



Willmore Wilderness Newsletter



Youth Venture into Willmore

We want to recognize this year's youngest traveler in Willmore. Jaely Moberly (age two weeks) was the smallest Willmore trail hand, and she traveled to Kvass Flats Camp on two occasions. A close second in the youngest category is five-week old Payden who went to Corral Creek Camp with big sister Brooklyn and his parents, Joey Landry and Tyler McMahon. The third youngest goes out to six-month old Zarina who traveled to Kvass Flats with her mother Becky Leonard. Special mention goes out to three-year-old Zachary and one-year-old Marcus, sons of Jim and Angela Leonard

who accompanied Zarina and her mom.

Continuing on in the youth theme, pictured above are youth who hiked to Kvass Flats Camp with their moms for a three-day camping trip in August. From left to right are travelers Payton with mom Jaeda Feddema, also holding Jaely on their second trip. The lovely Rowan is eating a cookie with her mom Kim Teneyck also holding son Julien, with son Kahleb to the right.

Pictured (from left to right) above are Jenn Houlihan, Angeen Hallock and Emy Hallock. We wish to commend Jenn and

Emy who both started 'wildies' that were running free in the mountains. Angeen also started a frisky four-year-old mare in the Larry Nelles Clinic. Our hats go off to these three ladies. The Willmore Wilderness Foundation sponsored these young women along with many other youth at the colt starting clinic.

Jenn, Angeen and Emy spent extensive time in Willmore Park this summer and fall riding their colts.

These three young ladies were filmed during the clinic for the movie "Wildie" currently in production. Way to go girls!



Willmore Bannock Queen

Gather around fellow riders
For a sad story I tell
About the Willmore Bannock Queen
Her slow descent to hell.

It all started with a challenge
That Queen Suzie threw out
*"My bannock is the best
Of that I have no doubt!"*

But her subjects all muttered
This cannot be true
For a stranger has arrived
And only his bannock will do.

The Queen she got mad
And said *"Off with his head!"*
But her subjects all demanded
A cook-off instead.

So it came to be
On one rainy night
The Queen & the stranger
Did meet for the fight.

The wood stove was fired
And ingredients a-mix
Honest judges were chosen
To ensure there was no fix.

Throughout the dark night
The bannock baked late
But soon it was time
And the judges set to ate.

It was amazing to see
The look on their faces
When the stranger's bannock
Was put in front of their places.

The contest is over.
They called out in glee
*"The strangers is better
And what's more its free!"*

The Queen was despondent
And started to cry.
She jumped on her horse
And off she did fly

Back home to her cabin
Tucked along the Kvass,
Where she can still be heard saying
"That Brian can kiss my ass!"

Anonymous



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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Hi Everyone:

It has been another busy year for the Willmore Wilderness Foundation. Of note, an extremely important piece of legislation called **Motion 507** was passed on April 12, 2010. Robin Campbell, West Yellowhead MLA introduced the Motion to the Alberta Legislature. **Motion 507** was designed to keep Willmore Wilderness Act intact. In the end, it will keep Willmore Wilderness Park unique, governed under its own legislation. A re-print of the Alberta Hansard Report dated April 12, 2010 is in this newsletter. It is well worth reading and will help everyone understand what went on behind the scenes. I would say that this shows excellent foresight on Robin Campbell's part.

One of our biggest education endeavors this year was the **Larry**

Nelles Colt Starting Clinic. The Foundation sponsored a dozen youth to attend. Two young teens brought 'wildies' that had been running freely in the mountains. The girls successfully started the wild mares. We also sponsored several teenage boys who started some pretty snuffy colts. All in all, the six-day clinic was a huge success. The youth, along with many participants who were young at heart, learned some valuable lessons from Larry Nelles. We were very pleased as three Jasper Park Wardens attended the clinic along with one Jasper Park Warden who was a spectator. Thanks to Danny Leonard and Cody Leonard who were a great help to Larry. We hope to bring Larry back again in June 2011.



Pictured Above: Basil Leonard
Bottom Left: Larry Nelles
Bottom Right: Brittney Penny
Photos by S. Feddema-Leonard

.... continued on Page 4





President's Report - continued from Page 3



Our trail clearing initiatives and garbage clean-up initiative went well. We would like to thank the Alberta Conservation Association for sponsoring garbage clean up and trail maintenance done in Willmore. We thank our volunteers Brian and Deana Bildson, Andrew Manske, and Virginia Moore who worked hard on a nineteen-day trip in August of this year. Our youth participants included Logan Leonard and Tyler Hallock.



