

Forest Reserve Multi – Use Dialogue

*A one-year information gathering process to identify issues of multi-use
within the Ghost River Forest Reserve*

**Submitted to: The Minister of Environment
Submitted by: M.D. of Bighorn No. 8
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Executive Summary

The purpose of this project is to draw attention to the widespread ecosystem degradation that is being caused by random camping and off-highway vehicle use in the Ghost River Forest Reserve. Over a 12-month period the M.D. of Bighorn through a steering committee has worked hard to increase our understanding of this critical issue.

The main focus of this study has been to initiate dialogue. The Steering Committee has met with user groups and other stakeholders, including: representatives from the oil/gas and logging industries, ranching, tourism, camp operators, organized recreational groups, random users, and area residents. Additionally, there has been representation from Federal and Provincial agencies, plus a variety of expert observers who have information relating to the whole region. In total through personal interviews and informal questionnaires more than 50 individuals representing the above stakeholder groups have been heard. What has resulted is a collective voice that clearly identified four main issues:

- The Forest Reserve is desirable for its wilderness, its beauty, abundance of natural resources and its varied outdoor pursuit opportunities.
- Use of the Forest Reserve has grown exponentially over the past 8-10 years
- This growth has created a critical situation for all users and the Forest Reserve itself.
- There is an **urgent** need to do something to preserve the Forest Reserve.

Based on these identified issues and considering the input from the participants in this dialogue, the M.D. of Bighorn has concluded that jurisdictional confusion needs to be resolved. This can be achieved by the development of new regulations, policies and procedures as part of an overall multiple use management plan that will require ongoing monitoring, enforcement and education.

What the Steering Committee heard throughout this dialogue process was that action to prevent further environmental damage must be taken. The M.D. of Bighorn would recommend to the Province of Alberta the following:

The M.D. of Bighorn recommends that a core group of stakeholders begin a process for developing a strategic plan. This process should be inclusive and its leadership should be a partnership between the government bodies that have jurisdiction: the Province and the M.D. of Bighorn.

Preface

This is the time for clear and wise direction in the planning and management of the natural heritage Albertans treasure. Thus, an important opportunity exists with the multiple use dialogue on the Ghost River Forest Reserve. Given the dramatic increase of use in the area, the issue is urgent. It is also complex. Sustainability of the region requires informed decision-making based on leading-edge information and management systems, shared responsibility between departments and levels of government, and broad public involvement. The Forest Reserve Multi-Use Dialogue (FRMUD) has undertaken a vital multi-stakeholder information gathering exercise that sets this process into motion.

The government of Alberta has prudently recognized the need to protect and maintain the high quality of land, water and air for the health, enjoyment and prosperity of all Albertans.¹ The Province has also recognized the need to provide natural resources and ecosystems for present and future generations.² These resources are the source of our vibrant economy and high quality of life. They are the natural capital of our province and require a shared vision and commitment to sustainable resource and environmental management.

Many individuals and user groups have respectfully utilized and enjoyed the Waiparous Creek/Ghost River watershed for years. Some are outfitters; others are youth and educational groups, ranchers, private citizens and various recreational users, also Aboriginal people, and the non-human creatures whose homes are in these beautiful ecosystems. FRMUD research indicates a generally shared consensus that the Forest Reserve is desirable chiefly for its wilderness character that recent use of the area has increased exponentially, that the situation is critical and action is urgently needed. Health and safety of the watershed and its people are an issue.

The ecological health and long-term economic viability of the region raises some important and challenging questions. A comprehensive planning process is needed, one that can foster a diversity of inputs towards generating a long-term plan for the sustainability of these precious places. In the absence of such a plan and its implementation, we are rapidly losing this natural heritage area whilst rendering it less commercially sustainable.

What would such a plan look like? It would take into account the diversity of viewpoints that reflect the multiple uses of the area and integrate them within an ecosystem-based management framework. Here, the bottom line of sustainability is preservation of

¹ See "Goals, Strategies and Key Activities", *Budget 99, the Right Balance: Fiscal and Business Plan Documents, Environmental Protection 1999-2002 Business Plan*. See also the Premier's Forward in *Alberta's Commitment to Sustainable Resource and Environmental Management*, March 1999; Pub. No. 1/732

² Ibid

watershed integrity. This does not diminish the economic prosperity of the region; on the contrary, such an approach is the key to long-term economic and ecological sustainability. Some activities may have to be curtailed, others will need to be limited or restricted to specific zones, there will likely have to be reclamation of certain areas. This will require enforcement of the laws already in place, the writing of new legislation and ongoing policy development. Such efforts also necessitate intergovernmental partnership, especially between Provincial and Municipal government, as well as collaboration with industry, scientific and other user groups.

All these things are possible with the right political sponsorship, fiscal arrangements, and infrastructure support. We need to start with the big picture, rely on good science, foster a diversity of input and develop a plan that applies to the smallest scale. There is room for the multiple uses of such areas. However, none can last unless we take swift action to manage human activities in ways that preserve watershed integrity. Long-term ecological and economic sustainability of the region will require ongoing regulation, monitoring, enforcement and education. With a sense of shared responsibility and vision sustainability in the spirit of cooperation, we can achieve this goal.

Dr. David Lertzman
Visiting Scholar in Corporate Environmental Management
Faculty of Management
University of Calgary, December, 1999

Introduction

For many years there has been growing concerns over the use of the Ghost River Forest Reserve by recreational off-highway vehicles and random campers. These concerns have centered on destruction of the environment, deterioration of the watershed, unregulated activity, fire risks and personal safety. While these concerns have been mounting, there is a feeling that no one is listening and nothing will be done.

The Municipal District of Bighorn finds itself in a very unique situation. While this area falls within its municipal boundaries, it is crown land and therefore Bighorn's direct control is minimal. However, the activity in this area is having a great effect on our residents and ratepayers. It has the potential to have very adverse ecosystem and watershed impacts in the long-term. Bighorn has lived with mounting pressures to do something about this growing problem ever since the Forest Reserve was brought into its jurisdiction in 1992.

In 1998 the M.D. of Bighorn Council resolved that some action should occur on this problem before it was too late. As a first step it was felt to be important to get a comprehensive and common understanding of the detailed nature and scope of the problem. Accordingly, the Forest Reserve Multi-Use Dialogue (FRMUD) Committee was created: a cross section of local residents and ratepayers as well as local elected officials. This group of people initiated a public dialogue process. The objective of this process was to:

- Enhance the dialogue relating to forest access and use by the multi-users and increase public awareness of the issues.
- Increase the body of knowledge of surrounding forest use and access and the attendant uses.
- Assist the land managers from the Alberta Government with the process of initiating an Access Management Plan and a Forest Use Plan and/or other programs, which are recommended by the process.
- Engage the public in the issues and explore opportunities to solve them.
- Increase the spirit of cooperation between the M.D. of Bighorn and our Provincial, Federal and Municipal neighbours who share in the effects of this issue.

The report that follows outlines the steps taken, describes the information gathered and concludes with some specific recommendations.

Background

The Ghost River Forest Reserve is located approximately 50km northwest of Calgary. It encompasses approximately 2900km² and includes most of the Ghost River drainage basin and Burnt Timber and Fallentimber creeks, which are part of the Red Deer River drainage basin. Its boundaries as described in the Integrated Resource Plan are as follows:

NORTH – northern divide of the Burnt Timber/Fallentimber Watershed Basin, and the boundary between Townships 30 and 31, Range 5 (W5M).

SOUTH – Bow Corridor and the northern boundary of the Forest Reserve south of the Stoney Indian Reserve.

EAST – boundary between Ranges 4 and 5, W5M, north of the Stoney Indian Reserve and the M.D. 8 boundary south of the Stoney Indian Reserve.

WEST – Banff National Park.

For most of the period since its creation the Forest Reserve was managed by a Forest Ranger and support staff working from a ranger's station within the Reserve. This approach to management had the Ranger involved in not only management activities but also all manner of enforcement and stewardship by virtue of his proximity and intimate knowledge of the area and the comings and goings of its people. This system worked well and the Forest Ranger was respected as an authority even in situations where he was called upon to exercise authority outside his realm.

In 1988 the Forestry Department developed a Sub-Regional Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) for the Ghost River Forest Reserve. This document outlined in broad terms how various uses and resources within this area would be managed. It also set out guidelines and objectives for the development of policy related to use and resource management. Today this plan is still the main planning document for this area. Included in the plan was the objective to develop an Access Management Plan to deal specifically with access created by industry and the management of recreational use. Subsequent to the adoption of the IRP, Forestry conducted a few public forums and published a couple of annual reports updating progress. While all other uses have been carefully regulated and continue to be monitored, the access management objective was never completed.

In 1992 a number of things happened. The government began the process of downsizing departments as part of a new fiscal management plan. Responsibilities for management within the Forest Reserve were divided between two agencies of Alberta Environmental Protection: Forestry, and Fish and Wildlife. As well, the Ghost River Forest Reserve was added to the municipal boundaries of the Municipal District of Bighorn increasing responsibilities such as roads and emergency service.

This downsizing and change in management approach had three direct effects on this area.

- Between 1992 and 1998 staffing decreased from 28 full time seasonal personnel to none with the closing of the ranger station and the result being removal of a physical presence at the ranger station and a gross reduction in the governmental presence in the area.
- While management of protected areas, fish and wildlife habitat, and commercial industry were still managed and monitored, recreational use was not.
- The M.D. of Bighorn increasingly heard concerns and reports of incidence in the Forest Reserve, which was now part of its jurisdiction.

In 1998, the Municipal District of Bighorn Council initiated the FRMUD process in an effort to take action that would lead to an access management policy.

