisa is the kind of person we love to recognize. She is a leader, working in the community to create new trails, or to find and re-develop old ones."

When you meet Louisa, her passion and enthusiasm for trails is immediately evident. She has shared information and set up displays on the activities of the Grouard -Peace River TrailNet Society and of the history of the Peace River area for the benefit of everyone attending the trail hikes and events in her area and beyond.

"I feel most honoured to have been given "The Boot" award," said Louisa Rich. "It was an outstanding experience for me and I shall never forget it. Thank you from the bottom of my heart. I do appreciate the award and the recognition, but I really just like being out on the Trail and working towards its completion. It is such an exciting experience."

Louisa, who is a long standing member of the Grouard-Peace River TrailNet Society, lives in High Prairie Alberta. She has six children including her daughter Mary Lou who encouraged Louisa's involvement in trail work. Louisa's family have lived in the Peace River area for generations starting in 1897 when her Grandfather, an inspector for the NWMP, would patrol the trails near Lake Athabasca to see if any Klondikers were in trouble. Her strong interest and family ties to the local history of her area led to her involvement with High Prairie Museum and Historical Society in the capacities of Director, President and Secretary.

Louisa's many trail activities include work on the board of the Grouard-Peace River TrailNet Society and stewardship of the Jackpines Natural Area, which was designated as a protected area due to her efforts with the Town Council and Chamber of Commerce of High Prairie. As a result of these and other endeavours, she received the Parks and Protected Areas Outstanding Individual Steward Award in 1998.

Thank you Louisa for all your efforts on behalf of Alberta's recreational trails community and congratulations on becoming our 2006 Trail Blazer. You are very deserving of this special recognition!



Louisa Rich receives the TrailBlazer award for 2006.

THE OTAGO

Central Rail Trail

New Zealand

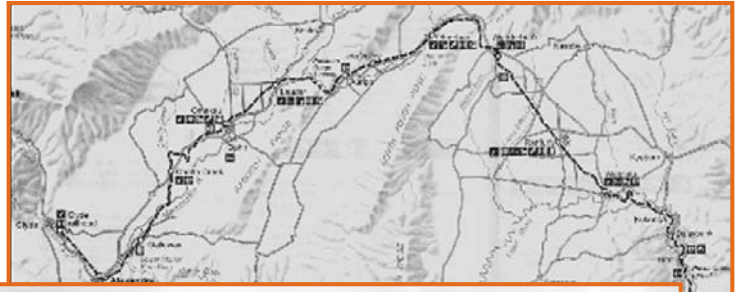
Perspectives from the Business Communities

by Cory Kulczycki
Sessional Instructor, University of Alberta,
Faculty of Physical Education & Recreation

I was given the opportunity to speak at Alberta TrailNet Society's 2006 AGM regarding my research on the Otago Central Rail Trail. This article is a summary of that presentation. The Otago Central Rail Trail is a 150 kilometre multi-use trail that was created on the right-of-way of the former Otago Central Railway in Central Otago, which is a rural region of New Zealand (see Figure 1). The railway has a strong history that is connected to the developments and settlements through the Central Otago region. Construction of the railway was primarily based on the gold rush in this largely rural region.

Support for the creation of the Otago Central Rail Trail evolved through a number of feasibility studies that identified the rail trail as providing preservation of natural and cultural heritage, and recreational opportunities. The trail is comprised of gravel and ballast stones that were left behind after the rails and railway ties were removed. The conversion process from railway to trail took approximately six years, including the refurbishing of the more than 60 bridges on the trail.

My research focusing on the Otago Central Rail Trail investigated the trail users (including general trail users and race participants), and the perception of the trail from the perspective of



Otago Central Rail Trail and trail bridge - New Zealand
(Source: Otago Central Rail Trail brochure).

business communities. In the period between the end of October and middle of November 2000, I surveyed 102 businesses in 13 towns along the trail. The distance of the businesses from the trail varied from being located directly beside the trail to many kilometres away from the trail.

At the time of the study there were many types of accommodation (including hotels and motels) and retail stores. During the study period I met and discussed the rail trail with many individuals, for example one person had indicated that many within the business communities felt that they should not have to cater to the needs and wants of the trail users. It was thought that the trail users should use what the business communities have to offer. A 2005 study by the Otago Central Rail Trail Trust has found that communities are becoming more accommodating to the needs of trail users with each passing year.