In fact, the Foundation mentored eight youth during the 2010 Trail Clearing Initiatives. These youth were from Edson, Hinton and Grande Cache. A snow fence was among some of the garbage that the youth collected. Our volunteers and youth picked thousands of yards of pine beetle ribbon from trees. This type of plastic is not biodegradable. The youth also picked up campsite garbage, as well as doing basic trail maintenance



Garbage has been gradually accumulating in the Park since 2002. Foundation volunteers have been trying to keep the campsites and trails clean of trash, but the issue has reached critical mass. A coordinated effort needs to be organized with respect to garbage removal. Old barbed wire and metal posts are strewn throughout the Park, which SRD abandoned and have forgotten about. The wire is a hazard to wildlife and horses alike. We need to look at an organized plan regarding the collection of the abandoned research sites—whose researchers have long ago, gone and forgotten their scientific projects.

The Willmore Wilderness Foundation stocked various campsites in Willmore with firewood as a courtesy during the 2010 year. This

year we replenished Big Grave, Sulphur Cabin, Camp Awasuk, Little Grave, Boulder Creek and Porcupine Lick campsites with wood. This was done as bush etiquette, and we hope that people who use the Willmore would replace the firewood for the next party that comes along.

Alberta Parks is constructing half a dozen patrol cabins in Willmore. They started the building this year. The Willmore Foundation Executive is concerned about the location of some of these cabins. We feel that this is much more of a 'Big Brother' approach to managing the Park. In days gone by, the Alberta Forest Service and Fish and Wildlife used horses and tents like the rest of the Willmore users. Alberta Parks appear to be adopting a Jasper Parks style of management.

A second concern that surfaced this year is regarding the motion cameras that Alberta Parks is using extensively. The Board of Directors is very unhappy about the use of these cameras and feels that it is an invasion of privacy. Please read Brian Bildson's Article called "Big Brother," which elaborates on this.

We want to thank the Alberta Fish and Game Association and the Wild Sheep Foundation-Alberta Chapter for sponsoring the 2010 Grizzly Bear Survey. We have had twice as many sightings reported this year than in 2009. Our staff member, Jenn Houlihan is working very closely with Nathan Webb, the Provincial Carnivore specialist on the 2010 Survey. One thing I have noticed is that the number of reports of twins and triplets has increased dramatically. This would indicate a very healthy bear population. I would encourage you



to read "2010 Grizzly Survey Report" in the newsletter, which was put together by Jenn Houlihan and myself.

The Willmore Wilderness Foundation was awarded the Alberta Parks Trail Clearing Contract for Willmore Wilderness Park and Kakwa Wildland Park. The Kakwa Contract went well and the Board was very pleased with the help that Grande Prairie Parks staff supplied. They provided our trail clearing crew with helicopter support and use of their cabins

The Willmore Wilderness Trail Clearing Contract was going well until September when weather ground things to a halt. Six-inch snow conditions made it necessary to leave Porcupine Lick earlier than expected, as the snow conditions in the high alpine area was less than ideal to move an outfit through. All trails in that area are in poor condition and need a lot more work

We thank Ken South, Dave Wildman and Richard Aarsen who completed the Adams Creek and Collie Creek Trail. The re-route on the North Jack Knife was done

around the beaver dams and we want to thank Ken and Gordon Groat, who were working in extreme weather conditions and on some of the toughest trails that Willmore has. Brian Allen completed the work on the Little Berland and did a great job. We thank Ken and Shelli Groat, Tom Wanyandie, Dylan Kowalski and Banjo Hallock who completed work on Jack Knife Pass.

The Foundation did a lot of other work, which was not part of the Alberta Park Trail Clearing Contract. This work was completed as our Foundation felt the trails were in desperate need of clearing. We thank Ed Regnier who cleared trail from Blue Grouse Camp to half way up the Blue Grouse Pass. The Foundation cleared trail from Big Grave Cabin up to Rocky Pass. This portion of the trail was cleared by five youth that the Foundation mentored. These youth included Tyler Hallock, Banjo Hallock, Angeen Hallock, Eli Hallock and Jenn Houlihan. The youth ranged in age from thirteen to twenty. They were all proficient trail hands at the end of the trip.

