

OSPS NEWSLETTER

OKANAGAN SIMILKAMEEN PARKS SOCIETY

Spring
2009

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An Invitation to the 44th Annual General Meeting of the Okanagan Similkameen Parks Society

When: March 6th, 2009 at 7pm

Where: Centre Stage Theatre, Rosedale Avenue, Summerland

Speaker: Kelly Cook of Princeton

Topic: Treasurers and Trails of the Tulameen with stories and slides



Kelly Cook has been team leader in the reconstruction of historic trails in the Tulameen area. She has become well acquainted with the people and events of this heritage area and is well able to tell their fascinating stories.

“Honouring the past... experience the Present” Commemorating British Columbia 150th Birthday on the original trails of the Hudson Bay Company. An event that saw the re-opening of many historical trails in the Tulameen River valley and gave thanks to the people responsible for their protection over the past;

Okanagan Historical Society and the OSPS.

The Tulameen area is full of “treasures”, past and present, come out and discover them through this upcoming presentation by Kelly Cook of Princeton. She was involved in locating and re-opening of these historical trails that once were the only routes into the interior of BC. Come and see the amazing pictures and learn the history of the trails.

“Here they can relive history and most important live as part of nature rather than



apart from her.” quote from Harley Hatfield, Okanagan Historical Society

No charge • All welcome • Refreshments

Editorial

We are pleased and grateful that Kelly Cook has agreed to speak to the AGM. Upon meeting her last fall, we were impressed not only by her enthusiasm but also by her knowledge of the terrain and the history of the trails which were being approved.

She arranged the wonderful “opening” ceremonies last July 26th (as reported in our newsletter) with all the Hatfield family in attendance, and riders who road on the old Pack Trails from the Fraser Valley.

Kelly has a wonderful story to tell regarding these heritage trails. We know they will

interest everyone.

The OSPS has long taken an interest in forestry – the regulations regarding logging, the necessity of forest cover in watersheds, and the value of preserving for special areas which included important trees of age or type.

Continued on next page...

Please used the enclosed membership form on page 4 to help us carry out our mission.

Trans Canada Trail Welcomes New President/CEO and Directors

The Board of Directors of Trans Canada Trail has announced the appointment of Deborah Apps as President and CEO.

Ms. Apps is a senior professional with more than 25 years of experience in health care, education, the arts and the not-for-profit community. She previously served as Senior Vice-President of Communications and Community Relations for the Calgary Health Region, President and CEO of the Alberta Children's Hospital Foundation and Executive Director of the University of British Columbia Alumni Association.

"The Trans Canada Trail is delighted to welcome Deborah Apps as President and CEO," said Valerie Pringle, chair of the Trans Canada Trail Board. "She is well-known for her leadership in non-profit management, successful fund development campaigns, strategic communications and fostering collaborative relationships with key stakeholders. Her experience and skills are exactly what we need as we move forward in building the Trans Canada Trail.

Deborah has been a member of the Board for the last three years and she is passionate about the Trail as an important Canadian legacy project."

The announcement of Ms. Apps' appointment was made at the Annual General Meeting of the Trans Canada Trail, held in Winnipeg on Saturday June 14. Members of provincial trail organizations were on hand to discuss the progress in developing trail sections across the country. At the meeting, four new directors were also appointed to the Board. They are:

Hartley T. Richardson, President of James Richardson and Sons, a private family owned corporation with broad corporate interests. Mr. Richardson currently serves as a director of Canadian Pacific Railway and Angiotech Pharmaceuticals Inc. He is involved in a broad range of business and community organizations and charitable endeavours. He is a Member of the Order of Canada.

Edwina Stoate, Vice-President, Global

Expense Management and Sourcing with Manulife Financial. She is a senior professional with more than 25 years of broad financial experience and skills in corporate finance, securities operations, investor relations, communications and marketing.

Rick Morgan, President of Morgan Leadership Search. He has been engaged in senior executive search for over 25 years in both the public and private sectors and has worked on behalf of many Canada's top organizations. He is an avid trekker and outdoor enthusiast.