A majority of the businesses along the trail acknowledged that the trail needed to be advertised and that many of the businesses took their own initiative to advertise the trail. The most com-

mon form of trail advertising was done through word of mouth, although some businesses did provide brochures and pamphlets about the trail. The owner/operator of one motel indicated that she created a photo album about the trail and placed a copy in each of her motel rooms. The Otago Central Rail Trail Trust and the New Zealand Department of Conservation have an interactive website (<http://www.centralotagorail-trail.co.nz/>), which supplies detailed information about the trail.

Due to the length and condition of the trail the business community identified bicyclists as the main trail user. The trail which consists of gravel and ballast stones has constantly been identified as a main issue surrounding trail usage. The businesses have noticed that the trail has attracted people travelling in groups. My research identified that businesses thought there were mainly small groups of friends with an increasing number of families using the trail. The 2005 study by the Otago Central Rail Trail Trust found that there has been an increase in user groups that contain approximately 5 people per group.

A majority of the respondents indicated that they thought the trail would have a positive impact on their business. A few businesses (mostly farm or home stays and motels) stated that they thought the trail would take visitors away from their business. In short, almost all of the respondents indicated that they view the trail as bringing a positive impact to their business.

Therefore, any changes that have occurred since the opening of the trail have been mostly on the positive side. A majority of my survey respondents indicated that the trail was good for their business. A large proportion of the respondents who said the trail was not good for business indicated that they did not benefit from the trail because of their distance from the trail. One respondent who does not offer a service directly related to trail use also noted a positive impact. This individual was a hair dresser who identified that her turnover had increased because of trail users who wanted a haircut before going for dinner. The respondents, who indicated that the trail had not helped their

business, did indicate that the trail had helped others within the business community, mostly because of an increase in the number of tourists travelling to the region to use the trail.

An important change within the general community was also noted by the respondents to my survey. The businesses indicated that they saw positive impacts to the communities as a whole. There has been continued investment within the various towns along the trail from local individuals and outside investors. People in the communities have also shown more pride and community spirit through activities, interaction, and cooperation to keep the trail corridor and surrounding community land clean from trash and debris. During my study a small number of individuals within the communities expressed concern about the number of people with various needs coming into the towns. The concerns surrounded the needs of trail users and the perception that trail users wanted items and services for free. At the time of the study there were not many public washrooms or drinking water sources, so trail users

