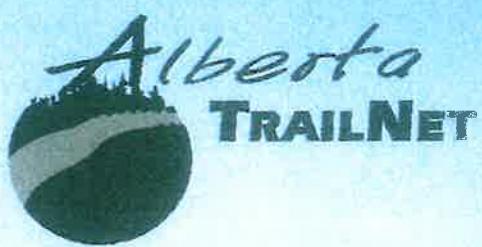


Annual Report 2020



New Bridge Crossing: Meadowlark Trail

Table of Contents

Mission, Mandate

Board of Directors/ Staff/Contractors

President's Message

Treasurer's Report

Executive Director's Report

Achievements

Photo Credits:

Alberta TrailNet Society

David Wasserman

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Bonnie Turner

Chantel Thorlakson

Alberta Snowmobile Association

Alberta TrailNet Society gratefully acknowledges the ongoing support of Alberta Culture, Multiculturalism and Status of Women.



Our thanks also to Trans Canada Trail, the Federal Government and to the many Donors who have contributed towards development of The Trans Canada Trail.



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Alberta TrailNet Society

Mission Statement

Promoting a trail network, including the Trans Canada Trail, connecting all Albertans.

Alberta TrailNet is a not for profit charitable society governed by a volunteer Board of Directors. Recognizing that trail environments foster physical activity and active living, Alberta TrailNet promotes the development and use of all types of trails in the interests of a broad range of user and stakeholder groups. We promote managed recreational access and long distance linkages for the multiple benefits and opportunities trails provide. Trails and trail systems provide affordable, accessible, multi use recreation and transportation infrastructure, preserve green space and wildlife corridors, and offer opportunities to appreciate and learn about Alberta's diverse historical, natural, cultural and economic history. Trails support tourism and economic diversification and growth.

Mandate

We support local groups in their trail building activities. We provide resources and assistance to the trail community, including a province-wide plan for future trail development. We develop and distribute practical information and advice on the planning, design, construction and management of trails.

Through formal agreement with Trans Canada Trail, we promote and support development of the Trans Canada Trail in Alberta.

We act as agent for the Province of Alberta in the allocation and management of provincial grant funding for projects that are part of Alberta's portion of The Trans Canada Trail.

We either act as agent or have taken transfer of title on certain rail rights-of-way in Alberta donated to Trans Canada Trail, and have assumed responsibility for their management, use, and where appropriate, disposition.

We work in partnership with provincial trail user associations in areas of common interest including ensuring that recreational trail interests are represented in provincial discussions on land access and management.



A Wintry Wonderland

2020 Board of Directors and Staff



Glenbow Ranch Provincial Park



Glenbow Ranch Provincial Park

The Society's work is carried out by its Staff, by Committees of the Board chaired by a Director of the Society, and by volunteers and supporters from all areas of the province. The Society occasionally contracts other individuals and organizations to provide expert services. Increasing use and demand for trails, the need for continuity and expert technical services, and the size of the program and delivery area have resulted in steadily growing demands on the Society's resources.



Alberta TrailNet Board Members and Staff

Executive

Christine Nelson, President

Ross Hayes, Past President

Reg Gunson, Vice-President, Trail Development

Debbie Olsen, Vice-President, Stakeholder Liaison

Paul Poirier, Vice President, Communications

Ronda Rankin, Treasurer

Sheila Thompson, Secretary

Directors-at-Large

Marvin Bjornstad

Loren Winnick

Jay Mills

Ferd Caron

Justin Bhatia

Manda Wilde

Association Representatives

Jeff Gruttz, Alberta Bicycle Association

Chris Brookes, Alberta Snowmobile Association

Ronena Wolach, Nordiq Alberta

Jason Edworthy, Alberta Equestrian Federation

David Wasserman, Alberta Hiking Association

Ken Luck, Alberta Recreation and Parks Association.

Rep Vacant, Off Highway Vehicle Users Group

Staff

Linda Strong-Watson, Executive Director

Courtney King, Admin/Communications Assistant

Fred Wilton, Special Projects Coordinator

Contractors

Colleen Bannon, Can Do Accounting

Andrea Collins, ROI Communications

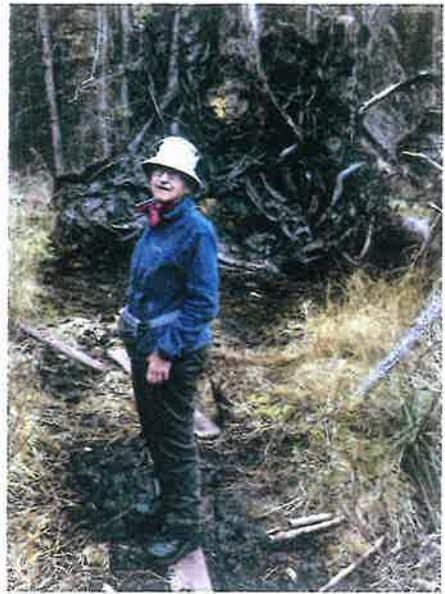
Annual General Meeting

Alberta TrailNet held its 2020 Annual General Meeting on June 13, 2020 over Zoom video conferencing due to Covid 19 restrictions and public health concerns. Fred Wilton gave a presentation on current Trans Canada Trail projects following the AGM.

