

WINTER 2007

TRAIL TALK

Newsletter of the Alberta Off Highway Vehicle Association

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From the Presidents Handlebars

Wow, 2007 is already here and what is going on with your association? In one word, lots.

2006 was a breakthrough year for AOHVA. We were finally able to bring on a full time person to deal with the myriad of meetings, committees and day to day projects that must be completed to accomplish our goals. Most of you are familiar with the work Cal Rakach accomplished as President of the association, and he has taken on the position of Technical Director full time. You can count on Cal to continue the incredible work he has done for all of us with his new ability to work on our needs full time.

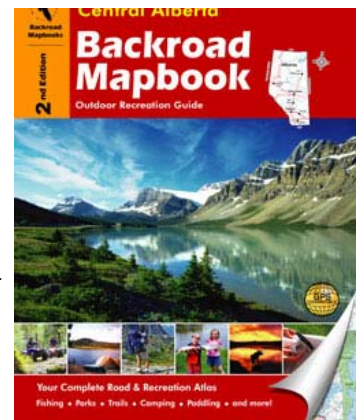
We have also hired an administrative assistant to help out with the incredible amount of paperwork that is being created. Linda will also be working with the directors to help out in any way she can so that the rest of us might take a minute to go riding in 2007.

Children's Riding Privileges Under Pressure

Recent developments in Eastern Canada may be a preview of things to come in Alberta.

Our sister associations in Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, and Quebec are already dealing with legislation that severely limits under 16 riders.

All of this is due to the help of the ATV and Off Road Motorcycle Industry. When looking for a new machine, keep in mind the



For more info from our new partner go to www.backroadmapbooks.com

names of the companies helping protect and improve your recreation: Honda, Yamaha, Suzuki, Kawasaki, Polaris, KTM, Arctic Cat, and Can-Am. Their help cannot be appreciated enough.

We are also creating co-operative relationships with a variety of partners. One of those is Backroad Mapbooks. Have a look at their website for more information.

Remember the annual meeting coming up

But now, New Brunswick has come up with proposed legislation that will outright ban ATV and trail bike riders under the age of 14, even on private property.

The groups that have been championing this cause are working in the rest of Canada to develop similar laws. All of us that ride with our families should be concerned. For

Ghost Access Management Plan

The Ghost Waiporous area has been an important part of motorised off roading for many years. Being very close to the city of Calgary has meant that there are a large number of enthusiasts taking advantage of the terrific trails and unbelievable scenery, but that of course has led to problems. The response of the government has been to institute significant reductions in available trails. This has led to problems for other areas that are now overloaded with riders.

All is not lost though. As part of the plan that came into force last spring, a committee of stakeholders was formed to discuss the possibilities of opening new trails, better management programs, as well as enforcement issues.

The AOHVA is part of this process and is working to bring back one of our provinces better riding areas. There have been some small changes already made due to the efforts of our Vice President., Bob Bolton, that have addressed some safety and other trail issues.

The Ghost/Waiporous area remains a high priority item that your association will not drop. It is of extreme importance to families throughout the province and to our form of recreation as a whole. It is also an important part of the economy in the area, potentially affecting service companies and dealerships throughout the area in a very negative way.

Make sure your public representatives know your views

News from here and there

- The ATV Quad Council of Canada is now officially in operation. Members include the provincial federations of Alberta (AOHVA), British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland.
- Quad Squad receives Alberta Stewardship Network, Water for Life Grant. The club recently received a grant from the ASN in the amount of \$5000 for the construction and installation of 2 pipe crossings in the York Creek area. The club has since applied for a second grant this

year for \$7,500 for another project in the Lost Creek area.

- Motorcyclists Confederations of Canada has formed an Off Highway Council to deal with OHV concerns throughout Canada. Current representation comes from Alberta (AOHVA), BC, Ontario, and Quebec.

Mission Statement of AQCC:

Assist and promote the provincial ATV/Quad federations

New Prince Edward Island Regulations Proposed

Prince Edward Island has recently approved new off road legislation, and is now bringing forward applicable regulations. Significant opposition is expected Some of the key proposals include:

- Youth under 14 years of age may ride an off road motorcycle under prescribed conditions
- Youth under 14 years of age will not be allowed to ride on an ATV
- Youth 14 to 16 years of age must take safety training and must be supervised by an adult
- People 17 years of age and older with a drivers license for at least 24 months will not be required to take training
- There will be funding to establish a provincial trail system
- New operator gear requirements including hel-

Our Sport Benefits Alberta Big Time

On January 31, 2007 the Canadian Off-Highway Vehicle Distributors Council (COHV) released an economic impact study completed by Smith Gunther Associates Ltd. of Nepean Ontario.

The highlights of that report based on 2005 data are that Canadians spent \$3.3 billion on activities directly involving ATVs and of that amount Albertans spent about \$495 million. Of these expenditures the two largest categories were for the purchase of ATVs at 25.4% and for the combination of food and accommodations at 24.9%.