Susan (Feddema-Leonard) continues with her writing and filming.

There are many developments on future book publications and film productions. I would encourage you to check out the Moccasin Telegraph regarding this. I would be remiss if I didn't thank Susan for all her hours in the mountains as a full-time trail hand. She also does the cooking, filming, journalizing and is the camp nurse. She helped me tremendously in this regard.

Last but not least, we depend on the support of our members at our yearly auctions and fundraisers. Without your support, we cannot do this kind of work. We are hoping for a good turnout for our fundraisers this year. The dates are listed in the Newsletter on Page 24.

Pictured Above: Participants take their colts out for their first ride

Opposite or Left Hand Page:

Top: Jasper Park Warden Patti Walker, one of three Wardens who started a colt at the clinic.

Middle: Tyler McMahon, a Willmore guide starts a colt at the clinic

Bottom: The crowd watches Larry Nelles a "horseman's horseman."

Photos by Susan Feddema-Leonard



VIEWS FROM SHEEP CREEK

Brian Bildson - Executive Director

BIG BROTHER IN THE BUSH



Brian Bildson traps a wolverine on his trapline at Sheep Creek

I've always been proud to be a Canadian. Not a rah-rah Yankee-style patriotism, but just damn proud of what this country has stood for over the years. Canadians have gone to several wars fighting and dying for what we believe in—democracy, human rights, and freedom. Yet somehow we've allowed our own freedoms to be slowly eroded right here at home.

I'd like to share one example of this slippery slope of loss of our rights, and not surprisingly, my battle is with the bureaucrats at Alberta Parks. Let me explain. Back in June of this year, a representative from the Foothills Research Institute (FRI) attended the AGM of the Willmore Wilderness Foundation. Peter was there to discuss a "Willmore Human Dimension" study

being conducted by Debbie Mucha, a U of A grad student. This study was being done in partnership with Alberta Parks, the U of A, and the FRI. The purpose of the study is "visitor-use analysis of Willmore Wilderness Park" in an effort to "help Parks identify users and deploy resources to benefit users and provide crucial data in **developing marketing strategies...**" It sounds pretty harmless on the surface, doesn't it?

At the AGM we were told that the information would be captured through in-person surveys and through the use of GPS tracksticks offered to Park visitors to track their movements throughout the Park. One of our members brought up the subject of trail cameras and was told by the representative that he had no knowledge of cameras being used.

Flash forward to August and my own personal trip deep into the Willmore. After three weeks on the trail, I had finally depressurized and reached that calm mental state that only the bush can bring. That is, until I met a bunch of irate cowboys on the trail. As our pack-string passed theirs, they called out, "Make sure you smile for the camera!" At which point I turned back to find out what they were talking about.

It wasn't much of a conversation as it essentially boiled down to the fact they'd spotted a trail camera set up taking pictures of anyone passing by on the trail, and they were mad about it. I couldn't blame them, but at that point I wasn't sure whose camera it really was. Once I hit civilization, it didn't take long to find out that the cameras were set up as part of the Human Dimension study.

I started to dig deeper and contacted Debbie Mucha who was in charge of the study. Debbie informed me that while they may not have mentioned the cameras at the AGM, they had put an ad in the Hinton newspaper about them. As I pushed for more evidence of the consultation process, Debbie went into defense mode, and that was the last I heard from her. At that point I felt that contacting Parks was the way to go.

To be clear here; the real issue is not the flawed public consultation/information process, although that is an all too-familiar trend with Parks. No, the Foundation's real concern is the use by Parks of the cameras for the purpose of capturing human images. In fact, the Board of the Willmore Foundation decided this



issue was too big to ignore and tasked me with pursuing this matter.

During the course of my investigation, I discovered that trail cameras are being used throughout Alberta Parks to capture human images. Whether it's an attempt to identify Willmore users or track snowmobilers in the Wild Kakwa, cameras have become pervasive in many of our Parks. How do you feel about that?

I know how I feel, and it's not good. Over the years I've bumped into several trail cams set up by Parks; however, by their location it was obvious they were there for species management purposes. From grizzly to wolverine camera set-ups, I've found them all. I've never complained about or tampered with the cameras, as I could see the rationale behind them.