President's Report

Christine Nelson

2020 was an interesting year for everyone. Pandemic protocols have resulted in massive increases in the use and enjoyment of trails and nature. As people looked for local outdoor family recreation opportunities, the most basic and low cost has proven to be a walk on neighbourhood pathways, or a vehicle ride to a nearby recreation trail. I hope for all trail users, new and experienced, that this has been a year of increased appreciation for Alberta's steadily growing provincial trail system and for the work and commitment involved from all of those engaged in trail development and operations. This pandemic year has revealed an urgency to expand existing and grow new trail systems and to ensure there is sustainable funding for the ongoing work involved in trail maintenance and improved trail experiences.



Some of the trail challenges for the year have been both physical and cultural. Physically we've seen an increased need for parking, user facilities and trail

maintenance. Culturally there is a need for increased awareness of trail etiquette, trail sharing, and wildlife safety. Trail clubs and associations, including Alberta TrailNet, have also been challenged with reduced funding and opportunities for fundraising.



Moose Portage Bridge washout

2020 also saw heavy spring and early summer rains which halted trail maintenance and construction activities, affected trail surfaces and the ability to access some trails, and washed out bridges in some areas. Work to address some of these issues is still ongoing with the bridge washouts in particular needing substantial funds before they can be repaired or replaced.

Our Achievements and Supporters

For TrailNet, a primary focus this past year has been on completing existing and planning new projects. As the rest of this Annual Report outlines, TrailNet continues to provide leadership and funding support to a number of local and regional trail initiatives. Trail successes to date are due to the fact that we all work together: governments, local and regional clubs and organizations, provincial trail user associations, volunteers, funders, and individual trail users.

I would like to thank the Government of Alberta for its continued support of Alberta TrailNet's mission, especially as many more Albertans have discovered trails as a recreational and active transportation option, and as important to

individual health and quality of life. When "things get back to normal" no doubt many more visitors to Alberta will also be discovering and using our trails.

I also thank the Trans Canada Trail organization, its donors, and the Federal Government for their important grant funding contributions, and the Trans Canada Trail for the coordination, communications, marketing and other tasks involved in realizing our national trail – the Trans Canada Trail. The Trail is an important high-profile part of Alberta's provincial trail network and one that Alberta TrailNet works diligently to support, develop and improve.



Athabasca South MRM Bridge washout

The Board

I would like to thank the Alberta TrailNet Society Board, a group of dedicated individuals from a wide range of backgrounds and skills. It's a continuing pleasure to work with a group of like-minded individuals who share my passion for trails.

This year we are losing two incredibly hard working long time Directors from the Board. Reg Gunson served as Treasurer, President, and Vice President of Trail Development, and has participated on the Board for 25 years. Sheila Thompson served as Board Secretary and has been a Board Director for 20 years. Both Reg and Sheila leave a legacy of completed projects across the province. On behalf of the Board and staff, our thanks and best wishes to Sheila and Reg for your experience, contributions and insights which are very much appreciated, and for your dedication to trails and the work of Alberta TrailNet Society.



View of the North Saskatchewan River from Battery Creek Trail in Devon.

Our Team

Fred Wilton has decided to finally retire to enjoy and pursue his many outdoor, recreational and other interests after the past two years spent working with TrailNet as Special Projects Coordinator. I would like to recognize Fred for his many years of work and support for recreational trails in this province, both as Trans Canada Trail Liaison, Strategy and Policy Branch, Recreation and Physical Activity Division, Alberta Culture and Tourism, and for his work with Alberta TrailNet.

Our immediate Past President, Ross Hayes, served as President for 8 years and has participated on the Board for over 12 years. Ross continues to champion development of the Meadowlark Trail and other trails in the greater Calgary and Kananaskis region.

Our Board relies heavily on the direction provided by our Executive Director, Linda Strong-Watson. Her ability to manage multiple projects, work with many partners and stakeholders, and generally move TrailNet's many initiatives and interests ahead is critical to our organization's success. She is supported by a small group including Courtney King, Colleen Bannon and Andrea Collins.

I look forward to another year and beyond of trail growth particularly in the north Rockies and northern half of the province.



Stairs on Devon River Valley Trail

Treasurer's Report

Ronda Rankin/Colleen Bannon

During the 2020 fiscal year, we spent \$270,651.77 on Trans Canada Trail (TCT) Projects in the area of Project Development including Construction, Management (Planning & Design, Implementation and Communications) and Project and Grant Fund Administration.

As well, we allocated \$80,486.05 from the Northshore Trail Grant Fund to the North Shore Trail Bridges and Culverts Project which is now complete.

AB Culture and Tourism (now AB Culture, Multiculturalism and Status of Women) provided a grant in the amount of \$1,930,000 towards the planning, design, construction and project management/administration costs of twelve Trans Canada Trail projects in 2018. The following is an update on the project funding amounts advanced from this grant in 2020. Covid 19 impacts or other conditions have slowed or otherwise influenced scheduling or the ability to advance certain projects including: the McKelvie Trail Suspension Bridge (\$0 of \$300,000), the Marten Beach Hamlet Staging Area Project (\$0 of \$150,000), Redwater Bridge to Echo Lake Trail Upgrades (\$0 of \$120,000), Meanook to Pennyvale Trail (\$0 of \$70,000), and DesNedhe' Trail upgrade (\$0 of \$80,000 - \$30,000 was advanced previously). The following TCT projects were allocated/funded project expenditures in 2020: Peace River Trail Upgrades (final \$3,027 of \$30,000 – project is now complete), Will Marx Trail Upgrades (\$8,000 of \$80,000), Beiseker Station Ground Trail (\$14,820 of \$150,000), Deadman's Flats to Canmore Trail (\$14,949 of \$150,000), Diamond Willow Trail Bank Stabilization (\$6,962 of \$150,000), Meadowlark Trail (\$192,616 of \$300,000) and the Woodridge Pinewood Estates Trail (\$2,363 of \$350,000).