Claire Morris, President and CEO of the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada. She previously served as deputy minister of intergovernmental affairs in the Privy Council Office of Canada and as deputy minister of Human Resources Development Canada. She has extensive involvement in the community and voluntary sector.

Alberta Trailtracker Newsletter – Issue 10 – Fall 2008

...continued from front page.

It is, therefore, disheartening to say the least to hear people, some in high places, describe forestry as "finished" in BC. The robust logging activity of years past may not be possible now, but the need for healthy forests is as great as ever, or perhaps greater as the need for the CO2 exchange possible by healthy forests is one of the busier in our search for cleaning the air and our environment.

However, as indicated in the columns of this newsletter, action is needed by we the people to whom most of the forest land belong. This includes re-establishing

growth, as well as rules and regulations to aid forest growth and continued well being.

Coal bed methane mining has again been touted in the Princeton, Fernie and Klappan areas. The OSPS is not in favour of such mining because of the damaging effects on waterways and surrounding lands. A moratorium was declared Klappan but not in Fernie – what in the policy?

Trails and there uses are a concern to many. The motorized clubs who represent many types of vehicles wish to go everywhere. Hikers and horse riders want some trails to have restricted entry – "open to all but

not for all uses" seems to suit.

We have included an article regarding the Trans Canada Trail in Alberta, contained earth "Alberta Trail Tracker" Fall 2008 issue from 11795 Groat Road, Edmonton, AB T5M 3K6 www.albertatrailnet.com it gives an interesting look at a variety of trails being developed in Alberta.

There is also the pressing matter of the identification and insurance of all types of ORV's. Years of discussion have not yet produced results, but both are key to controlling actions of the irresponsible drivers who have caused major damage over the years.

Bighorn Sheep find Greener Pastures

JOYCE LANGERAK
– WESTERN NEWS STAFF
Penticton Western News – Jan. 21/09

The raging Okanagan fire of 2003 has left behind a paradise for 15 California bighorn sheep transferred from an overstocked area near Kamloops.

The 15 sheep were removed from the Tronquille area on the north side of Kamloops Lake and released Saturday into Okanagan Mountain Park which sustained a major fire in 2003, creating excellent grazing with their favourite food – blue bunch wheat grass.

“What we have to do is keep burning the forest to keep it productive,” said Okanagan regional biologist Brian Harris.

The sheep can live only where there is a great deal of grazing area, and since the fire, there is plenty in the park.



“The habitat there is really good,” said the biologist. “I don’t expect they’ll move very far.”

Harris also gave credit to Mission Hills Winery’s Paradise Vineyard.

“They allowed us to drive through their property with a couple of stock trailers with sheep in them and to cut the fence. Their boundary is right on Okanagan Mountain Park.”

Meeting with Minister of Environment

Thursday, January 15, 2009

Dear Affiliates, (Réseau Canadien de l’environnement / BC Environment Network)

Since his nomination in October, the RCEN has been trying to organize a meet and greet with Minister Prentice with no success. Our requests to meet with the minister’s office have fallen on deaf ears. While this does not have an immediate impact on the RCEN, we felt it’s important for the Minister to meet with our organization as we are part of his constituency and play a vital role in his branches’ mandate.

We would like to encourage you to write to the minister’s office congratulating him on his appointment as environment Minister and suggest he meet with the RCEN. We

also suggest you speak with the MP’s in your regions. Relationship building is vital when dealing with government authorities and we want to make sure the environmental community is positioned strategically.

Please keep us informed of any correspondence and meetings you may have.

Thank you for all your help.

Emile Massenet Jr.
Associate Executive Director / Directeur général adjoint
Canadian Environmental Network / Réseau Canadien de l’environnement

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FOREST PRACTICES BOARD
NEWS RELEASE
DECEMBER 2008

Report Examines Management of Fire Hazards from Logging

VICTORIA – In a study of recently logged areas, the Forest Practices Board found that fire hazard was reduced satisfactorily in most cases, but no licensees fully met the legal requirement to assess fire hazard as required by the Wildfire Act, according to a report released today. The study examined 111 randomly selected cut-blocks, harvested from 2005 – 2007, in the Okanagan Shuswap and Central Cariboo forest districts.