So what's the big deal with a trail camera set-up for humans then? How about the slow erosion of our rights to privacy, in the very place it should be treasured and protected? Take a look at our society today. We've allowed fear, or apathy, to taint our common sense, and we have put cameras everywhere. Whether in the name of fighting crime or terrorism, cameras have become pervasive in our public spaces.

It was with this thought in mind that I entered into discussion with the managers at Parks. After much back-and-forth, an initial offer was made: back off for this year, and the cameras wouldn't be put in place next year. Our response was if they're not appropriate next year, they're not appropriate this year. I continued going back and forth on the matter with Parks, but in the end they are standing behind the project and continuing on with it.

While they may be standing behind

the Research, at the same time, I've sure noticed a lot of damage control. Foothills Research Institute has pulled their web page info on the project; U of A researcher Debbie Mucha has ceased all communications with us; and, coincidentally, they finally managed to run a piece in the Grande Cache paper on the project on September 29th—just before they terminated the project for the year. Doesn't sound much like a project they are proud of.

On the surface some folks may think, what's the big deal with cameras unless you've got something to hide? And besides, the cameras aren't there for enforcement purposes anyway, right? While we have nothing to hide, I'm not naïve, and when pushed, the regional manager conceded they would be used for enforcement purposes should the infraction be serious enough.

As for their other planned use for the data to develop marketing plans, I'd suggest they focus on actually making the Park safe for those new visitors. The trail systems are in disarray and trail map information still incorrect after years of Foundation input and corrections. It seems like Parks is in a hurry to get customers for a product that isn't yet safe for their own residents, let alone a foreign visitor. By the way, increased tourism was their rationale for pushing for a World Heritage designation for the Willmore as well.

At the end of the day though, this all comes down to one basic question. Do you believe there should be places for citizens to go where they can get away from it all—places where you have a reasonable expectation of privacy, and chance to connect to the land?



If you do, shouldn't a Wilderness Park by definition be that very place?

The world is changing at a blazing rate of speed. We have high speed communication tools everywhere, and our kids have disengaged from the real world, preferring instead to spend their time in some virtual world. In time our wilderness parks have the real potential of being an oasis of serenity in a too-fast and over-developed world. But apparently we need to be vigilant, or they'll just turn into another Banff or Jasper—beautiful destinations, but not a true wilderness.

The Willmore Wilderness Foundation was formed because of issues just like this. The members are committed to maintaining the original intent of the Willmore Act, and that does not include being photographed by researchers looking for an easy way to capture marketing data. Parks Minister Cindy Ady, at Calgary.shaw@assembly.ab.ca, is the perfect place to make your opinion known.

**Big Brother, back off,
and leave the Willmore wild!**



MARVIN (RED) CREIGHTON

by Jim Babala



Author, Jim Babala was a long-time Willmore Wilderness Park guide and outfitter.

Photo courtesy of Jim Babala

Marvin F. (Red) Creighton was born October 6, 1902 in Greenhill, Nova Scotia and moved to Alberta in 1920. He went to work at logging camps driving and breaking horses to work skidding logs and as teams. Red got to be known as one of the best teamsters in the business, driving four and six-ups. His horsemanship got to be well known among logging companies.

He next moved to Jasper, Alberta in 1924 and drove a dray team delivering coal and other services around the town of Jasper. In 1930 he started working for Jack Brewster breaking horses and as a guide. In 1936 he and Stan Kitchen formed a partnership in the outfitting business that lasted until 1943 when he sold his interest to Stan Kitchen.

In 1944 Red, in partnership with Larry McGuire, bought out Jack Brewster's outfitting business.

Jack Brewster had a number of young unbroken horses ranging along the Rocky River. These horses had never been handled or halter broke, as Jack hadn't been active for a number of years. Larry McGuire had grown up in Jasper and had worked as a guide and wrangler. He had helped outfitters in many horse roundups and also had experience in breaking horses. Larry and Red took on the job of breaking these horses, and they broke out forty head. The two of them started outfitting in partnership during the 1945 season and had a very successful year.

The next year they were booked up better than ever. That season they booked a party of five from Boston: a wealthy businessman by the name of Endicott. Endicott brought along his son, daughter, a friend of his daughter,

and his attorney of many years Col. J. K. Howard. Col. Howard had just returned to civilian life from the US Army and was recovering from a bout of malaria. He had been a colonel under Gen. Stillwell.