The Trans Canada Trail paid us \$138,194 in 2020 in matching grant funds for work on a number of Trans Canada Trail Projects in Alberta. Specifically, funding was received for the Deadman Flats-Canmore project (\$19,502) Beiseker Station Ground Trail (\$7,006), the Woodridge Pinewood Estates Trail (\$18,177) and the Meadowlark Trail (Irricana-Beiseker) Project (\$33,248).

In addition we received \$51,000 in 2020 from Trans Canada Trail to help cover TCT Trail Coordinator wages and expenses.

During the year, municipalities along the Athabasca Landing Trail provided funding to the extent of a further \$13,689 in support of steering committee work on that project.

Donations of cash during the year amounted to \$5,436, while membership revenue totaled \$2,550.

Expenditures totaling \$3,027 were spent on the High Rockies Trail Project in 2020.

Partially offsetting tax assessments on donated railway rights of way, we were fortunate to collect fees amounting to \$42,303 for negotiated crossing agreements primarily with the oil & gas industry. A large majority of these are one-time payments, therefore we do not forecast this as being a reliable future revenue stream.

We are grateful for the continuing operating support (\$64,406 in 2020) provided by Alberta Culture, Multiculturalism and Status of Women, under its Leadership and Certification Operating Grant Program.

At the conclusion of 2019, we had held our biannual and sixth casino which raised \$76,053 in November. In 2020, we were fortunate to cover expenditures of \$65,439 with this funding. The remaining funds (\$10,614) will be fully expended in 2021.

For the 2020 fiscal year, the Alberta TrailNet Society is reporting in its draft audited financial statements, an excess of revenues over expenses of \$34,953.



Original section of historic Athabasca Landing Trail near Meanook

Executive Director Report

Linda Strong-Watson

The 2020 year was a very busy one as always for the Society, its partners, and for trail building communities in Alberta. As indicated in the 'Achievements' section below, the Society's focus over the past year has been on the detailed planning, design and engineering work involved at the front end of projects before trail construction can proceed. While these projects are under the Society's or a partner's direction, the work is often carried out by specialist consultants who often contribute beyond what they are paid because of their shared passion for trails.



As always I want to recognize the dedicated individuals, groups and associations who are engaged in building and maintaining trails on behalf of the general public. The public use of trails and parks continued to grow throughout 2020, with usage increasing over 200% on some trails. This phenomenon was not unique to Alberta, but was replicated across Canada. The Covid-19 pandemic and public responses to its challenges and restrictions have highlighted how important outdoor spaces and trails are to public health and wellbeing. Increased use and access, often by new and inexperienced trail users, has also created environmental impacts, user conflicts, and funding and management challenges with governments, trail groups and others racing to catch up.

As I repeat almost every year - this serves to further highlight the importance of trails to Albertans and to our provincial and municipal parks and open space infrastructure. To be safe and sustainable trails must be properly located, designed, built and maintained. Whether it's a local, regional or provincial trail or trail network, it requires leadership, dedicated investment, and ongoing funding from all levels of government. Trails are a 'public good' and are worthy of these investments. They are also a privilege and public responsibility and dependent on the stewardship and respect of all users.

The Society actively manages the planning, design and construction of a number of projects and we are very aware of the growing complexity of approval requirements, costs, challenges and constraints involved in taking a project from concept to completion. We will continue to do our best to champion and support trail builders and operators and to advocate for sustainable provincial funding for trail development and maintenance.

Last but not least, I'd like to add my sincerest thanks to Fred Wilton for all of his help and support over the years I've been working for Alberta TrailNet Society. Fred has been a mentor, advisor, sounding board and fellow traveler on many trips to visit trail projects around the province. Many of you may have known and had opportunities to work with Fred in the past. Fred is looking forward to having the time to pursue his many interests, and for all of us Fred, we wish you the very best.

Achievements in 2020

Accountabilities in 2020

Goal: Continue to work with GOA, provincial trail user associations, municipal and other partners and stakeholders towards achieving the creation and passing of provincial trails legislation and the development of a provincial trails program.