The report highlights that the economic activity is concentrated in Ontario, Quebec and **Alberta**.

Using Gross Domestic Product (GDP), the most common measurement of economic activity, the Canadian impact of ATVs range between \$5.5 and \$7.5 billion dependent on whether or not government expenditures are included. Alberta GDP ranges between \$777 and \$959 million under the same assumptions.

By the time economic multiplier impacts are included direct Canadian employment of 24 thousand jobs yields between 92.5 and 123.4 thousand jobs. Alberta shows direct employment of 3.4 thousand jobs and under the same assumptions under economic multipliers yields between 11.6 and 14.1 thousand jobs.

The foundation of the study is the annual sales of ATVs and the total fleet of active ATVs. ATVs are estimated to be used 66% for recreation, 10% for commercial and 24% for agriculture and on private property.

The Canadian fleet is estimated at 975 thousand ATVs and the reported sales for 2005 amounted to 106.8 thousand. Alberta with a fleet of 109 thousand ranks third behind Quebec and Ontario with other provinces far behind in terms of fleet size. However, when it comes to sales Alberta is the growth market with sales of 24.4 thousand within a few hundred of Ontario's much larger population and within two thousand of Quebec who topped 2005 sales.

When it comes to government, the study indicates that ATVs contribute \$577.1 million to federal and provincial government revenues on a national basis. Of this amount Alberta is

shown to contribute \$68.5 million. I might ask what the government is doing to support this industry when it comes to trail infrastructure and competent management of this recreation that pays them so handsomely. I am left to conclude not much based on Alberta where more seems to be spent on removing and closing trails than on realizing the economic opportunities!

So what does all this mean? To me it says that the ATV industry, and we the users on which it is based, have a substantial economic impact on both the Canadian and provincial economies.

This means that those communities that welcome ATVs, provide environmentally responsible access to a safe, well maintained and managed trail system stand to reap significant economic rewards in the form of enhanced tourism.

Through responsible balanced development of the existing trail system, effective management and enforcement we have an opportunity to create a sustainable economic driver that can benefit our community and allows the public multi-user access to enjoy our backcountry.

Its about time you spoke to your Chamber of Commerce and MLA about this opportunity and the rights of access that stand to be lost or seriously impaired through the actions of radical environmentalists seeking to make our backcountry off-limits to many of its traditional users. Think about it - access to our public lands must be held as a privilege that no one has the right to take away. That privilege can only be earned and retained if how we conduct ourselves is environmentally responsible.

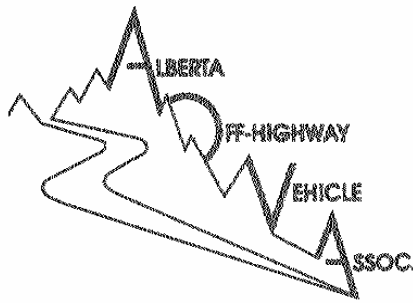
Hope you enjoyed a snapshot of the COHV economics study, some of my thoughts and a call to action to go with it.

Barry Harper

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Working to Keep You Riding

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Progress made on May Lake Trail

At a time when the motorized riding community has seen very little in the way of 'wins', work in the Lakeland has been substantial. After several years of pioneering trail inventory techniques, involving local government and community, work to address years of neglect and ever increasing usage on the May Lake Trail is coming to fruition.

The support to begin the restoration of Frozen Canyon and begin bridge building projects on the trail is getting ready to hit the ground this spring. The news here is not particularly that volunteers will be get work done on the ground, but the degree and depth of support this project has garnered.

Through careful public consultation and support seeking, local MLA Denis Ducharme has backed the project through community initiatives funding and the MD of Bonnyville Council has unanimously backed the effort in order to ensure critical work is completed prior to the upcoming May Long Weekend. There has been a revitalization of energy among the local sled, ATV and 4x4 clubs, as they are beginning to see the possibility of a significant success.

Further to drive to complete this work, Cal Rakach, AOHVA Technical Director and leader of the May Lake Project, was given specific instruction to continue efforts and apply the same trail planning principles to the Crane Lake-Tucker Lake area.

The goal is to provide connectivity in the region, from Cold Lake to the Lakeland Provincial Park, integrating the Iron Horse Trail, Trans Canada Sled Trail and other local trail infrastructure. By providing riders a place to ride, the expectation is that undesirable behavior will be curbed. Stewards are starting to take ownership of their trails and hard work; irresponsible actions will not be tolerated.

C. Rakach

Reminders: If you have not renewed for 2007 with either your club or AOHVA, now is the time to do so. Please do not delay. Your sport depends upon your support.

The AOHVA annual meeting is tentatively scheduled for April 29, 2007. Watch for more details on the AOHVA web site

Edmonton Sportsmens Show will have an AOHVA display. March 15 to 18 at the Agricom. Come see