The wildlife Act requires licensees to assess fuel hazard and the risk of a fire starting as well as spreading, and to abate the fire hazard if necessary.

In many cases, licensees assessed the fuel hazard, but in no case did they assess the risk of a fire starting or spreading. Despite the lack of compliance, fire hazards were often abated by routine practices such as piling and burning slash and debris at the roadside.

While results were generally good, we are concerned that some licensees are not recognizing high risk situations, such as when trees are processed at the stump, increasing the fire hazard due to large amounts of slash left on the site, said Board Chair Bruce Fraser.

The report makes three recommendations for improvement to fire hazard assessment and abatement practices. The Association of BC Forest Professionals has agreed to work with government and industry to address the recommendations.

MEMBERSHIP FORM Okanagan Similkameen Parks Society • Box 787, Summerland, B.C. VOH 1Z0

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GHG Emission Reductions in BC: Taking Global Equity and Temperature Stabilization Seriously

BY COLIN R. CAMPBELL
& CLIFF STAINSBY

Any greenhouse gas emission reduction strategy designed to restrain global average temperature rise to less than 2°C above the pre-industrial value will require a rapid initial reduction in emissions.

For BC to converge to equal global per capita emissions consistent with global

equity and the 2 degree maximum, GHG emissions will have to fall by 94 per cent by 2050.

Given the civilization-threatening risks expected from global warming, it is clear that we have a profound moral obligation to achieve these global targets, so that Earth's natural life support systems can provide for future generations. Failure to ensure that global temperatures remain below 2°C above pre-industrial levels will condemn

future generations to massively unreliable and uncertain environments, constrained food supplies, diseases, rising sea levels, and greatly compromised economic and social well being-in such circumstances even survival will be difficult for millions if not billions of people.

BC Commentary a review of provincial social and economic trends

Volume 12 – Number 1 – Winter 2009

West Coast Supports Global Warming Solutions

West Coast's stated long-term goal is to democratize BC's decision-making process when it comes to law making. Nowhere is this more important than in confronting the critical challenge of climate change.

Environmental Assessment (EA) is the primary tool for governments to assess the environmental implications of large-scale development. In general, however, there is no explicit requirement that climate change adaptation or mitigation be considered in an EA.

West Coast proposes that changes to BC's environmental assessment legislation should be made to allow government, project proponents and the public to assess

the climate change implications arising from a project.

Worldwide, countries are promoting carbon capture and storage (CCS) as mechanisms for diverting carbon from being emitted into the atmosphere (for instance, from industrial smoke stacks and flares). Although the province has signaled an interest in developing CCS technology, it has yet to set out a plan to promote, achieve or regulate this technology. There are numerous existing underground seams throughout the province (left as legacies from conventional gas drilling) and using them for carbon capture and storage may be one solution to climate change in BC. West Coast is researching the safety, social, economic and legal aspects of CCS to determine and propose what a CCS

regulatory regime in BC might look like.

Sustainable forestry through carbon tenure involves offset trading (e.g., a cap and trade systems), a framework that recognizes large protected forest areas as critical in mitigating the effects of climate change (as carbon reservoirs and sinks). West Coast is working for laws and policies to be adopted regarding forests and climate change (e.g., treatment for forest carbon credits in a cap and trade systems) that are ecologically sound, designed to protect forest biodiversity, socially just, and respectful of Aboriginal title and rights.

LUCY PEARSON

*West Coast Environmental Law - Vol. 34:02
– Nov. 10, 2008*

Reinvestment in Forest Sector Needed

BY BEN PARIFF

In recent months as the credit crisis has spread and stock markets tumbled, many economists have suggested that governments should blunt a global recession through increased public funding of infrastructure projects.