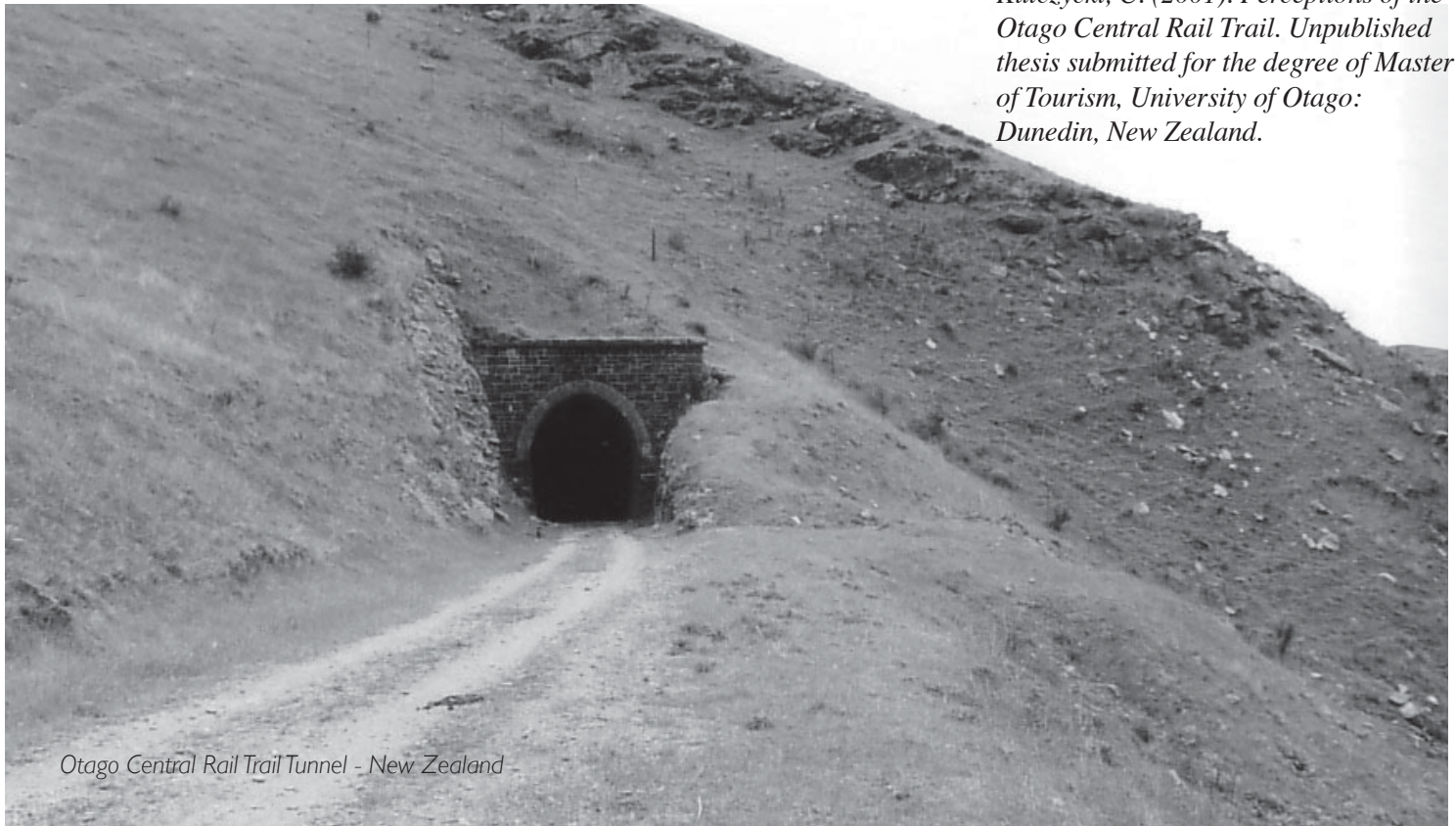
would ask for these items from local businesses. Some businesses did not feel that it was appropriate to provide services to individuals who were not paying. The friendly atmosphere of the locals and the business communities outnumbered these comments and opinions.

To summarize, the Otago Central Rail Trail has had a positive impact on the businesses and on the communities through which it passes. Similar findings were found in my 2000 study and the 2005 study conducted by the Otago Central Rail Trail Trust. The trail has attracted more tourists to the area surrounding the trail. There are social and economic (including increases in turnover and employment) benefits to the communities, and the communities have experienced a growth in amenities and community pride due to the trail.

Sources:

Otago Central Rail Trail Trust. (2005, November). The Otago Central Rail Trail means business. Retrieved on April 15, 2006 from <http://www.centralotagorail-trail.co.nz>

Kulczycki, C. (2001). Perceptions of the Otago Central Rail Trail. Unpublished thesis submitted for the degree of Master of Tourism, University of Otago: Dunedin, New Zealand.



Otago Central Rail Trail Tunnel - New Zealand

TRANS CANADA TRAIL

Foundation Update

Programming for Youth

The Trans Canada Trail Foundation understands that it is more important than ever for children to learn all about the benefits of a good diet and a healthy lifestyle. They are promoting a concept called the “Trans Canada Trail Mix” – a special blend of walking, hiking, skiing, running and canoeing. It is about helping kids get out and get active in the world’s largest outdoor gym – The Trans Canada Trail. As they take to the Trail, they can learn more about our beautiful country while getting fit. Did you know that 80% of Canadian families currently live within 30 minutes of an operational section of the Trans Canada Trail?

Youth programs under development include:

Grades 1-4: “TC Leaf”, a cartoon character, will star in a colouring book, an animated television series and a video game. As he travels along the Trans Canada Trail, “TC” will have adventures, meet friends and teach lessons about our history, heritage, and geography, plus the importance of an active lifestyle. A “TC Leaf” plush toy will also be available.

Grades 4-9: Walk Across Canada will be a curriculum based virtual tour of Canada developed by the Calgary Board of Education. This terrific educational tool will use the Internet and the Trans Canada Trail to teach lessons about history,

geography, the environment, active living and our heritage.

Grades 9-12: Since many high school programs require proof of community service for graduation, the Trans Canada Trail is a rewarding way for students to get the credit they need – and to help build vital communities – by trail building, maintenance or assisting local volunteer trail organizations.