Larry McGuire was a good friend of John Haggblad, and he asked John if he would guide for them during the 1946 season. John was assigned to guide Col. Howard. As the colonel was just getting over malaria, he made the trip mostly to help regain his health—so he was taking it real easy. He was leisurely enjoying his trail ride, camp life and fishing. This outing was agreeing with the colonel, and he was feeling better than he had for some time.

John and the colonel decided to make a try for a goat as they had seen many goats low down on the mountains. Even in the valleys, goats were everywhere. The colonel thought a goat would make a nice rug for his daughter.

They made a spike camp and took a goat as well as a good buck mule deer. While spike camping, the topic of sheep hunting came up. The colonel was an experienced sheep hunter and had made several trips after sheep. He had made two trips with the famous Jim Simpson from Bow Lake who had taken the famous Simpson ram in 1924.

The best ram Col. Howard had taken with Simpson had a 39¼-inch curl with a light base and was taken in 1929. The colonel told Jim that he wanted a ram with a curl over 40 inches and a heavy base. John told the Colonel that he figured he could get one out of the Coal Branch area where he and his brother Nick used to hunt and outfit.

John told the colonel he had promised to guide for Babala Bros.



for the 1947 season. Babala Bros. were starting an outfitting business in Haggblad's old hunting area, the Coal Branch and Brazeau River. The colonel said he would make the hunt the following year if his health continued to improve and if John would guide him. He also made arrangements with Red Creighton to hunt elk in the Brazeau River area from September 1 to 21 of 1947 to get an elk with better than six points to the side. What he wanted was seven points to the side or better. He would then book with Babala Bros. from September 25 to October 12 and would confirm the hunt during February of 1947. This all depended on his health.

He phoned me during February, confirming the proposed hunt, but better yet, said his daughter would accompany him also as a hunter. This was Babala Bros.' first non-resident hunt from outside of Canada. This made John Haggblad the "grandfather" of Babala Bros. outfitting and Red Creighton the "godfather." I have much to be grateful for to both these men. Without their help and good words of recommendation of the Coal Branch area, I don't believe we would have booked this hunt.

The Endicott party had a very successful hunt, taking a fine bag of mixed trophies. The best rams taken were in the 37 to 38-inch class. No 40-inch rams were seen, and now more than ever, this encouraged the colonel to hunt the Coal Branch area.

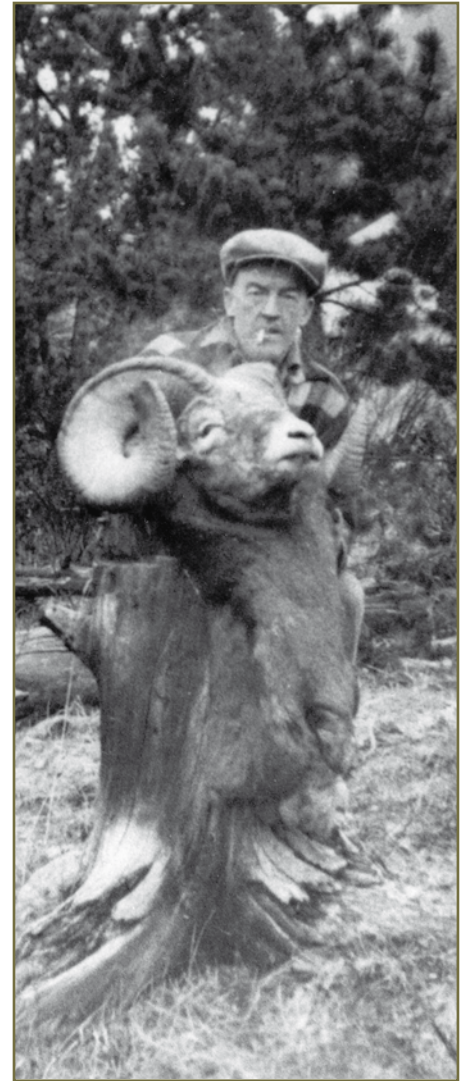
John Haggblad came back very pleased with his trip with Red and Larry. He was very impressed at how well Red was organized and how well he managed his outfit. John suggested it would be good experience for me

to work a trip or two with Red and Larry, but due to involvement in my own outfitting business and constant bookings, I was unable to do this.