Typically taken to mean roads, transit and sewer lines, infrastructures can also be understood more generally as an underlying base or foundation upon which great things are built. In that vein, British Columbia's vast publicly owned forests are a vital infrastructure that help to sustain a healthy environment and, by extension, healthy economy and healthy society.

Yet everywhere, there are signs that our forest foundation is crumbling. The most visible indication is, of course, the devastation wrought by the mountain pine beetle over a swath of land roughly the size of England in BC's interior. In less than a decade, hundreds of millions of pine trees have been killed by the bugs, vaporizing billions of dollars worth of timber.

Unless the provincial government intervenes and increases its reforestation spending, it will almost certainly fail to meet its greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals.

The beetle attack and years of unsustainable logging in response to it now mean that our collective provincial forests account is

badly depleted, signs of which are emerging in provincial government accounts.

In his first quarterly report for this fiscal year, BC Finance Minister Colin Hansen presented "revised" provincial revenues from forestry activities. The figures show a 28 per cent drop from earlier projections, plummeting from \$952 million to \$690 million this fiscal year. Yet even this sharp drop may understate the magnitude of the decline.

This is not encouraging, doubly so in light of our deteriorating economy.

But think how much worse it could be if the province fails to act. With our forest bank account overdrawn, we need an infusion of new deposits; deposits in the form of planted trees.

Much as government leaders around the world recently pumped billions of dollars into banks to prop up a faltering global financial network, Forest Minister Pat Bell needs to boldly commit to revitalizing our publicly owned forests. As a first step in what will likely be a decade or longer process, Bell should commit to a new stand-alone reforestation account, with a minimum infusion of \$100 million per year over the next five years. Once done, he should seek Ottawa's support through matching funds. But federal participation or not, Bell must commit to put some of the hundreds of millions the province

has collected in stumpage fees over the years back to work revitalizing our forest infrastructure.

With timber company fortunes flagging, Bell's leadership is desperately needed. 2009 will be one of the lowest in recent memory for industry tree planting. So low, that we may see commercial tree nurseries uprooting and burying millions of trees because anticipated orders failed to materialize or were canceled. This is bad news for a province that has admirably chosen to make steep cuts to greenhouse gas emissions. Trees store carbon. And with hundreds of millions of them now dead and littering our landscape, we need to grow a lot more of them.

While planting additional trees will not stave off a wrenching transition for forestry-dependent communities, doing nothing ensures even deeper social and economic pain. Aggressive, thoughtful investments in our forest infrastructure will, however, provide an immediate economic stimulus in terms of seasonal jobs, lessen the duration of the "fall down" in logging rates that is upon us, and ensure that today's depleted forest back account is revitalized with deposits that bear interest each and every spring.

BC Commentary a review of provincial social and economic trends

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UPDATE

South Okanagan Lower Similkameen National Park Reserve Feasibility Study

Many BC Nature members have written letters and signed petitions over the past two years in support of establishing a new National Park reserve in the South Okanagan – Lower

Similkameen. Parks Canada continues with their studies and has written that: "The feasibility study has learned a great deal about the land, the people, and the stories of this dry and diverse region. A full assessment of

feasibility will benefit from also including a First Nation Point of view.

The Magazine of BC Nature
– Winter 2008 – Vol. 46, No. 4

Canadian Rivers Network

www.ispeakforcanadianrivers.ca

Briefing Note: January 19, 2009

CANADIAN NAVIGATION RIGHTS AT RISK

The Harper government is poised to erase the historic right of navigation in Canada, a common law right that pre-dates confederation.

In public announcements published in the major media January 12 and 13 – 2009, the Harper government stated its intent to eliminate the Navigable Waters Protection Act (NWPA) as part of its plan to inject billions of dollars into infrastructure programs across the country.

The Harper government says the NWPA is antiquated and they want it out of the way.

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS PICTURE?

1 The common law public right of navigation pre-dates confederation, in fact it dates back to Roman law and is entrenched in the legal systems of virtually modern nations.