Research Methods

As set out in its objectives, its intent of FRMUD is to enhance dialogue, create understanding of the issues, engage the public in the issues and explore opportunities for solutions. The data collected by FRMUD is not so much a scientific research project as it is a tool of information gathering to foster dialogue.

As a dialogue process the Steering Committee adopted a three-part methodology as the best means of collecting stakeholder concerns and identifying the issues:

1. Visits to the Disturbed Areas

On May 22, 1999 the Steering Committee conducted a formal helicopter tour of the area with Forestry staff. Bighorn staff conducted an on ground tour during the same time period as the helicopter tour. Subsequent ground tours were conducted at various times throughout the process.

2. Engaging the Public and Stakeholders

In-person interviews and roundtable discussions were conducted with more than 50 representatives from the following stakeholder groups: government agencies, industry, leaseholders, outfitters, environmental groups, camp operators, user groups, and area residents. In all cases the steering committee met with the interviewees and engaged in open-ended discussion of the issues. Detailed minutes were taken at all interviews. Individuals were asked to share their perception of the issues and to suggest ways of solving the issues. This exploration led to many creative suggestions as outlined in the findings and provides base information for the next stage of this process.

3. Questionnaires/Surveys

Questionnaires were distributed to each stakeholder group in an effort to reach as many affected parties as possible. Questionnaires were distributed to those interviewed, area residents and others unable to attend the interview sessions. 100 questionnaires were handed-out by Bighorn and 28 were returned. Questionnaire research was not conducted on the basis of systematic statistical methods, rather the intent was to supplement information gathered in the interviews. Questionnaire samples and full responses are found in Appendix B and C.

Findings



Meadows are being destroyed

As outlined in the methodology, the Steering Committee adopted a three-step approach to the Forest Reserve and its issues. In the first step the Committee familiarized itself with the area and the impacts. In the second step, the Steering Committee engaged in open-ended discussion with representatives from all identified stakeholder groups. The third step involved the distribution of User and Stakeholder questionnaires as a means of further supplementing previously gathered information.

Step 1: Observation/Familiarization – Helicopter and Ground Tours

During the helicopter tour and on-ground tours the following observations were made:

- There was widespread random camping activity throughout the Forest Reserve. This included many areas bordering on the Wilderness Area and Banff National Park.
- Scarring from OHV use was visible both in the lower and higher elevations. It was

estimated that some of this scarring was above the recommended elevation limit for activity.

- Large concentrations of random camping were observed in the greater Ghost watershed.
- Upon landing at Johnson Meadow, a location of a ‘mud pit’, the group was immediately surrounded by more than 15 vehicles and these individuals began to ‘hot dog’ through the mud pit.
- Large parties with as many as 300 vehicles were observed throughout the region.



Hot Dogging by all types of 4 wheel drive vehicles is occurring

While the Steering Committee was in the air, a staff person toured the area in a municipal vehicle. Over a two-hour period, the following observations were made:

- *From the hills you cross just north of the cadet campsite you can tell where the road extends north through the valleys by the clouds of dust drifting into the air.*
- *In the gravel pit located south of the old airstrip there is the sense of people as spectators...people set up around the outside edge watching what is going on. Quads and motor cross bikes drive through the area. A vehicle manufacturer had brought in a 5 ton truck and is having demo days. People are camped in the bushes all around the pit. There are several hundred people in this area.*
- *Lots of signs posted showing people where to find various parties.*
- *Random camping is extreme. Virtually anywhere and everywhere. The criterion seems to be a level area, easy access from the road, and trees for shelter.*

After the Victoria Day weekend and throughout the summer separate committee members made on ground forays into the Ghost Forest Reserve. These were their findings:

- Immediately after the Victoria Day Weekend a short hike along the Ghost River found more than 20 smoldering fires.
- Again after the Victoria Day Weekend a group of area residents went into the Forest Reserve to conduct a cleanup. Within a three-hour period more than eight 1/2ton truckloads of garbage were cleared. This merely scratched the surface. Much more debris remained.
- Students from the Enviros Wilderness Camp spent days cleaning up.



With a lack of facilities in the Forest Reserve, scenes like this impromptu toilet are common



Area residents went into the Forest Reserve throughout the

- Where a grad party had taken place adjacent to an oil and gas well site, the area was littered with debris, excess food, chopped down trees. Used toilet paper and human excrement was found throughout the Forest Reserve. The Steering Committee's observations were captured both on video and photographically.

Step 2: Results of Multi-Stakeholder Interviews

The second step of this process entailed engaging stakeholders in the dialogue to discuss concerns, identify issues and explore potential solutions. The Steering Committee interviewed and engaged in open discussion with more than 50 individuals representing the following stakeholder groups: government agencies, industry, leaseholders, outfitters, environmental groups, camp operators, user groups, and area residents. These interviews resulted in a number of findings and formed the backbone of the collective voice that this dialogue process hoped to achieve. While a chart was developed to provide a quick reference, the following is a summary:

- Many area residents feel their safety and wellbeing are in jeopardy. They complain of increased trespass, ignoring of fire bans, degradation of the forest reserve, reckless driving on access roads and blatant lawless activity.
- Allotment holders are having grazing areas ruined and garbage left behind is endangering livestock.
- Outfitters are experiencing a decline in repeat clientele as a result of the lost wilderness experience.
- Camp operators are also concerned: facilities are being vandalized and there is a high incidence of theft.
- Recreational users worry that they will ultimately be excluded from the area. Many are concerned about the activity that is taking place by the ‘irresponsible’ Off-Highway Vehicle users, random campers and the negative image surrounding their sport.
- Established environmental groups consider the need for intervention as critical. While all agreed that there was insufficient baseline data specific to the Forest Reserve, enough science on similar activities and their impacts existed to extend a ‘best professional judgement’ to take steps and to inform decision making. Action should not be postponed while studies are conducted.
- The Provincial Government recognizes the need to manage this area and its resources but points to the complexity of the issues. Ministry officials recognize that any solution must reflect the diverse interests of the area and consider the needs of all Albertans.

What follows are the detailed interview notes from each stakeholder group.

Alberta Environment

Background:

The Forest Reserve is Crown land owned by the Province and they have a constitutional obligation to manage the area and its resources. Alberta Environment is the governing ministry for Crown Land including that found in the Forest Reserve. Different aspects of management and regulation are divided between the Forest Service and Natural Resource Service. The Forest Service is involved with management of the land surface activities including timber, oil and gas, domestic livestock, recreation and fire.

The Natural Resource Service has the mandate to manage protected areas and is responsible for such things as wildlife management on all Crown Land. An Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) is the land planning document for these areas. The Ghost River IRP was completed in 1988. Over the past three years the Alberta Government has put together a policy framework in their business planning and this involves the three concepts of people, prosperity and preservation.

Information Relevant To The Forest Reserve:

a) Forest Service

- The Forest Reserve is crown land for all Albertans. This is a guiding philosophy in making management decisions.
- The Forest Reserve is governed by two major pieces of legislation:
 - Public Lands Act
 - Forest Act
- The value in a process such as this is the opportunity to scope out issues.
- Elimination of certain activities in Kananaskis Country resulted in funds for a trail system in the Ghost area.
- In the past Forestry has a presence and maintained the trail system. In 1994 Recreation and Parks assumed authority for campgrounds and Lands and Forests lost their recreation presence.
- In 1998 the last Forest Service Foreman left and the formal program in the Ghost area ceased.
- Control of access can be done through a Forest Land Use Zone (FLUZ) but there is no FLUZ in the Ghost at present. Access is wide open.
- There are currently no resources committed to do an Access Management Plan.
- *Alberta's Commitment to Sustainable Resource and Environmental Management* is a recently released document that will guide Alberta Environmental Protection in the Future.
- This area is an important watershed area and via the Bow River to the water supply of three Prairie Provinces.
- Sawmills are required to produce a rolling five-year plan and a detailed annual operation plan.
- There are ground rules setting out how watercourses are to be protected, what seasons it can be used, how water crossings are to be accomplished, etc.
- There is no regulatory structure for recreation as there is for oil and gas and forestry.

- Various point sources are monitored but the Land Use Regulations are used to manage the watershed as a whole.
- There are two water quality sample points in this area; Cochrane and Carsland.
- More sampling would be required to determine if any deterioration had occurred as a direct result of activity in the Ghost/Waiparous area.
- In 1997 there was some local sampling but nothing is scheduled for 1999.
- Human health issues tend to be addressed more quickly and these are typically associated with urban settings.

Conclusion:

The Forest Reserve is regulated and managed through The Integrated Resource Plan and various policy documents. While commercial use is regulated, there are no regulatory controls in place for recreation. There is no Access Management Plan for the Ghost Forest Reserve and currently no resources allocated to developing such a document. This Forest Reserve is an important watershed area but there are not recent samplings to determine if multi-use is having an impact on water quality.

b) Natural Resources Service (NRS)

Steve Donelon

- Natural Resource Service is responsible for the Ghost Wilderness Protected Area and campground facilities in the Ghost Forest Reserve.
- They are also responsible for fisheries, wildlife and water resources throughout the Reserve.
- In regards to water resources their responsibility lies with water withdrawal and bed and shore activities. Watershed management is the responsibility of the Forest Service.
- NRS has Conservation Officers that are responsible for enforcement of regulations. Most of their officers are also Special Constables authorized to perform checkstops and issue tickets for liquor offences, OHV infractions, etc. Their main focus is fish and wildlife related infractions such as poaching.
- Kananaskis Country falls under the jurisdiction of NRS.
- It is estimated that as much as 80% of OHV use shifted to the Ghost Reserve from Kananaskis after the establishment of the park.
- While Kananaskis Country falls under the same legislation as the Forest Reserve, there are specific policies concerning recreational use in Kananaskis and not in the Forest Reserve.
- OHV and random camping restrictions have worked in Kananaskis.
- In Kananaskis Country the philosophy has changed. While once their role was as recreation managers it is now more as ecosystem managers.
- Good wildlife and environmental information will be necessary to show the impacts of high usage.
- It is important to focus on the issues and not on one user group.