- Work on developing a 'Provincial Trails Program' has been internal to government over the past few years and is currently focused on public lands. The development of provincial trails legislation and a provincial trails program remains a priority for all stakeholders in trail development including rural and urban municipalities. September 1, 2020 saw the launch of 'Alberta's Guide to Outdoor Recreation on Provincial Crown Land'. This online guide includes practical information and resources on where to go and how to be responsible and safe while enjoying public lands and provincial parks.
- Government tabled amendments to the *Public Lands Act* in April 2021 that would better conserve and ensure Alberta's public lands are sustained now and in the future and protect public safety. If passed, Bill 64, the *Public Lands Amendment Act, 2021*, would enable the collection of OHV fees for recreation on public lands. This income would go into improving visitor experience while conserving and maintaining public lands. The government has also announced its intention to implement a Public Land (random) Camping Pass along the Eastern Slopes, and a new Kananaskis Conservation Pass to take effect June 1, 2021, to support conservation, safety, and improved services and facilities in this busy mountain destination. This pass will be \$15/day or \$90/year and will be applied for vehicles parking in Kananaskis and provincial sites in the Bow Valley corridor.

Goal: Promote and support ongoing development of local and regional trail projects throughout the province and the ongoing development of Alberta's Wild Rose Trail System. Continue advocating to all levels of government regarding the need for dedicated and sustainable trail funding for trails throughout the province. Identify grant opportunities and apply for or support project grant applications where relevant. Oversee and ensure timely reporting on any grants received.

- Trans Canada Trail (TCT) approved funding for a number of Alberta projects in 2019/20 including: Banff (trail lighting); Beiseker (park washroom facility); Leduc (Telford Lake rest nodes); West Bragg Creek (trail paving) and Tom Snow Trail (reroute and upgrades); Grouard Peace River Trailnet Society (TCT trail upgrades); and Iron Horse Trail (Riverland Recreational Trails Society strategic planning). These projects are now largely complete.
- The Society helped fund the following projects which are now complete: trail signage including historic signage on the Athabasca Landing Trail in 4 locations; Ponoka County - Diamond Willow Trail engineering study to identify best approaches to address undercutting of the Battle River bank and resulting failure of the trail; Sturgeon County – Planning/design of the Pinewood Estates/Woodridge Trail; Planning/design of the Meadowlark Trail (Beiseker to Irricana); and Planning/design of the Beiseker station ground trail and staging area.



Diamond Willow Trail — Failure of river bank

Athabasca Landing Trail — The historic route went from Edmonton to Athabasca Landing and was double 8 miles (13 km) long. It linked two major waterways, the North Saskatchewan River and the Athabasca River. In 1870, the Hudson's Bay Company built a fort at the confluence of the two rivers. It was an important trading post from 1812 until 1912 when the company sold it through a series of transfers.

History of the Trail — The trail was first used by First Nations peoples as a portage to carry their goods north to areas where they were trapped by Mount MacKenzie and the North Saskatchewan River. The trail became known as the North West Trail because it followed the trail used by the North West Company.

In 1822, two entrepreneurial brothers, Joseph and Francis Lacombe, founded a fur trading post on the banks of the North and Athabasca Rivers. They made a very successful living from the success of the North and Athabasca fur trade. The Army eventually decided that there was no longer a need for the fort so it was closed in 1874. A new fort was built in 1875 between Athabasca and Edmonton. It became an important transportation hub. It was also Alberta's first community highway, Highway 20, Canada's first road.

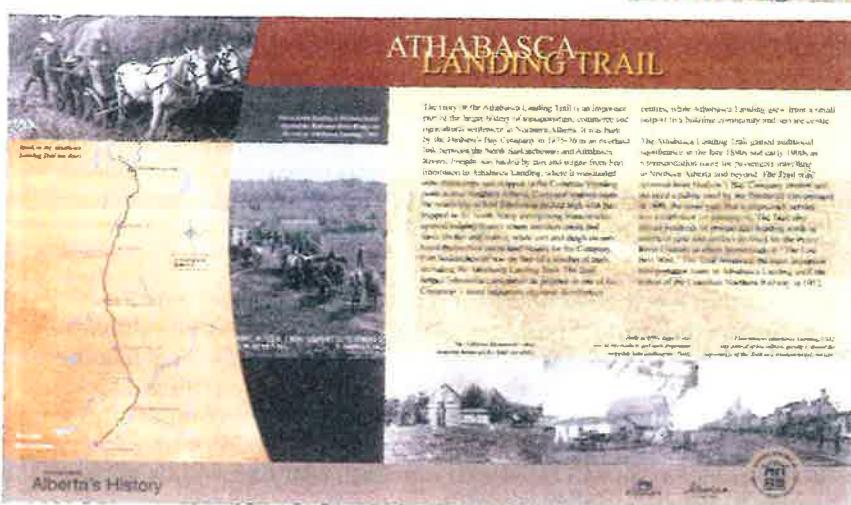
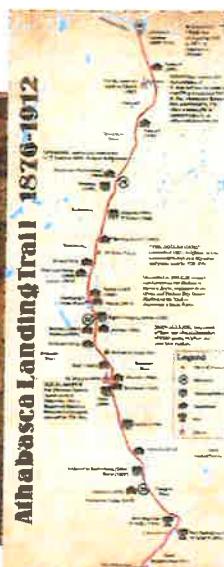
After the Hudson's Bay Company paid off debts to have the bridge built, a wooden bridge was constructed across the river in 1876. At the time, roads between Athabasca and Edmonton, it became a major transportation route. It was also Alberta's first community highway, Highway 20, Canada's first road.

Because of its unique history, the town was dubbed "The 100 mile Portage".