2. The public right to navigate waterways in Canada is an important part of our heritage and an integral part of the heritage of Canada's Aboriginal peoples.

3. Navigation rights are one of the pillars of environmental protection on Canadian waterways. If you take away navigation rights, you put Canadian waters (our lakes and rivers and streams) at risk.

WHAT THE GOVERNMENT IS SAYING:

Here's what Transport Minister John Baird says about the NWPA, the law in place to protect the right of Canadians to travel our waterways:

It's a "...huge regulatory burden that can really slow things down," he said.

The government is also talking about "...overhauling the environmental assessment process, which addressed the effect of a project on the surrounding area."

So the Harper government's strategy in responding to Canada's current economic challenge is to:

Save the economy by gutting the environment.

WHAT THE HARPER GOVERNMENT ISN'T TELLING YOU:

As earlier as April of 2007, the people responsible for protecting the right of all Canadians to navigate our waterways, had already crafted NWPA amendments that would eliminate protection of navigation rights on what it calls "minor waters" in Canada.

The historic test for navigable in Canada is, if you can paddle a canoe in it, it's a navigable waterway. There is probably not a more appropriate test in Canadian legal tradition than this 'float a canoe' test in the NWPA. It is distinctly Canadian. It's part of our heritage.

Here's what Transport Canada and the Harper government want to do to that Canadian tradition, a proposed definition for "minor waters" dating to 2007:

Minor Waterways Criteria – Proposed National Criteria:

- less than 60 cm depth at high water mark
- less than 3 m wide at high water mark
- channel slope greater than 2 percent
- sinuosity* (bends in the river) greater than 2
- natural obstacle frequency * greater than 3

Sinuosity Ratio = ratio of the length of the centerline of the stream to length of a straight line connecting the same points along the channel.

Natural Obstacle Frequency = number of natural obstructions along a stream length of 500m (250m upstream, 250m downstream)

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

Voice your opposition to the Harper government's plan to save the economy by gutting the environment.

Tell your municipal, provincial/territorial and federal representatives that you don't want the historic right of navigation diminished in Canada. You want it protected for the future.

Visit our website for information on ways that you and your organization can help.

BC's Carbon Tax

The 2009 BC Budget should commit that the low-income credit will grow in line with carbon tax revenues. Indeed, because low-income families need real options for

taking climate-friendly actions, the credit could be increased much more.

BC Commentary a review of provincial social and economic trends

Volume 12 – Number 1 – Winter 2009

As Canadian ethicist Margaret Sommerville says, "We are unique in that we have two roles with respect to nature: we are both an integral part of it and, because we alone have the power to destroy it, we must be its protector".

(2006 CBC Massey Lectures)

OSPS Supports this Statement:

The BC Ministry of Environment recognizes that "wetlands provide for commercial and recreational use of wetland-dependent fish and shellfish, enhance agricultural productivity, and support a variety of scientific, educational and recreational opportunities."

The government also states that "action is required to help reduce wetland losses and provide for coordinated conservation and management efforts."

When it comes to the protection and management of a large wetland habitat like the Crestons Valley Wildlife Management Area, we hope that the government will live up to its commitments and provide the critical resources necessary to keep this wetland alive.

Show your support for the CVWMA and its wildlife by writing letters to the Honourable Barry Penner, BC Minister of Environment.

The Wetlander – Fall/Winter 2008

What Hikers Want in a Park

Hikers go into the backcountry to be close to natural beauty. Undisturbed wilderness is the ideal; recognizing that our presence in itself is a disturbance in the wilderness, we accept the need for well-built trails to minimize the impact of foot traffic and the need to limit access in some ways. The presence of motorized off-road vehicles is sufficient to destroy the quality of the backcountry experience. Sharing a trail with ATVs or off-road motorcycles is out of the question for hikers, as the noise, dust, and danger of collisions quickly makes those trails unusable by foot traffic. Separate ATV trails create a heavy impact on the environment that also undermines the quality of the hiking experience. Any park area that is "shared" with motorized off-highway vehicles is no longer available for hiking.