Jon Jorgensen

- Fish and Wildlife does not have a lot of information on wildlife in the area except sheep.
- The Ghost typically has Zone One areas that are critical wildlife areas on the high ground and Zone Two areas that are low lands with willow etc., which are good for moose.
- It is important to protect Zones One and Two.
- There are some trails that go through the same habitat along creeks, etc., and the hunting regimes must be done carefully to preserve the animals.
- There are no general hunting seasons in the area and there are only a low number of permits issued each year.
- It is difficult to determine which of the species are stressed, as there is little information and no trend information on any species other than sheep.
- Best available information for management purposes is hunter.
- Difficult to know if there is degraded habitat because the data is poor.
- Logging generally does not have an extremely adverse effect on habitat if it is managed properly.
- Major problem with logging and other commercial activities is that it opens up areas for other human uses.
- Numbers of people in an area has an impact on animals but a major study would need to be done to determine how many vehicles in a riparian area would cause moose to move away. Habitat alienation can result of too many people.

Brian Lajeunesse

- Studies done in 1970 and again in early 1990's showed a major change of species composition with west coast cut throat and bull trout replacing brook trout and in the 1990's these fish were only in two drainages. Over harvesting seems to be the issue and this can be controlled through regulations.
- Any river use in the spring (such as driving through creeks) from mid-May to mid-June will have a detrimental effect on the spawn. Any silt which gets mixed in plugs off the gravel and reduces the oxygen available to the eggs.
- The largest cause of this siltation is the use of OHVs crossing or running up and down creeks.
- Over angling can be controlled but the silt issue is more difficult.
- There is no mechanism to stop access to the area.
- In other areas of managed OHV use, putting in pit-run or boat ramps to harden the creek bottoms has minimized this impact.
- In agricultural use areas, parts of creeks have been fenced off and livestock provided with hardened watering places.
- OHV use in and of itself is not bad but it needs to be dealt with in relation to unmanaged creek crossings.
- OHV users may not have an appreciation of the siltation issue and the fish issue. More education could in part assist in this issue.

Conclusion:

Excess human usage can have an adverse effect on wildlife and cause habitat alienation. Users need good data on the area to be convinced of the need for their own personal change in behaviour. Protection of Zones One and Two is critical. Good data on wildlife and human use impacts is not available for this area. It is important to focus on the issues.

Alberta United Recreationalists

Background:

The Alberta United Recreationlists(UR) was formed a few years ago to work with the governing agencies and volunteers with regard to off-highway vehicle use in the Ghost Reserve area. The UR is an umbrella group for about ten-fifteen different clubs that are family oriented. There are approximately 400 members. The UR sells stickers for \$20 and the money is used to help fund trail conservation. These stickers are available from most OHV dealers in Calgary. Their aim is to raise one million dollars and use the annual interest to do ongoing trail maintenance. The UR has begun a campaign to solicit corporate sponsorship. Part of the UR mandate is to educate people in an effort to help them to understand why regulations may be required. The UR sees OHV use as a valid type of recreation that introduces people to the sights in the area and to recreational opportunities.

Information Relevant To The Forest Reserve:

- Membership does not condone ripping and tearing type of behaviour.
- When there was a greater presence by Fish and Wildlife and other rangers there was less abuse. All this manpower is pretty well gone and there does not seem to be much of a government presence in the area now.
- There are thousands of users in the area and perhaps ten thousand arrive on the May long weekend.
- Recent threats or rumours of the closing of Maclean Creek has brought a number of off-highway vehicle users on side in regard to seeing the need for some kind of regulation.
- UR would like to see a management plan and are very willing to compromise on the issues in order to ensure continued use by OHVs in the area.
- Multiple uses can be a big problem even within the recreational community and there are many diverse groups.
- Single users are difficult to control and the UR is struggling to get their interest.
- The more threats there are to regulate the area, the more people will come on side.
- There are many renegades in the area, for example, when the area around Margart Lake was fenced in order to protect the habitat, signs were ripped down in about a month.
- There are fewer uniforms in the area and there are more rampages.
- The Mockingbird area is out of control, as is the gravel pit area.
- The new campground operator is attracting more users to the designated campgrounds. In the past a lack of maintenance and friendly staff chased people out of the campground and into random camping areas.
- The UR takes outhouses to the hinterland when they have a rally.
- The government in the past proposed prohibiting random camping within 1.5km of any designated campsite but the UR feels that there are not enough facilities to accommodate the large numbers of users on a long weekend. This type of prohibition would just drive people further into the bush.

- Seismic exploration has caused damage to a number of designated trails such as the road to Pretty Rock.
- In the past UR worked with Fish and Wildlife but this has tapered off due to lack of staff.
- The UR does not want see a K-Country type of area with large resorts and they do not want to be left out of future use of the area.
- A system similar to Ontario where snowmobilers pay \$80 to use maintained trails would be appropriate.
- Even if 9,000 people were to get upset due to regulating activity, it should not derail plans to maintain the area for reasonable future use.
- In regards to OHV use ruining grazing meadows, most recreational users do not understand this issue. Education is needed.
- The urgency to get something done on a scale of one to five is a six plus. Something must be done within the next year.
- While the trail system was completed in 1982, no overall plan on how to use or care for the trails is in place.
- There is a lot of wildlife in the area and some seasonal trail closure would be a good idea.
- More regulation and enforcement is needed.
- The UR is continually attracting new members to their meetings who are interested in seeing a management plan developed to allow them continued use of the area.

Conclusion:

The UR is concerned with developing appropriate management and enforcement plans to preserve the area and ensure accessibility for OHV users in the future. The need for these plans is critical.

Alberta Wilderness Association (AWA)

Background:

The AWA is a non-profit Society and Registered Charity. The society's two paid staff are complemented by a large number of volunteers. The primary focus of this organization is issues associated with protected areas in Alberta. The majority of this work is with Alberta Public Lands and approximately 70% of Alberta is public land.

Information Relevant To The Forest Reserve:

- Historical Context: the Dominion Government of Canada in 1911 established The Forest Reserve.
- In a 1927 brochure, the Bow River National Forest stated the following: "These forests are areas of non-agricultural land established primarily for the protection and reproduction of timber, for the protection of watersheds, and for the maintenance of conditions favorable to a continuous water supply and for the protection of animals, birds, and fish. The scenic and recreational values of these forests are now deemed to be resources of major importance."
- In 1930 the Alberta Government was given control of these resources under the Natural Resources Transfer Act and the Eastern Rockies Conservation Board was established.
- The AWA has a concern that Forestry does not have watershed management people on staff anymore and the value of the watershed may be diminished from lack of supervision.
- Alberta does not have an old growth forest policy and these forests are suffering from cumulative impacts.
- Logging roads need to be more completely reclaimed.
- There needs to be less fragmentation of habitat that is being caused by too many trails and their excessive use.
- Usable habitat in the Ghost seems to have been greatly reduced as a result of over use.
- A program to identify habitat that is usable should be done, and restrictions on vehicle use would help to maintain it for wildlife.
- The Forest Land Use Zones (FLUZ) can be used to regulate usage such as where vehicles can and cannot go, etc. A number of these zones have not been established in the Forest Reserve.
- The core-protected areas in the Ghost Forest Reserve area should be designated under the Protected Areas Act to protect watershed and to reduce damage by recreational and commercial users.
- The Provincial Government needs to evaluate the resource and put a strategy in place.
- This management and planning should not be downloaded onto the Municipality.
- Alberta has an Energy and Utilities Board and a Natural Resources Conservation Board but these two bodies only look at specific projects.
- On a scale of one to five with regard to urgency, the AWA feels this area is a six and that existing information should be taken and applied to the area.

Conclusion:

The need to provide protection and management is critical in the Ghost Forest Reserve. Good habitat is being fragmented and destroyed by over use and lack of control. All aspects of the resource use should be taken into consideration and protection policies put in place. Enough information currently exists to begin this process immediately.

Allotment Holders

Background:

Allotment holders have grazed cattle and horses in the Forest Reserve for more than 50 years. Some allotments go back three generations. Allotment holders were invited to participate both in a round table discussion and through responding to a questionnaire.

Information Relevant To The Forest Reserve:

- One allotment holder reported that nearly 1/3 of their allotment is unusable due to damage. Compounding the damage to grazing areas is the sheer number of people in the area and garbage left behind.
- Garbage left in Forest Reserve presents a real hazard for livestock and wildlife.
- The Forest Reserve is now the ghetto for the recreational industry.
- One quick count on a Sunday involved one hundred and sixty 4x4's going west.
- Forestry and Oil and Gas operations are well regulated but there are none for recreation.
- While these commercial industries reclaim roads, dirt bikes and other OHVs just open it up again.
- Cattle chasing and attempts to herd have been observed.
- Instead of 'multi-use', it should be 'Restricted Compatible Use.'
- Perhaps multi-abuse would be more appropriate than multi-use.
- There are nine meadows in the Fallen Timber area ruined by motorbikes, etc. tearing up the vegetation.
- Allotment holders do not pay much to the Government so they feel that they do not have much clout.
- It is a joke to think vehicles stay on trails.
- There are teeth in the existing legislation to do something but the Government does not want to implement.
- Fear that vigilante activity will begin if something is not done.
- When then Environment Minister Brian Evans toured the area he was stunned by the devastation.
- The result of this visit was some increased signage and some areas shut down but this only moved individuals further into the bush.
- Century old horse trails are now hip deep in mud.
- Commercial tour companies have been observed driving in the rivers.
- One year at Fallen Timber a sport utility vehicle was sunk in the mud up to its doors all summer.
- Those who are regulated have a hold put on them by Government but recreational users do not have any ownership or obligation.