Red continued to take good rams in the Kvass area, taking an exceptionally good head in 1949. Ed Moberly guided a hunter to a 41½-inch ram during that season. Red told me he felt the wrong hunter had taken this fine ram, as he was definitely not a sheep hunter. Red said that the goat this hunter also took meant as much to him as the fine ram. He was not a trophy hunter, and it was his first big game hunt and probably his last. Red said he never heard from the hunter again, as quite often happens when a hunter only makes one trip in a lifetime.

Red Creighton bought out Larry McGuire in 1951, and Larry joined the Park Warden Service. Red carried on, however, running a first class outfit. He retired from the outfitting business in 1964 and sold his business and the Black Cat Ranch to Dave Slutker from Edmonton. On his retirement Red lived in the Brule and Hinton area and worked during the winter months in Hinton and Jasper as an ice maker for winter sports.

He was an expert at making curling ice. Curling is a very popular winter sport in Canada. As well, Red did a lot of carpentry and eventually built himself a home in Brule where he retired and lived permanently. I visited Red for the last time in late November 1984 and spent an evening with him. I had just come back from hunting Whitetail deer in the Czar-Provost area of Alberta and was feeling pleased as I had taken a fine record book Whitetail, scoring 171-3/8 points.



Red Creighton in 1949 with a Record Book Ram on the Sulphur River that was not officially recorded.

Photo courtesy of Jim Babala



The Moccasin Telegraph



Susan Feddema-Leonard
Photo by Jaeda Feddema

Thanks to the
Government of Alberta's
Rural Community
Adaptation Grant Program
& to MLA Robin Campbell

Many changes have hit Alberta's eastern slopes over the past half century. The traditions, culture and business of the people who have lived in this region for generations have been threatened. In order to become proactive and help remedy this situation, the Willmore Wilderness Foundation applied to Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development for funding to help the mountain business community make a transition into today's economy. The Foundation developed the Transition to Traditions initiative, which was successfully funded through the Government of Alberta's Rural Community Adaptation Grant Program.

Transition to Traditions will spend two and a half years focusing on the transition of a traditional economy on Alberta's eastern slopes. The project will end in September 2011. *Transition to Traditions* is designed in part to create a database of the old time knowledge and resources in the region. The program also focuses on producing and disseminating educational videos and material, featuring the old time traditions of the area. The initiative hopes to facilitate a strategy to help a traditional business sector keep its operations viable. The main goal of the Transitions Program is focused on facilitating the mountain community, businesses and stakeholders into a unique way of doing business.

The Willmore Board of Directors felt it imperative to find a way to give the mountain culture, traditions and businesses a second breath of life. What better way than through multimedia. The Foundation had vision and believed that educational film production was a key ingredient to get "the mountain story out there."

The big question was, "Was it possible to get film productions to a television standard, so that the story could be seen by a wider audience?" There was so much to learn and a big mountain of knowledge to climb.

The Foundation started the big task of filming old timers and getting their interviews for posterity. These interviews were transcribed and placed in a database. In fact, the Foundation is still in the process of interviewing and transcribing. Editor Estella Cheverie and author Susan Feddema-Leonard are working on three more books and hope to go to press with one of them in the spring of 2011. All of the publications are about the people and peaks of Alberta's eastern slopes.

The Foundation has also acquired a state of the art film production studio. *People & Peaks Productions* was registered with Consumer and Corporate Affairs as a Trade Name under the Willmore Wilderness Foundation. Susan Feddema-Leonard, Film Producer and Director, explored educational options and became a successful graduate of the Serac Adventure Film School in Colorado and two Banff Adventure Filmmakers Seminars. She had the good fortune to study under the world-renowned Film Producers Michael Brown and Keith Partridge.

The next step was to develop a movie production team. The Foundation decided to enlist the services of the mountain community musicians and film production personnel, subcontracting out many of the projects. For example, the Foundation secured the services of Laura Vinson and Free Spirit to write some original songs about Alberta's eastern slopes. Laura was an ideal





Working on Long Road Home's postproduction sound at Dave Martineau's recording studio in Brule Alberta. Pictured from left to right are Susan Feddema-Leonard, Jerry Woolsey and Dave Martineau.

Photo by Dawn Woolsey

choice as she was born and raised in the Rockies. She was the perfect person to do the job as she has been nominated many times for the National Juno and Canadian Country Music Awards. Laura and her band Free Spirit have many ARIA Awards for best Band, Vocalist, Album, Single, and Song.