The Town of Athabasca was officially incorporated in 1895. The town had a population of about 100 people. It was a small town with houses, stores, and a few businesses. People could walk and get a short ride across the river. On the opposite side of the river, there was a small town called Willow Creek where a cluster of "Athabasca Girls" lived there. There was mostly an absence of men due to the Athabasca Gold Rush.

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athabascalandingtrail.com



Athabasca Landing Trail Historic Signage

- The Society also provided funding in support of Bragg Creek Trails Association efforts to complete final construction and installation of their West Bragg Creek Bridge located between the Hamlet of Bragg Creek and West Bragg Creek/K Country. After the bridge structure was built and work on bridge infrastructure and installation challenges completed, Rocky View County decided to instead move up its plans for a new road bridge and incorporate a pedestrian crossing on that bridge. The Society has since been negotiating to take ownership of the trail bridge for use on another TCT project.

- Other Society projects: Smith's Landing First Nation (DesNedhe' Trail) (improvements/interpretive signage); Canmore to Dead Man's Flats trail study; and consultation/facilitation services for a border crossing marker and trail at the AB/SASK border are ongoing.

- TCT also approved a number of 2020 spring and fall trail maintenance grants.

- The Society continues to be encouraged by the number of communities and groups that are interested in developing trail projects. New federal funding programs were created last year, however it's not known how many groups were successful in obtaining federal infrastructure grants, CFEP grants, or other provincial and municipal grants.

Goal: Support TCT projects approved for funding by TCT in 2020/21 as well as any outstanding projects from 2020.

- The Society has acquired or is in the process of applying for construction funding for projects where the planning and design work is now complete (see above). These projects will be the focus of our activities for the 2021 trail building season.

- Heavy spring and summer rains in 2020 resulted in two major bridge washouts - one on the Athabasca Landing Trail and one on the Peace River Trail. Bridge engineering studies were completed in 2020, however these trail sections are closed at present as we do not yet have the funds to replace these bridges.

Goal: Pursue additional provincial funding in support of advancing identified projects and the completion of the TCT in Alberta.

- The Province has provided grant funds which are being matched by Trans Canada Trail, municipalities and other partners to help complete certain TCT projects. The Society is very grateful for this and other government support.
- We have also been fortunate to receive and are very grateful for the support of private donors.

Goal: Oversee completion of the remaining CPR/TCT/ATN land transfers. Manage donated lands and address encroachment and other issues and requests for access.

- Ongoing. All but several land transfers from TCT have been completed. Most recently the Society completed the transfer of TCT beneficial ownership of certain lands to the Society. Current work is focused on completing the final transfer of these lands from CPR to the Society. Weed control, mowing, culvert repair or replacement, and the installation of signage and access controls are all key responsibilities, however funding for these and other costs (taxes, land management tasks, travel) remains a key challenge.

Goal: Continue to work with the TCT towards moving interim road connections off road. Support TCT efforts to install TCT signage along the trail. Advance work on priority projects (those that can be completed in 2021) and other TCT projects wherever possible. Celebrate TCT project completions and opening events. Identify priority TCT projects for 2021/22.

- Ongoing
- TrailNet and its partners successfully completed a number of planning, construction and signage projects which are featured in our newsletter and annual report.
- Several new projects were identified and applications for funding submitted to TCT.
- Covid-19 has slowed work on certain projects. Work will continue on these in 2021. Public events have also been rescheduled.

Goal: Review what contract facilitation may be required in more remote and in key areas and engage additional resources as possible to advance TCT development. Continue to seek and support new trail operator groups. Focus resources on enlisting municipal support and determining the route for gap sections (current on road routing) along the route of the TCT.

- Ongoing. Staff continued to work with trail partners on TCT projects. The creation and support of new and existing trail operator groups remains a priority, particularly as the demands, expectations, and workload of these groups continues to increase. We are committed to working closely with municipalities as municipal involvement and support are critical to successful trails.

Goal: Continue support and participation on the Athabasca Landing Trail Steering Committee; support Athabasca Landing Trail construction and planning initiatives for 2021 including a trail signage plan.

- Ongoing. The Society continues to support the work of the Athabasca Landing Trail (ALT) Steering Committee (made up of the municipalities from Fort Saskatchewan to Athabasca, trail operator groups and government representatives). Participating municipalities have each committed funding to support the ongoing work of the steering committee. ALT Website redevelopment is currently underway. An ALT trail signage plan remains a priority.

Goal: Secure trail development permit approvals from Rocky View County for Society lands and the Meadowlark Trail between Beiseker and Irricana. Continue with planning and development of trailheads and trail within Beiseker and between Irricana and Beiseker in partnership with the Meadowlark Trail Association, the Beiseker Parks and Trails Society, and other local trail groups/organizations.