Conclusion:

There are frequent and angry conflicts between recreation and agricultural users. Meadows have been destroyed making sizable grazing areas unusable. This is creating significant economic hardship for allotment holders and horse outfitters. Cattle have been harassed and employees threatened as the level of lawlessness and irresponsible use

increases. It was suggested that grazing areas are put out-of-bounds to recreation users and that a determined effort be made to protect the watersheds that nurture the meadows.

Banff National Park

Background:

Banff National Park borders the Ghost Reserve to the West. The aim of the National Park is to preserve the area and ensure its natural habitat for the future. The greatest challenge faced by the Park is the volume of annual users and managing the potential impacts of this usage. Wildlife does not recognize boundaries and Banff National Park is therefore concerned about what is occurring on its boundaries.

Information Relevant To The Forest Reserve:

- 100,000 people use the backcountry annually in the National Park. Maintaining the ecological integrity is a concern.
- Grizzly bears and wolves are used as indicator species.
- Bears need a territory bigger than the Park and only 50% of the park is even suitable habitat and only a small portion of that habitat is considered of high value.
- Human activity is making the habitat even less suitable.
- The Park uses backcountry permits as a management tool, but day use has exploded.
- There is a people problem and it is increasing.
- The science suggests that if there is a trail in a valley, the trail will displace animals up the valley sides three to four hundred meters on either side of the trail. If the valley is very narrow and the elevation is too extreme, the animals will become displaced.
- When the Park restricts an area, it can have a ballooning effect elsewhere. This must be taken into account with any management planning.
- Rustic access in areas surrounding the Park is increasing by the use of OHVs.
- The issue of access into the Park through the Ghost area is a fairly critical concern.
- The east end of Minnewanka could use lots of enforcement manpower and the intention is to have a presence on a more frequent basis.

Conclusion:

Over use by humans is a critical management issue. Activity in the Ghost Reserve has a direct impact on Banff National Park.

Brian Godwin, Former District Foreman

Background:

Mr. Godwin spent 20 years working in the Ghost area for the Forest Service.

Information Relevant To The Forest Reserve:

- In late 1997 a complete inventory of all formal and informal trails, campgrounds and accesses were mapped. This survey was done from the ground using Forestry, Parks, and Fish and Wildlife staff. This survey is in raw data form and would still require another month of work to compile. Mapping was done on IRP maps rather than topographic maps. Plotting was not done using GPS, but information could be converted.
- While there are 189kms of designated trails, the inventory produced nearly 2,000kms.
- Mr. Godwin recommended an approach to launching a public input process that would begin with production of a preliminary plan, and then a public consultation process based on the issues and what it would take to resolve them.
- Mr. Godwin feels that the Ghost area cannot afford to wait much longer.
- A great deal of the problem has arisen from the lack of planning for various uses, inconsistent management and enforcement.
- Management and controls must ultimately be imposed; flexibility and openness to the needs of all users must be part of the process.
- There are not enough properly developed facilities for OHV users.
- Mr. Godwin is very supportive of the efforts of Alberta United Recreationalists. He estimates that this group may only represent about 5% of users.
- Fire hazard is huge and fire bans are ignored. It is a miracle that the whole Forest Reserve hasn't burned down.
- A challenge is how to disperse concentrations of users. One solution maybe to create more patrolled areas.
- It is premature to discuss the carrying capacity of the area.
- Creek crossings are critically needed. Hardening or gravelling is often most effective.
- Reclamation will be a huge expense, but it can be done.

Conclusion:

Long term management and control plans need to be instituted. These plans will not be successful without an inclusive planning process. All users must be considered and respected.

Camp Operators

Background:

Many different organizations use the Ghost Forest Reserve to provide wilderness type experiences to youth. Some organizations have actual camp operations with full infrastructure while others utilize the natural environment. These types of operations have been in the area for more than 20 years.

Information Relevant to the Forest Reserve:

- The Ghost Forest Reserve is an ideal location to provide a wilderness experience to youth. It is located within a reasonable driving distance from the City of Calgary making it accessible and affordable.
- Recognized users, such as camp operations are regulated carefully yet random users have no rules and are not checked regularly.
- Many of the camp operators are tired of vandalism and abusive behaviour and are considering leaving the area.
- Vandalism is getting to be a very big problem. Facilities are broken into and trashed, materials are stolen, fences, signs and buildings defaced and broken. Unauthorized persons are using camp facilities.
- 4 wheel drivers have driven right through camps in the middle of the night. This is becoming a real safety issue.
- Camp operators have invested hundreds of thousands of dollars in developing and maintaining facilities. Many groups within their organizations are refusing to bring youth into the area. Security measures have not worked and RCMP cannot be counted on to respond, as they do not have the manpower. Operators are fearful of losing their investments.
- Operators are extremely worried about their liability in regards to safety of participants. Their clients are children. What kind of experience is this for them?
- OHV use is not the only problem. Large groups are now using the area just to party and with increased accessibility this is occurring using regular vehicles. This is a fairly new added pressure.
- Agreement that activity has increased dramatically in the past five years.
- Confusion as to whom has responsibility. There are a number of players in the area that seem to have different roles, but there doesn't seem to be any coordination. Never know whom to call.
- The use of Rural Crime Watch was discounted, as there are not many people living in the area.
- Operators expressed the urgency of the problem.
- Numerous individual incidents of run-ins, vandalism, etc. were told to the Steering Committee.
- In some cases where incidents have been reported and responsible parties actually caught, the operators have experienced retaliation.
- Operators agreed that it is critical not to focus on a particular group but rather on the issues and develop ways to manage and resolve these issues.

Conclusion:

Camp operators come to the Ghost Forest Reserve to provide mainly youth with a natural wilderness experience. They have invested large amounts of money in their facilities and programs. The fear is that this continued lawless activity threatens their existence. It has already become a real safety issue for staff and participants. The need to do something is urgent and many are considering leaving the area before something serious happens and they are faced with lawsuits. There needs to be a focus on the issues, and a coordination and management of all activities that occur in the area.

CAMPGROUND OPERATOR

Background:

Campgrounds in the Forest Reserve were privatized in 1996. Under contract, operators are responsible for management, maintenance and provision of all related services. The current contractor is in the third year of operation of a four-year contract. Campgrounds in this contract: Waiparous Creek, Burnt Timber and Fallen Timber.

Information Relevant to the Forest Reserve:

- Business at campground has dropped significantly in the past three years.
- Operator speculated a few reasons for this drop in business:
- Random camping is occurring directly beside campground causing noise and garbage problems.
- Forest Reserve is littered with garbage and there is no control of activities. People have commented that they no longer feel safe in the woods. Feel there is a loss of the wilderness experience.
- Price does not seem to be having an impact. Campgrounds are clean and well maintained. Users seem to be willing to pay for these services.
- A wide range of users are attracted to the campground. Sometimes random campers will come into the campground to escape the noise and feel safer.
- Vandalism is not a major problem. There have been a few minor issues and firewood is sometimes stolen or washroom facilities used by random campers.
- A much larger problem is the garbage. There are no longer garbage containers for Forest Reserve users. Besides the piles of garbage left in the forest, campground containers are filled to overflowing and garbage is left beside containers creating a huge mess. Excess garbage is not coming from campground users but rather random campers.
- Perception is that most problems occur within the areas of the Forest Reserve that are most accessible to regular vehicles.
- Operator is a supporter of random camping. A ban on this activity would not work, as there are not sufficient developed sites for the number of users. This type of experience is excellent when done with respect for the surrounding environment.
- As an area operator, Mr. Weinart is personally embarrassed by the state of the Forest Reserve.
- As a business operator he is often not sure where to turn. If nobody takes responsibility for the area he will likely not bid the contract again.

Conclusion:

There is a need for both formalized campgrounds and random camping experiences. However, the effect of random activity going unregulated is having an extremely adverse impact on business. There is a sense of confusion as to who is in charge and where to turn for help. Responsibility for activity needs to be directed and coordinated, and activity needs to be regulated to preserve the experience for all.

Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS)

Background:

The Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society is the largest national grassroots conservation group working to preserve bio-diversity through a system of protective areas. Their long-term interest is in landscape preservation throughout the Rockies, and specifically the contribution the Forest Reserve makes to the Central Rockies as a whole.

Information Relevant to the Forest Reserve:

- CPAWS is adopting the Forest Reserve as a campaign area. It is a priority.
- What is occurring is abuse of a common resource. It is a case of loving an area to death. Protected designation is required.
- Science is necessary to make a case, but CPAWS does not see that a great amount of new science is required. Much of the information is already available.
- Other information can be garnered from experts already working in the area. Call it 'Best Professional Judgment'.
- CPAWS is very interested in pulling together this science.
- This area should be a buffer zone to the adjacent protected area: Banff National Park.
- CPAWS now advocates zonal designation rather than blanket protection. This approach allows for a variety of activities to occur within a region by identifying zones.
- CPAWS suggested that both random camping and OHV use are heavily impacting the area.
- CPAWS can play a role in raising public awareness. This is what they do well.
- CPAWS feels that there is already legislation under which change could occur:
- The National Heritage Act and the Highway Safety Act.
- CPAWS advocates an on-the-ground solution. Make the changes and then provide enforcement and education. Stewardship programs are an excellent way of monitoring.