The TrailBlazer Board Game, with the map of Canada as its base, challenges players to cross the country by canoe, covered wagon, train and bush plane. Along the way, they are asked skill-testing questions and earn Treasure Cards for free points. The game is a great way for the whole family to get together with the Trans Canada Trail for some fun and learning.

The Kids Zone of the Trans Canada Trail website gives young visitors the opportunity to have their first look at the “TC Leaf” cartoon character, submit their own trail stories, read about trail facts and take a virtual tour of the Trans Canada Trail across the country. The website is being redeveloped, so keep checking back for updates on these and other initiatives!

Visit their website at
www.tctrail.ca

New President Announced

Sanderson Layng has been appointed as the new president of the Trans Canada Trail. Under his leadership, the Foundation will focus on five key areas: securing funding; acting as an advocate in all levels of government; establishing a Community Development Program; increasing media coverage and restructuring the TCTF website; and helping with insurance issues.

We welcome the experience, energy and enthusiasm that Sanderson brings to his new position and are looking forward to working with him on this national project.

QUEBEC'S ROUTE VERTE

Official International Opening
June, July, August 2007

The Route verte is a bicycle network extending for almost 4,000 kilometres throughout the various regions of Quebec. Over a period of more than 12 years, almost a thousand different organizations have contributed to its development. The official international inauguration of this route—the largest cycling network in the Americas—will take place in June, July and August 2007. Visit www.routeverte.com for more information on special events and activities planned over the next few months.

ON COURSE FOR 4,000 KM!

Eighty six percent complete in terms of length, 13 regions where the completion rate exceeds 85%, 300 municipalities linked to the network—these are the results of the most recent Route verte progress report prepared by Vélo Québec Association (VQA) as at October 31, 2006. According to Jean-François Pronovost, VQA executive director, “The 4,000-kilometre mark is well within reach in 2007. The inauguration activities will highlight the efforts of those who have put their shoulders to the wheel and will motivate the regions that still have a few kilometres to go.”

OFFICIAL INAUGURATION PARTNER AND SPONSORS

The key Route verte development partner since the very beginning, the Government of Québec is of course involved in this summer's official inauguration activities. Also, PROXIM, a major network of independent drugstores, and GAZ MÉTRO, have agreed to become official sponsors, making it possible to schedule various events throughout the summer.

Source: Route verte Newsletter - Mar. '07



TRAIL LINKS

Here are some great trail websites. Hope you find them useful too!
Check our website at www.albertatrailnet.com for more links.

www.americantrails.org – Contains information on trail design and construction, trail management, advocacy and education

www.trailsandgreenways.org/resources - This link will take you to Clearinghouse, a project of Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (RTC), which provides technical assistance, information resources and referrals to trail and greenway advocates and developers. There are useful online manuals, reports and fact sheets available free of charge.

www.trailscanada.com – Register your trail, find a trail in Canada or find useful resources for building that trail at TrailsCanada. Registered Trans Canada Trails can be found on this site.

www.ownthetrail.com/TrailStandards_Whistler.pdf - Whistler's Trail Standards document came across my desk a few times! You too can obtain this valuable manual online by referring to the link above.

www.nationaltrail.ca/alberta.htm - By clicking on this link you can find out more about the hiking/walking clubs and other trail treading groups in Alberta.

trails.braggcreek.ca - The Greater Bragg Creek Trails Association's website invites visitors to play a role in shaping the pathways in and around Bragg Creek.

The Central Alberta Regional Trails Society (CARTS) has a new website at **www.centralalbertatrails.org**. CARTS is a not-for-profit society, run by volunteers, that exists to provide information and support regarding recreational trail designation and development in central Alberta.

Trailex.org is a website that allows trail users to share wildlife information in the Bow Valley (from Lake Louise to Bragg Creek). The goal of this website is to keep humans and wildlife safe. The site allows you to view recent postings before you choose where you want to go or you can post a message. For more information contact info@trailex.org.

The Calgary Area Outdoor Council is a non-profit organization which represents member groups and individuals involved in outdoor recreation and environmental activities. The organization provides a broad range of communications, information, referral, networking, consultation and event planning services for its members in particular and the outdoor community in general. Their informative monthly newsletter features articles on important issues and listings of events and workshops relevant to outdoor enthusiasts. Be in the know by visiting **www.caoc.ab.ca**.