These remarks also apply to other human-powered backcountry activities, such as snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, or skiing mountaineering, which are adversely affected by the recreational use of snowmobiles. This point of view is not our alone: according to Alberta Recreation Survey 2004, 64 percent of respondents thought motorized off-road vehicles should not be

allowed in provincial parks, while only 20 percent thought they should be allowed.

Trails should be accessible for all, but not for all purposes. i.e., some purposes are detrimental to other uses e.g., ATV's on trails. Here is a quote for December 2008 issue of the Wild Hands Advocate, the Alberta Wilderness Journal.

The OSPS has shared in the building of 70 kms of the Trans Canada Trail by assisting under the direction of Marilyn Hansen of Summerland. This stretch has included many challenging situations as it travels west alongside the still active tourism train section to Falder and beyond.

Fences, trail building support on the creek-side, several bridges and other needs cost much time and effort in garnering the necessary money, equipment, supplies and workers to do the many jobs. It has taken several years but Marilyn and her teams have made a significant contribution to the Trans Canada Trail.

*Wild Lands Advocate – the Alberta Wilderness Association Journal
December 2008 – Vol. 16 No. 16*

Message from SOSCP Coordinator BIO DIVERSITY – SOUTH OKANAGAN-SIMILKAMEEN

Last week, (Nov 08) The South Okanagan Similkameen Conservation Program Coordinator received formal endorsement in principle from the Regional District of Okanagan Similkameen to initiate a *Regional Biodiversity Conservation Strategy*. The notion for such a strategy was raised in the *South Okanagan Regional Growth Strategy* under the goal to "ensure the health of ecosystems in the South Okanagan to provide water, land, air and biodiversity" through

two policies:

1. to coordinate the management of regional biodiversity conservation; and,
2. to support environmental stewardship strategies.

A Regional Biodiversity Conservation Strategy will be an important policy framework that sets priorities for identifying, preserving and restoring natural areas. It is the landscape view of the region and a "road map" for consideration of conservation and management options for entire ecosystems and watershed that go beyond municipal or rural boundaries. These strategies become an important tool for local governments as they incorporate habitat information and sustainability considerations into strate-

gic plans, community and neighbourhood plans, park and recreation master plans, and development bylaws.

The SOSCP is proud to be taking a leadership role with respect to this strategy.

*Bryn White
Program Coordinator*

The presentations made at the AGM December 9/08 were all excellent. Congratulations too, on the speakers for the program.

South Okanagan-Similkameen Conservation Program Newsletter – November 2008

Growing Concerns Regarding the Care of Watersheds

Growing concerns regarding the care of watersheds has resulted in letters regarding the Draft Trail Strategy for BC being developed by the Ministry of Tourism Culture & the Arts. Questions have arisen about the lack of any mention of water, and waterways, specifically mentioning ATV activity and the need for licensing for identification purposes.

INTERIOR HEALTH – JAN. 22, 2009 Re: Draft Trail Strategy for BC – Comments from Interior Health

This strategy proposes to facilitate increased recreational use of the backcountry but gives little consideration to the risks to drinking water posed by those activities. I recognize that this plan has broader implications for public health than just protection of drinking water; however, the lack of consideration for drinking water source protection is troubling given that a letter was sent by the Southern Interior Regional Drinking Water Team to MOTCA this past summer highlighting concerns with off-road motorized vehicle use.

Interior Health's Health Protection Program has identified the following critical points for the management of potential threats to drinking water from recreational activities:

- trail crossings of streams
- motorized vehicles in wet areas (aka "Mud Bogs")
- trails located in erodible soils with high sediment delivery potential
- staging areas within close proximity of surface water, particularly those without toilet facilities
- cattle and wildlife to access to sensitive areas

Concentrated recreation tends to be better regulated than dispersed recreation. As such, increased organization of trail networks is likely the best way forward in dealing with impacts from off-road motorized vehicles. MOTCA's initiative is an opportunity to help address the current gaps regarding drinking water protection and stimulate the development of some

province wide standard practices to ensure drinking water sources are adequately protected. Briefly these are:

- lack of time re/ spring release program or to review and comment on the plan
- no representation of drinking in recreational water interest groups
- no mention for planning and regulating of watersheds
- effect of trails on watersheds not included re/ water, only of risk and liabilities of trail use
- appropriate management practices should be included in discussions
- include BC Action Plan for Safe Drinking Water when dealing with all source to top management
- no mention of physical environment re/ trails that cross community watersheds
- add the principle: Trail Systems in multi-use watersheds will be designed and managed to prevent negative impacts on water quality, particularly water used as community drinking water sources
- need for updating provincial legislation such as Motor Vehicle (All Terrain) Act, without means to identify non-compliant users, enforcement of legislation is severely impeded

Interior Health Drinking Water Officers and water suppliers in the Interior Health region have identified concerns regarding the proposed trail strategy. The following are some of their specific comments:

A number of our Drinking Water Officers and water suppliers became aware of the feedback sessions held in their area only after they had occurred. There is also concern that the proposed spring release is ambitious and that the process seems rushed. The result is a general sentiment that drinking water stakeholders have not had adequate opportunity to review the

plan and provide sufficient input.

The Health Protection Program has historically engaged in collaborative processes to better manage risks from recreational activity in water supply areas. However, the steering committee for this plan does not appear to have representation from any drinking water or recreational water interest (either government or public). A collaborative partnership representing all interests would serve to improve buy-in.

The picture of the ATV driving through a creek idealizes an activity which has detrimental effects on ecosystem health and water quality.

Nowhere in the plan is the Drinking Water Protection Act of BC Action Plan on Safe Drinking Water discussed as key considerations for planning or regulating recreation in watersheds. In these documents the Province of British Columbia places a clear responsibility on everyone to ensure that their actions do not adversely impact drinking water safety.

The Trail Strategy speaks to liabilities related to the use of trails but does not acknowledge the risk and liabilities associated with impacts to drinking water quality. In comparison, when developing source protection plans water suppliers consider risks from all recreational uses in their water sources and ensure users are well informed of the risk and liability of their actions.

Trail planning should include discussions of appropriate management practices with affected water suppliers and Drinking Water Officers prior to implementation as part of on-going stakeholder engagement.

Continued on next page...



The OSPS has and continues to be in favour of ATV/OHV licensing and insurance as well as having controlled areas for some users.

...continued from previous page

All large water suppliers in the Interior Health region have been tasked with conducting source water assessments and developing protection plans through conditions on their current operating permit. In accordance with a source-to-tap management approach to protecting drinking water (as prescribed under the BC Action Plan for Safe Drinking Water), all provincial land-use agencies will have access to these documents. These plans should be considered as part of stakeholder engagement with water suppliers and health authorities in developing trail networks in individual watersheds.

The document thoroughly outlines the benefits of the plan but is limited in discussion of potential risks. Economic and social benefits are considered, but consideration

of the impact on the physical environment is conspicuously absent. For example, nowhere is it recognized that trails may be traversing community watersheds.

Trail systems in multi-use watersheds will be designed and managed to prevent negative impacts on water quality, particularly water used as community drinking water sources.

There is no discussion of the need for updating of provincial legislation such as the Motor Vehicle (All Terrain) Act. For example, there are currently no means to identify non-compliant recreational users through license plates or decals; this severely impedes efforts to enforce legislation.

Prior to moving forward with this strat-

egy I am requesting that action be taken to ensure the initiative better accounts for drinking water protection. I strongly encourage you to engage in further consultation with drinking water stakeholders including health agencies and water suppliers to identify key issues and possible solutions.

If you require any further information, please feel free to contact J Ivor Norlin, source Protection Officer with Interior Health, at 250-833-4100 or jivor.norlin@InteriorHealth.ca for more information on our agency or drinking water safety, please visit our website at www.interiorhealth.ca/health-and-safety.aspx

DR. ANDREW LARDER
Senior Medical Health Officer

Proposed Changes to the Navigable Waters Protection Act

The canoeing and kayaking communities recently expressed concerns about proposed changes to Canada's Navigable Waters Protection Act (NWPA). ORC contacted Transport Canada to get a clearer understanding of the possible impact of those changes. The following is a summary of the information we were given.