Conclusion:

CPAWS sees this area as priority. Zonal designation rather than blanket is the best approach and will recognize the multi-use aspect of this area. Much general science is available on the impacts of various human uses on all types of wildlife and the environment. This science could be applied to this area in developing a management plan. CPAWS advocates an on-the-ground solution. Make the changes and then provide enforcement and education. Stewardship programs are an excellent way of monitoring.

East Slopes Grizzly Bear Project

Background:

Project area is the Bow Valley Watershed as well Kananaskis Country and Banff National Park. As the Forest Reserve borders the National Park, it is on the fringe of the project area. The ESGBP has been ongoing for 5-6 years. It is concerned with habitat and populations within the study area, compiling information on changes and pressures, and recommending future action. The study has produced five years of research on individual bear movement at an annual cost of \$400,000.00. In year six the study will be reduced to half that expenditure and will focus on a study of births and deaths. All information relates specifically to grizzly bears.

Information Relevant to the Forest Reserve:

- Habitat is good, but it is not bear friendly due to human usage.
- Human activity is greatly impacting the bear population.
- Estimated grizzly population in the Ghost area is 7 bears per 1,000 sq. kilometers as compared to Banff's 10/1,000 sq. kilometer.
- In K-Country the bear population has benefited from reduced vehicle traffic. However increased pedestrian traffic has led to the identification of more problem bears.
- Bear/human contact naturally increases as usage of the forest increases. It is imperative that garbage and urban/wildland interfaces be managed.
- Of the eighteen bears that have died since the study began, six have died in the Ghost area. It was suggested that in fact the death rate is higher than the birth rate. If this imbalance continues the bears will slowly die out.
- The public accepts the importance of protecting grizzly bears, but convincing some groups and individuals to take specific action is difficult. Good data and lots of public education are needed.

Conclusion:

Human activity is having an impact on the bear population. There is a greater death rate than birth rate. There needs to be management of urban/wildland interfaces. There needs to be more information specific to the area.

Industry - Oil and Gas/Forest Products

Background:

Oil and gas exploration and timber harvesting activity has played a large role in the Forest Reserve for many years. In recent years this activity, particularly oil and gas exploration has increased. Regulatory bodies and industry itself very closely monitor these activities.

Information Relevant to the Forest Reserve:

Forest Products Industry

- A rollback reclamation method is used for roads. No road surface is left and the debris is rolled back over the surface. This renders the road impassible, however the cut lines remain.
- OHVs do not cause a problem for rehabilitation. There is some erosion from OHVs on the trails and there is a safety issue in the area.
- Reclamation of roads is not a problem as there are enough trails in the area to access any cut blocks. The policy of Spray Lakes Saw Mills is to reclaim any new roads built. This includes erosion control.
- Spray Lakes has had their reclamation program audited and received good marks from the government.
- A long-term presence in the area is planned and succession plans are in place for the future.
- The biggest threat to the wood supply would be the possibility of exclusion from the land base.
- The McLean Creek public consultation was cited as an example of a successful process. The area can be managed for bio-diversity and multiple uses.

Oil and Gas

- Petro-Canada's Seismic Program uses thin slash lines making it difficult to access the area along seismic lines.
- Development of roads tends to open the area for other uses that have the potential to impact industry activities as well as other commercial users (i.e. Allotment holders).
- Chain link fences have been put around many of the wells and there is some vandalism happening.
- Petro Canada's pipelines tend to follow the roads so as not to open an area up even more.
- Barricades and gates can be breached and therefore do not necessarily stop access into an area.
- Sector representatives suggested that there are some problems of outrageous behaviour in the Forest Reserve and that they have some infrastructure and property that needs protection.
- Tool thefts have occurred and pressure gauges shot with rifles.
- Sour gas incidents can happen if a pipeline is shot. Resource extraction is getting to be a high stakes game.

- Well sites are mostly unoccupied and therefore quite vulnerable.
- Shell has had problems with OHV use in the Panther Corners area where this kind of activity is not permitted.

Conclusion:

Industry is strictly regulated. Unregulated use is having some impact on activities particularly in the form of vandalism, trespass and erosion of reclamation projects. The largest impact on the area is the creation of new roads during development that is allowing greater access to the public. This access has the potential to create conflict among all users. Concern is for coordination and control of all uses and potential future impacts.

Outfitters

Background:

For more than 70 years equestrian outfitters have used the Forest Reserve to take clients into the wilderness on horseback. Their business depends on being able to provide a natural experience.

Information Relevant to the Forest Reserve:

- Vandalism is up. During the 1970's was a problem and then it declined. Now it has escalated again. A quad was stolen from a hay shed by cutting the chain.
- A four-wheel drive operator received a letter of authorization to conduct business right on top of a horse-outfitters permit area.
- Horse outfitters are strictly regulated to prevent environmental damage.
- A new four-wheel operator is abusing terrain on the Devil's Head and Blackrock after being requested not to.
- Horse outfitters have been operating in the area since the early 1920's. Conflicting use in the area is now adversely affecting their business to the extent of considering whether to continue.
- Conflicts occur.
- High trail along Lessuer Creek was supposed to be for horses only. Now it is being used by OHVs.
- Horse trails are being ripped up and rendered useless by OHV users.
- One outfitter reported being threatened by OHV users with guns.
- In hunting season individuals have been observed hunting from trucks and quads along Ghost Road.
- There should be a 'no hunting' buffer along Banff National Park Boundary. One area outfitter indicated that he would be willing to give up his grazing lease to establish a wildlife corridor if that is what's required.
- Maybe more extreme environmental groups can apply pressure to government.
- There is a need to have alternative for OHV use. Cannot just shut them down.
- Usable area has actually increased with the raising of the restricted area for motorized vehicles from 5,500' altitude to above 6,000'.
- Activity is having a huge effect on business due to 'non-repeats'. Customers love the experience but are turned off by OHV use. This activity takes away from their wilderness experience.
- This area is becoming well known across North America for climbing in both summer and winter. One individual referred to it as the Yosemite of the north. Access to this popular climbing area is via the TransAlta road.

Conclusion:

For more than 70 years horse outfitters have utilized and enjoyed the wilderness experience provided by the Ghost Forest Reserve. Their business has been adversely affected in the past five years by the increased unregulated recreational use. They care very much for the wilderness, the wildlife and the natural environment, and this is what attracts their clients as well. Many are considering abandoning operations in the Forest Reserve because it is no longer worth it. Their business is carefully regulated and outfitters feel that all activity must be regulated to preserve the area for everyone. Management plans need to be in place to coordinate activity and reduce conflicts.

Area Resident's Meeting

Background:

Approximately 23 area residents attended an open house. Displays and questionnaires were available. A short presentation was followed by a round table discussion. The following is a summary of discussion and follow up comments received through returned questionnaires.

Information Relevant to the Forest Reserve:

Water

Clean water concerns due to lack of facilities. Many residents have observed changes to the water over the years. Issues of contamination, effect on fish, etc.

- Indiscriminate motorized vehicle activity in watercourses.
- Bathers using soap in Waiparous Creek.
- Build up of slime on rocks in the Waiparous Creek.
- On many occasions area residents have rescued vehicles from watercourses.
- Washing of vehicles in the Ghost River.
- Area residents use wells for their water. Afraid of contamination.
- Human feces has been observed floating in water.

Fire

Unanimous agreement by those in attendance that fire may be the single largest danger to area residents.

- There is only one route in and out of the area.
- There is no way to know where users are or even who they are if a major fire were to occur.
- Fire bans are ignored. Irregular monitoring from air is not adequate. Need ground patrols.
- Random camping fires are built everywhere. Often left smoldering after campers have left. One resident extinguished more than 20 smoldering fires along the Ghost River after the May long weekend.
- One resident observed at least 10 fires daily during last year's fire ban between the Bar C Ranch and Lessuer Creek.

Disaster Plan

While fire is the type of disaster that causes the most concern, a number of residents commented that the level of commercial activity such as oil and gas exploration increases the potential for required evacuation.

- Oil/Gas companies have evacuation plans. Area residents are informed and can easily be contacted in the event of a leak or blow out. How would you ever get to the random users?
- At Waiparous there is a one-lane bridge that most area users and residents must use.

Regulation/Control/Enforcement

A general lack of control, regulation of recreational activity and enforcement presence were the identified issues.

- Used to be at least 28 individuals regularly working and patrolling the area.
- A few officers occasionally patrolling is not effective and there is concern for their safety.
- There doesn't seem to be anyone in charge.
- Excessive number of individuals using the area indiscriminately.
- Forestry/Environment should take this area in hand and be responsible.
- Offenders should be made to help with the clean up and maintenance of area.
- Signs indicating restricted areas have been chopped down and driven over.

Safety

- A Waiparous Village resident had a vehicle rip up their lawn and driveway at 2am during the long weekend.
- Richards Road residents have had activities occurring on their private property. Fences cut; no trespassing/private property signs are ignored. Vehicles often enter driveways and then tear out.
- Strangers entering private property and coming to homes for vehicle rescue and other emergencies.
- Random gunfire. Patterns of gunfire heard which are consistent with firing range type activities.
- Individuals have been observed hunting from quads and trucks in the Reserve.

Environment

The impact on the environment is of great concern to area residents.

- Degradation of meadows.
- OHV activity has been observed above the permitted elevation levels.
- Scarring on hills – heavy erosion is occurring in areas as a result.
- Random camping at Lessuer Creek – large numbers in and around the creek. No facilities. Where is all the human waste going?
- Green trees are routinely cut down.
- Over usage is permanently ruining natural grasses, plants in meadows and forest.
- Bears are becoming habituated to people and garbage left around is the cause.

Sponsored OHV Events

Throughout the summer, events and product demos go on in the Forest Reserve.