- Ongoing. The Meadowlark Trail development permit application was submitted and approved in February 2021. Construction plans are



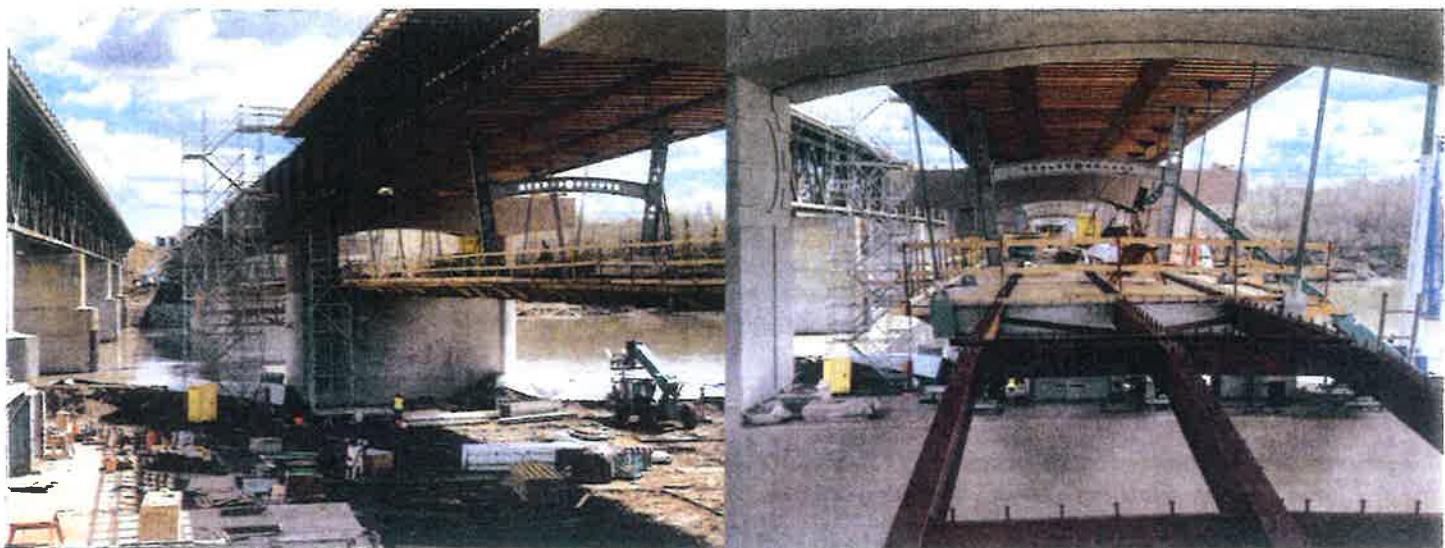
Meadowlark Trail prior to trail construction

underway for the Meadowlark and Beiseker Trail projects which will be tendered for construction in 2021.

Goal: Monitor City of Fort Saskatchewan, Sturgeon County, the River Valley Alliance, and AB Transportation progress on twinning the Fort Saskatchewan (Hwy 15) Bridge and underslung pedestrian access, and connections from the new bridge to existing trails on either side.

- This project is well underway with completion expected in 2022.

Goal: Working in partnership with municipalities, land managers and other stakeholders, implement plans to gain support and required approvals for TCT routing through Rocky View County between Irricana and Airdrie, Airdrie and Calgary, and Cochrane and Bragg Creek. Monitor progress on development of the TCT in west and north Calgary.



Construction of Highway 15 Bridge with underslung pedestrian bridge

- Ongoing. With the exception of trail through Glenbow Ranch Provincial Park, the interim routing in this area is via road connections. While detailed planning is complete, substantial fundraising will be required to develop trail (alternate TCT route) along the Hwy 8 right of way between Calgary and Hwy 22 north of Bragg Creek. Although west Calgary connections through Haskayne Park to Glenbow Ranch Provincial Park have yet to be developed, the trail is mostly complete through Glenbow Ranch Provincial Park. A bridge across the Bow River and community connection are outstanding.

Goal: Work in consultation with the MD of Lesser Slave River, GOA, the Athabasca Recreational Trails Association and other stakeholders to identify next steps and planning for Peace River Trail upgrades and management approaches. Work on staging area development and review signage requirements along the interim road or water route connections from Moose Portage to Slave Lake and from Athabasca to Sawdy.

- The Athabasca Recreational Trails Association's work on improvements to the Peace River Trail was impacted by 2020 heavy rain and water issues. Work on signage needs and a trail management plan hasn't yet started.
- The Athabasca Recreational Trails Association has been in discussions with a Sawdy area landowner group regarding the possible development of a staging area there however Athabasca County will likely need to be involved in any lease arrangement for access to this land. Weather, Covid-19 and time constraints have impacted progress in these areas as has the Moose Portage Bridge washout on the Peace River Trail. An engineering study was completed on replacing this bridge and related costs. Identifying a source of funds to replace the bridge is a priority.

Goal: Continue to work with the affected MD's/Counties, First Nation and Metis communities, the Woods and Water Trails Association and other stakeholders on route planning and development along the north shore of Lesser Slave Lake east from the narrows. Initiate planning and Indigenous consultation on Phase 3 of the Northshore Trail. Identify funding for the Phase 2 bridges and trail.

- Ongoing
- The Woods and Water Recreational Trails Association has taken responsibility for developing a section of the TCT (the Northshore Trail) east of the narrows along the shore of Lesser Slave Lake. Work on Ph 1 trail improvements continued and construction of 4 bridges and 2 major culverts was completed in 2020.
- Upon receipt of required approvals from Environment and Parks, and once funding is secured, trail survey, planning and bridge engineering/design will be able to proceed on the Ph 2 section of the trail.

- Indigenous consultation and planning on Phase 3 will follow.

Goal: Work with AB Transportation, Rocky View County and other stakeholders to identify funding and advance trail construction in the Hwy. 8 right of way.