After receiving submissions and testimony from agencies of all levels of government the Government of Canada's Standing Committee on Transportation, Infrastructure & Communities (SCOTIC) issued a report on June 12, 2008, which contained eight recommendations for amending the NWPA. These included amendments to the definitions of "minor waters" and "work", for ensuring that the trigger mechanisms in related statutes for environmental assessment and fishery habitat assessment will not be eliminated or jeopardized, and for other housekeeping amendments. If implemented the amendments would strengthen the Government of Canada's ability to protect safe navigation and manage the construction of works in navigable waters.

The Transport Canada spokesman emphasized that the public right of navigation is a common law right which exists regardless of the NWPA and the amendments would not restrict canoeing or kayaking activities. Furthermore the proposed amendments would in no way circumvent the existing environmental triggers in the NWPA. Full details of the proposed amendments can be found on the Government of Canada website.

Please contact the ORC office if you continue to have concerns about the amendments.

J. MCCALL
The Outdoor Report
Summer 2008 Vol. 20 No.2

Trans Canada Trail: British Columbia

BY BRUCE OBE

Published in April 2008 by Whitecap Books, North Vancouver.

372 pages, with numerous colour maps and photos. Soft cover suitable for use on the trail.

This guide to the Trans Canada Trail in BC will be an essential reference for all outdoor recreationists planning to use part of all of the Trans Canada Trail within the Province. It can also give a comprehensive view of the Trans Canada Trail to those armchair recreationists who dream of doing the entire Trans Canada Trail some day but who may take a while before they get around to the more challenging parts of it!

The book is a compact but very detailed field guide to the Trans Canada Trail. The mainland portion of the trail is broken down into 17 sections each with a detailed description. The Vancouver Island sections are also included. The description of each section begins with an overview, a summary of the conditions, cautions and highlights, as well as a list of the local points of interest. The guide then includes a kilometer by kilometer description of the trail referenced to the map which accompanies each direction. There are many attractive photos.

Bruce Obee, the author, is an outdoor enthusiast and a contributing editor to British Columbia Magazine and he has also provided many articles and photographs for National Geographic, Canadian Geographic and Travel & Leisure magazines. He lives on the Saanich Peninsula and, with a companion; he cycled the entire length of the Trans Canada Trail across seven mountain ranges in southern BC to complete his research for the guide.

He discovered that the Trans Canada Trail

is essentially a route, consisting of a track through a forest or across a farm, a multi-lane highway, a downtown street, a logging road, an abandoned railway, a dyke, and it sometimes even went on ferries!

The Trans Canada Trail's southern route stretches 1,758 km all of which can be cycled or hiked. About 670 km consists of abandoned rail-beds, about 300 km is gravel road, about 520 km follows existing highways and other paved roads and 45 km follows dykes. The remaining 220 km is what can truly be described as a trail. Its route meanders and if a direct route were to be followed the distance would only be about half as far.

There are also over 1,000 km of Trans Canada Trail in Northern BC which will eventually be linked into the network.

The majority of users are cyclists but the trail is also used by hikers and equestrians. In the winter the users are cross country skiers, snowshoers and, in some places in the Interior of the Province, snowmobiles. In places where de-activated logging roads have been used the water bars have been modified to enable cyclists to cross them.

The author make the point that the Trans Canada Trail is neither designed nor constructed for motorized use and he states that use of the trail by ATVs is either discouraged or prohibited, though he also acknowledges that some sections near Princeton are both maintained and used by ATV riders. He comments on the extensive damage which has occurred, particularly on recently constructed sections of the Trans Canada Trail.

I particularly enjoyed the trail trivia which was listed at the beginning of each section, the clear maps and the complete lists of points of interest attached to each section.

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