- On Richards Road – a brewery sponsored dirt bike event had over 100 bikers participating in activities for 2 days below a residence. Noise was constant.
- A bike manufacturer sponsored an event in an Allotment holder's meadow. Ripped up the meadow and left it unusable.
- These types of events need to be better regulated or disallowed.
- Area residents, allotment holders and outfitters are often not notified.
- There is no accountability for these groups. They should be held responsible for the clean up. A fee should be imposed to help compensate for the cost of maintenance.

Traffic

- Extreme levels of traffic are having adverse effects on area roads. Both excessive recreation and commercial traffic are the cause.
- Highway 40 passes directly through the Summer Village of Waiparous. Traffic does not slow down and residents fear for this danger. Children cannot ride bikes from one side of community to other.
- 400 vehicles were counted between the 4-way stop at highway 1A & 22x to Grand Valley Road on Monday of the May long weekend this year.
- One resident who travels down highway 40 daily around 7am, at least 29 commercial vehicles are routinely counted heading north.
- Increasing the capacity of the road will only compound the problem in the Forest Reserve

General

- This area has become a dumping ground. Stolen vehicles are dumped and burned.
- This is the sacrificial land for the Province.
- Rumour that MacLean Creek will be closed. If this occurs the impact on this area will be even more devastating.
- Worst incidences seem to occur within 100 meters of roads. Accessibility has an effect.
- Restricting random camping within a certain distance of the road will only push the trouble further into the bush and make it harder to control.
- As Calgary grows and the economy continues to prosper, more people will be looking for places to recreate and will have more money to spend on these activities.
- There is recognition that OHV users and random campers need a place to go. Prohibiting this activity is not the answer. Management is the key.
- What is the carrying capacity of this area? How do you set limits?
- What about an annual pass to use area? This might give users some ownership. Show them that using the area is a privilege with associated responsibilities.
- These passes could come with a code of conduct. If you were caught contravening this code your pass could be taken away. There could be fines or mandatory participation in maintenance projects.
- Using this area is not a right just because it is public land.
- Change insurance for these vehicles so they are only insured on recognized trails.
- OHV use and random camping are often observed in restricted areas including Banff National Park.
- Grad parties are a big problem. One party in May near an oil/gas operation left company fencing knocked down and tremendous amounts of garbage.
- Not all OHV users and random campers are irresponsible. Many abhor this type of behaviour. We cannot label all users as abusers.
- Advances in technology have increased ability of OHVs to get into previously inaccessible terrain.
- There are simply too many people in the area during peak periods.
- Where do we go from here?

Attractions of Area

Area residents expressed their desire to keep the area pristine and cited a number reasons for using the area.

- Beautiful natural environment.
- Large areas for hiking, walking, skiing, picnics, birdwatching, horseback riding.
- Incredible views and vistas.
- Fields and forests full of wildflowers and wildlife.

Rock Industry

Background:

Rock Industry activities generally border the southern portion of the Ghost Forest Reserve. Their main activity is mineral extraction.

Information Relevant to the Forest Reserve:

- Only Continental Lime has notational certificates within the Forest Reserve. Their greatest concern is continued access to this area.
- Baymag's extraction activities are focused in the area of Radium, British Columbia. Processing occurs in the Bow Corridor. However they have experienced some vandalism and would be very concerned if reported activity north were to occur in the area of their plants.
- Lafarge's extraction activities occur exclusively in the Bow Corridor. Similar to Baymag, there is concern about the potential of future increased activity having an adverse effect on their property.
- Further, rock industry representatives felt that individuals have a responsibility to take care of the environment and from what they have heard it seems that greater control and regulation is required. The rock industry is closely monitored and regulated, as should all other types of activity.

Conclusion:

Corporate concerns of activity from the rock industry within the Forest Reserve are minimal due to limited corporate interests. Concerns are for potential future impacts that might effect their operations.

Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP)

Background:

The RCMP is the traditional source of enforcement for criminal activity. The Cochrane detachment responds to requests for assistance, as well as enforcement of provincial and federal statutes in and around the Forest Reserve. The Cochrane Detachment has 21 officers and 8 Highway Patrol officers that cover a large area from the outskirts of Calgary to Kananaskis Country. The Ghost Forest Reserve falls within their jurisdiction.

Information Relevant to the Forest Reserve:

- The RCMP responds to requests for assistance, however, there are few resources for proactive initiatives. Check Stops are done on a regular basis on major long weekend holidays.
- The RCMP views the problems in the area as serious due to a lack of controls.
- The predominant types of calls are:
 - Drunk and disorderly conduct
 - Rowdiness
 - Vandalism
 - Drinking and driving offences
 - Assaults
- Criminal code violations receive priority
- Stolen vehicles are dumped in the Reserve area
- The lack of sustained police presence in the area is well known publicly.
- There is a need for a land use plan for the area.
- Eliminating random camping might effectively cap numbers.
- Communication in the area can be a problem as a result of the ‘dead’ spots for phones and radios.
- Rural Crime Watch volunteers can record violations and license numbers. The RCMP can then act upon these reports.

	1999	1998	1997	1996	1995
MVA Collisions	14	16	13	3	2
Provincial Traffic Offences	32	46	35	9	30
Criminal Code Traffic Offences	6	11	10	0	1
Criminal Code Persons and Property	50	117	84	7	14
Drugs	3	5	8	0	0
Provincial Liquor and Others	30	69	59	11	34

QUALIFICATION:

- The statistics for 1995 and 1996 specifically relate to Highway 40 and the Ghost Forest Reserve
- The statistics for 1997-1999 include the larger rural north-west area of Cochrane Detachment, including the Ghost Forest Reserve

Conclusion:

As a conclusion, the RCMP presented the Steering Committee with the following statistics for the rural northwest area of the Cochrane Detachment. This area includes the Ghost Forest Reserve.

Table 1

**Forest Reserve Multi-Use Dialogue
Interview Findings Charted by Issue and Priority**

Issues/ Stakeholder groups	Watershed	Fire	Safety	Management/ Regulation	Recreation Use	Environment	Wildlife	Disaster Planning	Traffic
Alberta Environment	4	2	2	2	2	2	2	N/A	N/A
Environmental Groups	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	N/A
Allotment Holders	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	N/A
Area Residents	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
User Groups	2	2	2	1	2	1	1	2	2
Camp Operators	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2
Industry	2	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	3
Banff National Park	1	1	2	2	2	1	1	N/A	N/A
Royal Canadian Mounted Police	N/A	1	1	1	1	N/A	N/A	1	1
Outfitters	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2

Table Index: **1 – Critical Issue** **2 – Moderate Issue**
 3 – Potential Issue **4 – Requires More Information**

Step 3: Supplementary Questionnaires

The third step in this process involved the distribution of supplemental questionnaires. Questionnaires were distributed to those interviewed, area residents and others unable to attend the interview session. Bighorn staff distributed 100 questionnaires and 28 were returned. As set out in the methodology, questionnaire research was not conducted on the basis of systematic statistical methods, its purpose was rather to supplement information gathered in the interviews. Responses from the Stakeholder and User Questionnaires have been tabulated and are presented as a means of further illustrating the issues. What can be concluded from these questionnaires confirms statements made in the interviews that:

- The Forest Reserve is used for both its diverse recreational opportunities, and its rich natural resources.
- All users appreciate it as a wilderness area and agree to the need to preserve its environmental integrity.
- There are problems arising from incompatible uses, inconsistency and lack of regulatory controls and enforcement, and an absence of a clear management plan.

Full summaries and questionnaire samples are found in Appendix B and C.

User Questionnaire Responses – Summary

Total Responses = 9

Respondent Profile

Respondents were area residents living adjacent to the Forest Reserve. Their use of the area is recreational and included camping, fishing, hunting, skiing, and nature observation. Use of the area occurred throughout the year with largest usage occurring in the summer and fall months, most often by small groups of family and friends.

Observations

- Their top 3 reasons for choosing to use the Forest Reserve area included accessibility, quiet country atmosphere, observing nature and mountain scenery and isolation.
- Noted changes in the area were increases in OHV use, random camping, abuse of the area, environmental damage and abusive behaviour.
- Overwhelmingly, changes suggested were for ban or restriction of random camping, OHV use (particularly large tire OHVs) and numbers of people using the area. The need for stringent policies and enforcement on OHV trails was stressed.
- As for services currently not available in this area, respondents suggested: better supervision, increased enforcement, better control during fire bans and more designated campgrounds.
- One respondent indicated they no longer use the area for the following reason:
I will not submit my family to an area prevalent with the abuse of alcohol, abusive language and the destruction of nature.

Stakeholder Questionnaire – Summaries

Camp Operators – 2 Responses

Respondent Profile

Respondents are operators of various types of nature and wilderness camps that bring small groups, most often youth, into the Forest Reserve to camp, hike, study nature and experience wilderness. Their operations run year-round.

Observations

- Issues/concerns/challenges related to their operations in the Forest Reserve included:
 - Parties, vandalism, dirt biking.
 - Increasing human presence taking a toll on the environment.
- Benefits for their operation to using the Forest Reserve are the opportunities to do many outdoor activities, reasonable lease rates, wonderful wilderness areas and relative (but decreasing) privacy of a wilderness setting.

Industry – 6 Responses

Respondent Profile

Commercial interests use the Forest Reserve extensively. Respondents to the questionnaire were representatives of the oil and gas sector, forest products and the rock industries. Oil and gas proponents are actively involved in exploration, drilling and sour gas processing. The forest products industry uses the Forest Reserve for timber harvesting. The rock industries do not have any direct interest in the Forest Reserve, but their operation on the border.