- Detailed design of the trail is complete however it is unlikely construction will proceed until Highway 8 redevelopment occurs unless funding and approvals permit otherwise. Substantial funding is needed; efforts to secure funding will proceed as time and opportunity permit.

Goal: Work with TCT and other stakeholders to advance the planning and implementation of signage and user information on the Athabasca/Slave Rivers water route. Consult with and engage First Nations, Metis, and municipal, provincial and federal land owners/managers on the water route project; enlist their involvement in improving user awareness and safety and promoting the tourism potential and opportunities provided by the TCT Arctic water route. Share the Athabasca/Slave River Ph 1 and 2 water route studies with Athabasca, Fort McMurray, Fort Chip, Fort Smith and with the broader community of stakeholders along the water route.

- Little work was done over the past year on a signage/user information plan for the water route. A consultant will be hired to advance this work once funding is identified.
- We are working with Smith's Landing First Nation and local stakeholders to advance work and signage on the DesNedhe' Trail – the portage route between Fort Fitzgerald, south of the AB/NWT border, and Fort Smith, NWT. This project has been delayed by Covid-19 and inability to travel between Alberta and NWT.

Goal: Review interim on road routing for the TCT for various areas including through Waskatenau and Sturgeon, Smoky Lake and Thorhild Counties; work towards obtaining land manager approval for signing a TCT road connection from Heinsberg to the AB/SK border. Support planning and development of the AB/SASK border marker in consultation with TCT, Onion Lake Cree Nation, the RM of Frenchman Butte, GOA, GSASK and the Saskatchewan Trails Assn.



DesNedhe' Trail: TCT Gateway marks crossing of 60th parallel, AB/NWT

- Ongoing. Some of these sections including TCT connection from the Iron Horse Trail to the AB/SK border will likely be addressed by road connections over the longer term.
- We've been working with Onion Lake Cree Nation (OLCN), the RM of Frenchman Butte, and the Alberta and Saskatchewan governments to obtain support for an AB/SASK border marker, parking area and short off road route connection at the border. This work has been on hold for the past year and the Society looks forward to re-engaging with Onion Lake Cree Nation and others on this project.

Goal: Plan High Rockies Trail and other celebrations when conditions permit public events. Advance planning for AB/BC border signage in consultation with AB Parks, Banff National Park, and BC.

- A trail opening event has not yet occurred due to Covid-19 impacts.
- A school group from BC built a gateway on the BC side of the border. We will consult with Parks regarding adding an interpretive kiosk, maps and trail and park signage at the border.

Goal: Seek an agency interested in taking responsibility for preserving the historic Sharples grain elevator and, provided we are able to identify a partner, follow up with Historic Sites regarding approval of a historic site designation. Seek local proponents and a group interested in developing trail from Cosway to Dunphy.

- The Society's application to have the site considered for designation as a historic site was accepted for designation by Historic Sites upon TrailNet's formal approval. The Society seeks information and interest from municipalities and others in the area. A caretaker agency is needed before approving the designation.
- The Society obtained an historic and conservation cost evaluation. The elevator has been secured and the site signed to ensure public safety however follow up efforts will continue to be required to ensure the security of the site.

Goal: Develop and deliver Spring Children's Initiative (Trail Games and Contest) for release on social media June 1, 2020 in celebration of International Trails Day, June 6, 2020.

- Complete. This was an interesting and very successful initiative. We hope to do it again.

Other Achievements/Initiatives

The Society continues to work in cooperation with provincial trail user associations, government, land managers and other stakeholders to: support existing trail operator groups and encourage the formation of new groups; identify and/or cultivate broad municipal, urban and rural awareness and support for trails; ensure responsible management approaches; research and implement best practices to address local issues and concerns; develop effective strategies for securing input and advice from various stakeholder groups; develop new trail supporters; and support community trail building efforts throughout the province.

- The Society held its Annual General Meeting in Edmonton on June 13, 2020 which had to be held by ZOOM call due to Covid-19.
- The Society is an active member of the Canadian Trails Federation, a partnership of national, provincial and regional trail organizations, including provincial/territorial trail councils from across Canada and other trail stakeholders. The Society continues to consult with Canadian Trails Federation (CTF), National Trails Coalition (NTC), and other national and provincial/territorial trail partners on acquiring renewed federal and other funding for trail projects across the country.
- Planning and re-development of the Society website will proceed in 2021.
- The Society responded to numerous requests for information and support from around the province and provided input to a number of government and other stakeholder consultation initiatives.



Breaking Trail

Trail Blazer Award Winner 2020

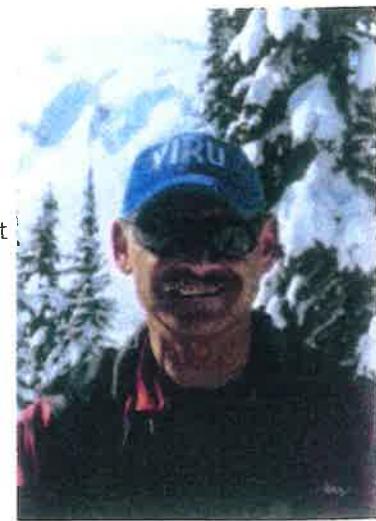
Alf Skrastins

Alf Skrastins was awarded the 2019 Trail Blazer Award at Alberta TrailNet's AGM on June 13, 2020. The Trail Blazer Award recognizes individuals and groups that have made significant contributions to trail development in Alberta. Alf has shown a lifelong commitment to outdoor recreation and trails through his involvement in many different projects and groups.