Over the next three years, the Jasper Trails Project will involve the local community, trail enthusiasts and others in an initiative to reconfigure and expand the 190 km of trails surrounding the Town of Jasper. This project aims to upgrade existing trails and reclaim wildlife areas so that all users can enjoy excellent trails in the best possible locations – ecological and recreational. To keep the public informed and gather valuable project input, the official project newsletter, “In the Loop,” is available by visiting:

www.pc.gc.ca/pn-np/ab/jasper/plan/plan4_e.asp

Do you know of a useful trail website that you would like to share with others? Email your link to atnadmin@telus.net and we'll try to include it in our next TrailTracker newsletter.

It's been said that much of western Canada's history can be traced through the once-primitive trails that cross over the plains of our country. Alberta sits at the hub of some of these routes. Two such trails, the Athabasca Landing Trail and the Victoria Trail played a significant role in northern Alberta's history.

The Athabasca Landing Trail was developed in 1874 by the Hudson Bay Company and is described by Richard DeSmet of Pioneer Trail North Foundation as "the shortest 100 mile portage between the North Saskatchewan and Athabasca River." This trail was once a shortcut north from Edmonton to the southern part of the Athabasca River and was considered so efficient for early traders and aboriginal people, that it became the "busiest northern route for 40 years."

The Victoria Trail, following the North Saskatchewan River from Victoria (now Pakan) to Edmonton, was part of the longer Carlton Trail that traversed Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. The Victoria and Winnipeg portions of the Carlton Trail beginning at Onion Lake on the Saskatchewan border are together responsible for the development of the "steam boat traffic" along the North Saskatchewan River. Explorers Henry Kelsey, Simon Fraser and David Thompson all trekked along this trail in their journeys. The river was the main means of transportation, and the trail followed its path to accommodate foot, horse and wagon traffic.

Regional and local trail groups, have long recognized the opportunity and the importance of preserving these notable trails, but it has only been in recent years that the idea has moved into the mainstream. Together the groups are working on joining these

Two Historic Trails Linking Up for a Pioneer Adventure

by Jessica Hainstock



International Trails Day participants on the Athabasca Landing Trail.

two trails, to make a continuous 360 km alignment within the Trans Canada Trail system. Victoria Trail boasts 58 km of historic designation, the Athabasca Landing Trail claims 32 km.

Travelers on the Victoria Trail can stop at Victoria Settlement alongside the North Saskatchewan and explore the Methodist Church built in 1906 on the site of the original Methodist Mission built by Reverend George McDougall in 1862. The Hudson's Bay Company established Fort Victoria nearby in 1864 to trade with the local natives. The trading post's Clerk's Quarters is still standing and open for public tours. Further east on the trail is the Pine Creek Post Office, built in 1908 by the original Post Master Sam McDonald. The office served three purposes—general store, post office and fur trading post—until 1913; it was later restored to its original functions and now 87 years later, serves as a museum.

The Athabasca Landing Trail is scenic with its well-traveled paths and footbridges, sloping countryside and abandoned railway corridors. Despite its long history, this trail has stayed amazingly intact. Near Westlock a portion of this trail has remained untouched by development for 150 years and another spot, found about 35 kilometers north of Edmonton, remains unspoiled except for a mile and a half of newer development. The joining of these trails to a larger modern trail network recreates the role that these trails originally played – that of a meeting place, connecting people and communities across history.

<http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/PrinterFriendly.cfm?ArticleId=A0000370>
Athabasca Landing Trail- The Canadian Encyclopedia

Hillary Darrah and Jessica Hainstock are students in the Professional Writing degree program at Grant MacEwan College. They researched and wrote these articles for a newsletter

BLAZING a Trail in BRAGG CREEK

by Hilary Darrah

October 2005 marked the inauguration of the Bragg Creek Centennial Pathway.