Observations:

Issues/concerns/challenges related to their operations in the Forest Reserve include:

- Public access to industry roads and facilities - road safety.
- Security
- Interfaces with stakeholders and recognize the many and varied interests within the area.
- With the development of the area, high grade roads being installed which allow recreation activities to have access to greater area. This will impact not only our sites but also local grazing leases, land owners, etc.
- Benefits for their operation to using the Forest Reserve is the potential of commercially viable reserves of sour gas, sparse population, supportive Council and Emergency Services Management, good existing infrastructure relative to oil and gas operations.

The Next Step – A Sample Process

The issues affecting the Ghost Forest Reserve are not unique. Throughout North America, impacts on natural environments from multiple uses are putting pressures on land managers to find solutions that take into consideration the need of maintaining the ecosystem and accommodating the many users. In the United States the Bureau of Land Management has developed a successful process that accomplishes these objectives.

One example of this process is the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument. Below is a summary of that process. A complete description is available on their website:

<http://www.ut.blm.gov/monument>

1997 summer and fall	1998 spring and summer	1998 fall through 1999 fall
SCOPING	DEVELOP PROPOSED PLAN AND ALTERNATIVES	REVIEW DRAFT AND FINAL PLAN
<p>Public input via: Workshops (Aug-Oct) Visions Kit (Aug-Oct) Input from independent forums Home Page</p> <p>Results A forum and update letter summarizing the issues raised and describing the scope of the plan, listing the planning assumptions.</p>	<p>Public input via: Management scenarios mailing Input from independent forums Written comments Home Page</p> <p>Results Publication of a draft Monument Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement, listing preferred alternative by the fall 1998.</p>	<p>Public input via: Written comments Input from independent forums Home Page</p> <p>Results Revision of Draft Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement is scheduled for the fall of 1999.</p>

The Bureau of land Management’s Monument Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement is complete. It will not undergo a period of review where appeals may be made. Once the appeal period is complete, an implementation plan will be developed. This plan will be developed and monitored by an Implementation Advisory Committee, comprised of stakeholder representatives. It is expected that the plan will go into the implementation stage in mid-2000.

Conclusions/Recommendations

For ten months the Steering Committee has collected the ideas of those who live, work and play in and around the Ghost River Forest Reserve. This dialogue process has endeavoured to:

- Enhance the dialogue surrounding forest access and use by the multi-users and increase public awareness of the issues.
- Increase the body of knowledge of surrounding forest use and access and the attendant uses.
- Assist the land managers from the Alberta Government with the process of initiating an Access Management Plan and a Forest Use Plan and/or other programs, which are recommended by the process.
- Engage the public in the issues and explore opportunities to solve them.
- Increase the spirit of cooperation between the M.D. of Bighorn and our provincial, federal and municipal neighbours who share in the effects of this issue.

More than 50 representatives of 10 different identified stakeholder groups have met with the Steering Committee and engaged in open discussion of the issues, concerns and possible solutions. Individuals have passionately and candidly shared these concerns. To them the issues are very real and threaten both the environmental integrity of the Forest Reserve and their recreational or commercial use. A sense of immediacy and crisis was conveyed. Something needs to be done now and for the future. Consistently, the M.D. of Bighorn through the FRMUD Steering Committee heard these responses and it is clear that action is long overdue. The largest question remains: What to do next?

Based on the findings of this dialogue process, The M.D. of Bighorn is recommending that the following next step be taken:

The M.D. of Bighorn recommends that a core group of stakeholders begin a process for developing a strategic plan. This process should be inclusive and its leadership should be a partnership between the government bodies that have jurisdiction, the Province and the M.D. of Bighorn.

Alberta Forestry has been conducting research on uses in the Forest Reserve and has already suggested that this information be reviewed in a planning forum in January 2000. This planning forum could serve as the first step of that strategic planning process. It could consider information from this report as well as other relevant information such as the access management research project recently undertaken by a team from the Faculty of Environmental Design, University of Calgary.

The Ghost River Forest Reserve can continue to function as an area where people can recreate and enjoy nature. If done on a planned sustainable basis it can be a wonderful place where the agricultural, industrial and recreational users can coexist in harmony without destruction of the ecosystem and without jeopardizing the many species (flora and fauna) that call this very special place “home”. Implementation of the above recommendations can set us on a course of action that will help save this precious ecosystem. Together we can resolve these issues.

APPENDIX A

Ghost Forest Reserve Area Map

APPENDIX B

Stakeholder Questionnaire Detail and Sample

FOREST RESERVE MULTI-USE DIALOGUE
STAKEHOLDER QUESTIONNAIRE
CAMP OPERATORS – 2 RESPONSES

Relationships to Forest Reserve: (How does your company use the Forest Reserve.)

- Camping, hiking, trails, nature study.
- Winter use.
- Wilderness youth camp.

What are the issues/concerns/challenges related to our operations in the Forest Reserve.
(Including issues that need to be addressed).

- Parties, vandalism, dirt biking.
- Access road (TransAlta) is terribly high vehicle maintenance costs.
- Increasing human presence taking a toll on the environment.

Area Benefits (What does this area provide for your company).

- Opportunities to do many outdoor activities.
- Reasonable lease rates
- Wonderful Wilderness areas.
- Relative (but decreasing) privacy of a wilderness setting.

FOREST RESERVE MULTI-USE DIALOGUE
STAKEHOLDER QUESTIONNAIRE
INDUSTRIES – 6 RESPONSES

Relationship to Forest Reserve: (How does your company use the Forest Reserve).

- Gas Development: seismic, drilling, well servicing, sour gas processing
- Not used by Rock Industry

What are the issues/concerns/challenges related to your operations in the Forest Reserve. (Including issues that need to be addressed).

- Undulating terrain poses expensive and complex drilling and pipeline operations.
- Public Access to industry roads and facilities – road safety.
- Security
- Interfaces with stakeholders and recognize the many and varied interests within the area. Need to obtain a balance among them all.
- With the development of the area, high grade roads being installed which allow recreation activities to have access to greater areas. This will impact not only our sites but local grazing leases, land owners, etc.

Area Benefits. (What does this area provide for your company).

- Area is thought to contain commercially viable reserves of sour gas.
- Sparse population.
- Supportive Council and Emergency Services Management.
- Good existing infrastructure relative to oil and gas operations.
- Gas exploration and development potential exists throughout the area.

Other information (studies/uses) the Steering Committee should be aware of:

FOREST RESERVE MULTI-USE DIALOGUE
STAKEHOLDER QUESTIONNAIRE

INTRODUCTION

The Forest Reserve Multi-Use Dialogue is an initiative of the M.D. of Bighorn to seek out and give a voice to the many users of the Forest Reserve south of the Red Deer River and north of the Bow River. This area is used and enjoyed by many parties. By completing this questionnaire you will be assisting in developing an understanding of the area and how its users interact with the ecosystem. A report compiling information collected through these surveys and other means will be available in early 2000. Thank you for taking a few minutes to assist.

Please use the back of this form or other paper for additional comments if necessary.

Organization:

Contact:

Phone:

Relationship to Forest Reserve: (How does your company use the Forest Reserve?).

What are the issues/concerns/challenges related to your operations in the Forest Reserve?
(Including issues that need to be addressed).

Page Two
Stakeholder Questionnaire
continued

Area Benefits. (What does this area provide for your company)?

Other information (studies/uses) the Steering Committee should be aware of:

Thank you for taking the time to fill in this questionnaire. Please mail or fax to the address below:

M.D. of Bighorn
Box 310
Exshaw, Alberta
T0L 2C0
Fax: (403) 673-3895
Phone: (403) 637-3611
Calgary Direct: (403) 233-7678
CONTACT: Emily Smith

APPENDIX C

User Questionnaire Sample

FOREST RESERVE MULTI-USE DIALOGUE
 USER QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES
 TOTAL RESPONSES = 9

1. For what purposes do you use the Forest Reserve:

CAMPING 3	FISHING 3
HIKING 6	INDUSTRY <input type="checkbox"/> - Go directly to question 8
HUNTING 3	HORSEBACK RIDING <input type="checkbox"/>

OFF-ROAD VEHICLE (Please indicate type) _____
 COMMERCIAL RECREATION (Please expand) _____
 OTHER (Please list): Mountain Biking 2X, Cross Country Skiing X3, Nature Observation X2

2. Place of residence: Ghost Country Place (4)
 Summer Village of Waiparous (5)

3. I use the Ghost area during:

WINTER	7
SPRING	7
SUMMER	7
FALL	7
I do not use the area (go to question 10) 1	

4. Frequency of Use (Please indicate average usage per season):

WINTER	6
SPRING	5.5
SUMMER	15
FALL	19.5

5. I use the area:

ALONE	2
WITH MY FAMILY	5
WITH FRIENDS	5
IF WITH FRIENDS, AVERAGE SIZE OF PARTY	5

6. Average length of each stay in the area

DAY USE 4	OVERNIGHT 2	WEEKEND 3	OTHER 1 weeklong
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7. What are your top 3 reasons for choosing to use the Forest Reserve area?

- Accessibility from your residence (3X)
- One of the few areas available for 4X4 use.
- Mountain scenery and isolation (becoming considerably less so) (2X)
- Clean air
- Clean water
- Quiet country atmosphere (3X)
- Hiking and cross country skiing. (2X)
- Unique wildflowers (X2)
- Hunting and fishing (X2)
- Observing nature (X2)

8. What changes have you noticed since you began using this area?

- Increased # of OHV vehicles, campers. (X3)
- Increased abuse of the area and rowdy, abusive behavior of area users.
- Increased environmental damage, pollution & erosion.
- No controls or limits in the area.
- Noise created by dirt bikes can be heard for miles
- Substantial increase in traffic.
- Garbage everywhere (X2)
- Lots of noise. (X2)
- Since privatization of campgrounds, excessive and damaging growth of random use
- Overuse.
- More fires during fire bans. (X2)
- The natural environment is being destroyed. (X2)
- Badly misused. (X2)
- I have not noticed any change.