Alf is the founder of the University of Calgary's Outdoor Centre—which provides many different educational programs and activities for those looking to immerse themselves further into outdoor experiences. He instructed and guided cross country skiing, backcountry skiing, avalanche safety, hiking, backpacking, whitewater rafting and sea kayaking. Alf is also a founding member of the Canadian Association of Nordic Ski Instructors, the B.C. Sea Kayak Guides Alliance and the Association of Outdoor Recreation and Education.

Included in Alf's impressive list of achievements is the founding of the *Foothills Wilderness Journal*, which ultimately was merged with *Explore Alberta* to become *Explore—Canada's Outdoor Magazine*. Alf has also been involved in many other groups and initiatives — especially in and around Kananaskis Country — including Friends of Kananaskis, Great Divide Trails Association and Bragg Creek Trails. He has been a contributor on public advisory councils for the Evan-Thomas Provincial Recreation Area Management Plan, The Canmore Nordic Centre Provincial Park Redevelopment Plan, The Bow Corridor Trails Advisory Committee , The Kananaskis Trails Advisory Committee, The Porcupine Hills -Livingstone Recreation Advisory Group and has sat as the Vice President of the Outdoor Recreation Coalition of Alberta.

Alf continues to be an avid outdoorsman, explorer and hobby photographer. Alberta TrailNet was very pleased to welcome Alf to the illustrious group of previous Trail Blazer award winners.



Alf Skrastins

Trail Tracker Award

Tina Northwest

On June 13, 2020 Tina Northwest was awarded the Trail Tracker Award for her significant contributions to developing the Maskwacis Trail. When Alberta Transportation constructed Highway 611 east of Maskwacis in 1983, an increase in pedestrian related fatalities and vehicle incidents became a serious concern. People from the community who regularly accessed the on-road route on foot from their country homes into town were faced with constant uneasiness due to the danger of people walking on the small road shoulder along the highway. It was clear that a safer option was needed.



Tina Northwest

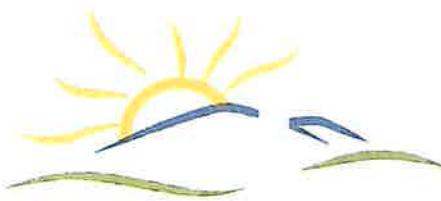
Tina had been researching the concept of a trail since 2012 and saw her vision start to come to life when planning and agreement for a trail was reached with Alberta Transportation in 2013. Tina's vision and leadership, and her work with a small committee of Samson Cree Nation members, were key in bringing together community efforts to create a trail from Maskwacis east along Highway 611 towards the Battle River. This was the first project of its kind in that community and Tina's efforts in engaging Samson Cree First Nation leaders and community members, gaining the support and involvement of Alberta Transportation engineers, and securing Federal and Provincial grants represented an outstanding accomplishment that will benefit the community for many years. This project helped address a number of community needs related to safety, health and wellness and active transportation, and provided new recreation, sport, environmental and educational opportunities. The initial 10 km granular trail build was completed in 2015 and later improved with the addition of asphalt surfacing allowing greater access and enjoyment by the elderly and more diverse uses of the trail by young people.



Strathcona County Trail



Stoney Trail, Kananaskis Country



Claresholm

Where **Community** Takes Root

July 26, 2021

Honourable Ric McIver
Minister of Municipal Affairs
320 Legislature Building
10800 - 97 Avenue
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

RE: CODE OF CONDUCT

At the last regular meeting of Claresholm Town Council held Monday, July 19, 2021, Council discussed the Councillor Codes of Conduct instituted by the Alberta Government on October 26, 2017. It has been brought to our attention by the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association (AUMA) that the current Alberta Government has plans in the works to remove the requirement for municipalities to have a Code of Conduct in place to govern all Councillors equally by way of Bylaw.

The Town of Claresholm passed Bylaw #1641, the Council Code of Conduct Bylaw on April 9, 2018 prior to the government's deadline of July 23, 2018. In the current Council's first year of governance, it became inherently clear how important a Councillor Code of Conduct is, as our Council had to undergo advanced communication training and contract outside mediation to overcome some contentious issues.

Claresholm Town Council respectfully requests that your ministry tread this path lightly and make sure that consultation with municipalities in Alberta is completed prior to any major changes being made. The Alberta Urban Municipalities Association should be highly involved, and the Town of Claresholm fully supports their efforts. Having a requirement for municipalities to have a Code of Conduct Bylaw in place provides a framework for Council members' behavior and provides each Council direction and guidance for dealing with any contentious issues that may arise. It is imperative that the option of imposing sanctions on Council members continues as necessary to support this process. Claresholm Town Council requests that the Council Code of Conduct Bylaw requirement remains in place.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this issue, please contact the undersigned at your convenience.

Yours truly,

Doug MacPherson
Mayor
Town of Claresholm

DM/kk

Cc: Mr. Roger Reid, MLA for Livingstone-Macleod
Alberta Urban Municipalities Association (AUMA)
AUMA Member Municipalities



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