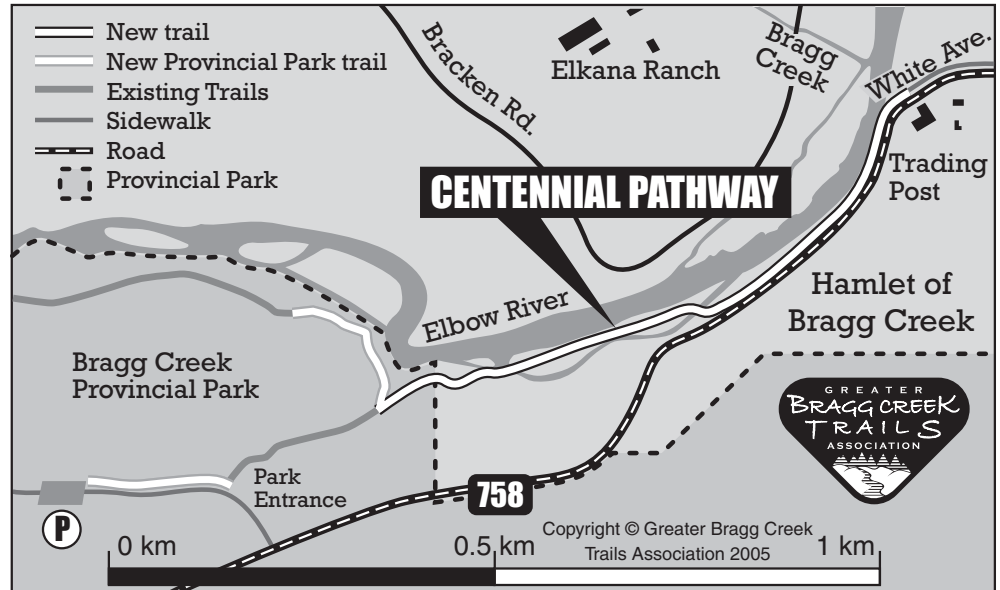
For five months, dedicated volunteers have contributed their weekends and their lives to this trail. It was not easy, as only a small number of people were involved in building this trail, which runs from the sidewalk on White Avenue to the Bragg Creek Provincial Park and parallels the Elbow River for 2 kilometres, but it was rewarding.

“It was great fun,”

says Peggy Paulson, one of the volunteers who worked on the trail.

Participants spent most of their summer weekends meeting and working on the trail. Using their determination and a helping hand from the Kananaskis Trail group with staking and planning, they began building.

With little initial funding available they used the money acquired from membership fees to foot the bills. They eventually received a \$5000 grant from the Municipal District



Map provided by Doug Sephton

of Rocky View and some wood for bridges and boardwalks was donated from the Spray Lakes Sawmill. This support was greatly appreciated and was essential to building the trail.

They did encounter some setbacks. Every boulder that had been painstakingly placed to line the path was moved away by vandals and some signposts were thrown into the river. However, the flooding that occurred that summer was probably the biggest hindrance. Yet there was a positive side to that. Volunteers were able to turn that event to positive use as it allowed them to determine how high the water could rise and use that information when building the two bridges and the boardwalk on the trail.

Before the trail, people would have to ride their bikes, run, and walk along the narrow, shoulder-less,

two-lane road which was getting busier and busier and more dangerous. With a trail now running parallel to the road, trail users are much safer. Children can ride their bikes to school safely. Runners and cyclists can exercise without worrying about traffic. Eventually, horseback riders will be able to enjoy this trail. This trail is an important asset to the community.

The trail is open year-round for hiking and walking and is free of charge for those who want to use it and enjoy the Bragg Creek area. The Greater Bragg Creek Trails Association is currently working on a new section of Trans Canada Trail that will join Bragg Creek to K Country.

**Maps are available at
www.braggcreek.ca**

International Trails Day - June 2, 2007 is a day dedicated to celebrate trails, their development, uses and the healthy lifestyle they encourage. Visit their website at www.internationaltrailsday.com to view trails day events and photos from all over the world. Take part in developing a public awareness of trails by hosting an event and listing it on the International Trails Day website.





Photo: ASA

In Memorium



Photo: PCL

Dale Gunderson

Dale Gunderson, former Winner of Alberta Snowmobile Association's Snowmobiler of the Year Award, died tragically in January 2007, while clearing trail in his community of Whitecourt. Dale was the trail boss for the Whitecourt Snowmobile Club. Dale will be sadly missed by all his friends in snowmobiling and trails.

John Poole

Philanthropist and former PCL owner, John Poole, passed away in January 2007. Among many other contributions to their communities and province, the Poole family support the Trans Canada Trail as Kilometre Club Members. John and his wife Barbara are Patrons of the Trans Canada Trail. We honour and celebrate John Poole and the richness of life he brought to and shared with his family, his friends and with Albertans.

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

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