9. What changes if any would you like to see to the usage/management of this area?

- Ban random camping. (X4)
- Ban all large tire OHV on 4X4 trails.
- Restrict number of people/vehicles. (X2)
- Set stringent policies and rules re: OHV trails and enforce them. (X2)
- Some sort of control.
- Limits on what area can be used for.
- Close parts of the area to protect it from devastation.
- Users pay.
- Return of Provincial Government supervision of recreational use. (X2)
- Reasonable fire (forest) protection.
- Seriously limit or abolish off-road usage (X2)
- No changes are required.

10. Are there services currently not available in this area that you would like to see in the future?

- Implement user entry fees to reduce overuse and help pay for maintenance.
- Better controls on fires are needed.
- No other services except fire control.
- More pay campgrounds. (X2)
- No.
- Random users must be supervised.
- Lack of supervisory staff.
- More enforcement by the forestry department.
- Reinstate some form of regulation.
- Reinstate forestry office.

11. If you no longer use this area, please list the reasons why?

- I will not submit my family to an area prevalent with the abuse of alcohol, abusive language and the destruction of nature.

**FOREST RESERVE MULTI-USE DIALOGUE
USER QUESTIONNAIRE**

INTRODUCTION

The Forest Reserve Multi-Use Dialogue is an initiative of the M.D. of Bighorn to seek out and give a voice to the many users of the Forest Reserve south of the Red Deer River and north of the Bow River. This area is used and enjoyed by many parties. By completing this questionnaire you will be assisting in developing an understanding of the area and how its users interact with the ecosystem. A report compiling information collected through these surveys and other means will be available in early 2000. Thank you for taking a few minutes to assist.

Please use the back of this form or other paper for additional comments if necessary.

- For what purposes do you use the Forest Reserve:

CAMPING	<input type="checkbox"/>	FISHING	<input type="checkbox"/>
HIKING	<input type="checkbox"/>	INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> - go directly to question 8
HUNTING	<input type="checkbox"/>	HORSEBACK RIDING	<input type="checkbox"/>

OFF-ROAD VEHICLE (please indicate type) _____
 COMMERCIAL RECREATION (please expand) _____
 OTHER (please list) _____

- Place of residence _____ (CITY, TOWN, HAMLET, ETC.)

- I use the Ghost area during:

WINTER	<input type="checkbox"/>
SPRING	<input type="checkbox"/>
SUMMER	<input type="checkbox"/>
FALL	<input type="checkbox"/>

I do not use the area (go to question 10)

- Frequency of Use (please indicate average usage per season):

WINTER	___(times)
SPRING	___
SUMMER	___
FALL	___

- I use the area:

ALONE	<input type="checkbox"/>
WITH MY FAMILY	<input type="checkbox"/>
WITH FRIENDS	<input type="checkbox"/>

IF WITH FRIENDS, AVERAGE SIZE OF PARTY _____

- Average length of each stay in the area:

DAY USE	<input type="checkbox"/>	OVERNITE	<input type="checkbox"/>	WEEKEND	<input type="checkbox"/>	OTHER	_____
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7. What are your top 3 reasons for choosing to use the Forest Reserve area?

- What changes have you noticed since you began using this area?
 - _____
 - _____

- _____
I have not noticed any change
- What changes if any would you like to see to the usage/management of this area?
• _____
• _____
• _____
- No changes are required
- Are there services currently not available in this area that you would like to see in the future?
• _____
• _____
• _____
- If you no longer use this area, please list the reasons why?
• _____
• _____
- I would be interested in being involved in future discussions:

NAME

ADDRESS

PHONE

FAX

Please return this survey to: M.D. of Bighorn No. 8, Box 310, Exshaw, Alberta, T0L 2C0
 Phone: (403) 673-3611 Calgary Direct (403) 233-7678
 Fax: (403) 673-3895 email: bighorn@telusplanet.net

SURVEY DEADLINE _____

Please feel free to copy and distribute

APPENDIX D

Research/Reference Material List

FOREST RESERVE MULTI-USE DIALOGUE

Research/Reference Material List

- 1983 *Ghost River Sub-Regional Integrated Resource Plan*
Alberta Forestry, Lands and Wildlife
Edmonton, Alberta.
Draft of 1988 revised Government of Alberta Planning Document for public lands and resources within Ghost River Planning Area (see below). Identifies history of planning initiative, resource potentials and opportunities (48 pages plus maps).
- *Notes: Round Table Meeting, Ghost River Integrated Resource Plan, September 10th, Fish and Wildlife Office, Calgary.*
Meeting between Users/Associations, I.D. of Bighorn #8, Sarcee and Calgary Fish and Game Assocs., Parks Canada and private individuals.
- 1987 *Public Involvement Summary,*
Ghost River Draft Plan
August 19, 1987
Summary of Public Meetings on Ghost River Draft Plan - February 26, 27 and April 21, 22 and 23, 1987 in Water Valley, Cochrane, Canmore and Calgary. Includes bibliography of written letters and briefs (27 pages).
- 1988 *Ghost River Sub-Regional Integrated Resource Plan*
Alberta Forestry, Lands and Wildlife
Edmonton, Alberta. Pub. No. T/180
ISBN: 0-86499-578-4
Government of Alberta Planning Document for public lands and resources within Ghost River Planning Area. Identifies resource potentials and opportunities (81 pages plus map).
- 1990 *Ghost River Sub-Regional Integrated Resource Plan Annual Report*
April 1989 - March 1990.
Alberta Forestry, Lands and Wildlife Edmonton, Alberta.
Report summarizing progress on "implementation of" Ghost River Resource Plan (20 pages with map).
- 1993 *Letter, 13th December, To: All Oil and Gas Operators Re: Oil and Gas*
Developments, Eastern Slopes (Southern Portion)
Executive Summary
From: Energy Resources Conservation Board,
F.J. Mink, Vice Chairman and L.P. Prince, Ph.D., Vice Chairman
Information letter confirming requirements for developments along Southern portion of Eastern Slopes (6 pages plus map).

- 1993 *Ghost Snowmobile Area,*
Alberta Environmental Protection,
Land and Forest Service
Informational Pamphlet, (2 "pages" plus map).
- 1994 *Alberta: Timber Harvest Planning and Operating Ground Rules.*
ISBN: 0-86499-919-4, Pub. No.: Ref. 71.
Guidelines, objectives, requirements, standards for industry, including appendices,
figures, tables and index (69 pages).
- 1998 *Instructions for the Submission of the Environmental Field Report with*
Applications for Dispositions under the Public Lands Act, November 1998
(REV.),
Alberta Environmental Protection Land and Forest Service, Government
of Alberta. Information on how to file report (14 pages) including 2 page
form.
- 1998 *Facility Map, Shell Canada Ltd.,*
Central Alberta Region including Burnt Timber, Benjamin Creek, Hunter
Valley, Panther and Wildhorse Creek Fields, September 1998 (1 "page").
- *Backgrounder: Kananaskis Country Recreation Development Policy Review*
(June 1998). Kananaskis, Alberta Environmental Protection, Natural
Resources Service. Prepared by: Praxis, Inc. and Ong-Lee Design.
Background information on existing uses and development in K-Country to help
interested individuals assess Policy Review for new recreational facilities - hotels,
campgrounds, trails, lodges and the associated development processes (12 pages
including maps and references).
- 1999 *Coalition seeks second Kananaskis,*
Calgary Herald,
Newspaper clipping, February 24th, 1999.
- 1999 *Government of Alberta, Budget 99, Environmental Protection 1999 - 2002*
Business Plan.
Includes information on how the Provincial Government will manage Business and
Resources in the province. From website:
<http://www.treas.gov.ab.ca/comm/budget99/envir.htm> (11 pages).
- 1999 *Alberta's Commitment to Sustainable Resource and Environmental*
Management, March 1999,
Report from the Alberta Government. ISBN 0-7785-0592-8, Pub. No. I/732, (9 pages).
- 1999 *Map: Wildcat Hills,*
Petro-Canada Oil and Gas of Wildcat Hills,
Unit Area, updated April 4, 1999.

- 1999 *Map: Wildcat Hills Area,*
Petro-Canada Oil and Gas,
Updated April 28th, 1999, (1 page).
- 1999 *Letter, April 30th 1999,*
To Reeve Ed Latvala Re: The Alberta Conservation Association,
Information package, detailing mandate, organization and aims of Alberta Conservation Society including, (1 page letter, 6 page Newsletter Winter 1999, 12 page colour brochure - Association Annual Report, from 1997-1998).
- 1999 *Alberta Wilderness Association,*
Information Package put together for Forest Reserve Multi-Dialogue meeting, May 11th, 1999. Includes Address, Protected Areas Goal Statement, Mission Statement, Selected References (2.5 pages), “*Bighorn Country*” Wildlands Coalition information sheet, including map; Edmonton Journal newspaper clipping dated Feb. 24th, 1999 titled *Push for Kananaskis of the North*; Alberta Wilderness Association *Ghost River Integrated Management Plan*, prepared by Steven de Keijzer (33 pages with maps); photocopy of *Alberta’s Bighorn Wildland Recreation Area Map*, Alberta Forestry, Lands and Wildlife; photocopy of *Bow River Forest map 1927*, Department of the Interior, Canada; *Ghost Area: Why is it important to Banff?* - 3 page document outlining significance of Ghost Area.