We were also fortunate to be able to hire Dave Martineau who did all the pre-production sound. Dave, a resident of Brule is a singer, songwriter, producer and multi-instrumentalist. His musical proficiency has resulted in two nominations for Pedal Steel Player of the Year in the Canadian Country Music Association Awards. A native Albertan and well-known session player/performer, he has provided instrumental as well as vocal tracks on numerous recordings across western Canada. Dave has performed over the years with people such as Tommy Banks, The Edmonton Symphony Orchestra, Ian Tyson, Crystal Gayle, kd lang, Laura Vinson, Tommy Hunter, Ronnie Prophet, Dick Damron and Wilf Carter.

Next, the Foundation had to enlist a post-production soundman. We were very fortunate to bring on board, Jerry Woolsey who has over thirty-five years experience as a performing musician, engineer, producer and technician. Jerry has

worked in film post-production sound with clients such as the National Film Board of Canada, Karvonen Films, Alliance Entertainment, LucasArts Entertainment, Northstar Entertainment, Frame 30, Great North, Kicking Horse, and many other production companies. Film and video shows have included *Bye Bye Blues*, *Due South*, *The Diviners*, *The X Files*, *Jake and the Kid*, *Kung Fu - The Legend Continues*, *Lonesome Dove*, *Medicine River*, *Moccasin Flats*, *North of 60*, *Ordeal in the Arctic*, *The Outer Limits*, *Pigeons and Doves*, and more. He has two Junos under his belt for work with Long John Baldry and The McDades.

There was no second choice though when it came to finding a narrator. Ken Groat was the number one man to provide professional narrations. His roots run deep in the Canadian Rockies for more than two hundred years. Ken has more than five generations of knowledge and experience behind him. His leadership is invaluable, and he is an excellent spokesperson for the traditional knowledge, values and culture of the eastern slopes. He has a unique ability and is an outstanding narrator.

The production team needed an expert to guide the overall process to ensure quality control. The

Foundation contracted Andrew Manske, a cinematographer, editor and director who has more than ten years experience in the television industry. Andrew and Brian Bildson, Executive Director for the Willmore Wilderness Foundation guided the production team as they edited the first documentary, *Long Road Home*.

It was the team's first time working together and it didn't take long for the synergy to develop. *Long Road Home* was the end result. It is a HD documentary that focuses on the history of the formation of Jasper National park. The story features a fourteen-day return trip of the descendants of six families who were evicted from the Park in 1909. The forty-five minute production featured a Centennial Commemorative Journey in 2009—the *long road home* after one hundred years. Stories were shared through the voices of the descendants as they revealed their fight to preserve traditions, culture and a way of life as Mountain Métis.

Producer/Director Susan Feddema-Leonard decided that she wanted to get a second opinion on the technical and artistic quality of *Long Road Home*. She wanted to know if it would stand up to the



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A person may become a member by a favourable vote passed by a majority of members at a regular meeting of the Foundation, and upon payment of the fee. Written notification will be sent to accepted members with a membership card.

\$25.00 per year.
 Life Time Membership is \$500.00
 Corporate Membership is \$100.00 per year.
 The membership year runs from Jan 1 to Dec 1.
 Annual General Meeting in June of each year.

An independent newsletter published in December & June.

ADVERTISING RATES:
 full page ad B & W - \$295.00
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 Contact our Editor at
info@willmorewilderness.com

Join Our Membership -

Find out about what's happening in Willmore. Get the latest news, issues and developments! We will keep in touch with our members in an annual newsletter each January. We keep you up-to-date on important events and information. Articles or letters to the editor are always welcome. Join today!

A person may become a member by a favourable vote passed by a majority of voting members at a regular meeting of the Foundation, and upon payment of the fee. Written notification will be sent to accepted members with a membership card. The membership year runs from January 1 to December 31. Yearly Membership is as follows:

- \$25.00 Individual Membership
- \$35.00 Family Membership
- Life Time Membership \$500.00
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date	





Moccasin Telegraph by Susan Feddema-Leonard, continued from Page 11

technical challenges of HD television. She decided to email one of her instructors, Michael Brown, who has received over forty international film festival and industry awards, including three Emmys from five nominations. She hoped for some honest feedback.

Michael is a busy man and Susan was very pleased when he emailed back a response. He stated, "I think your film is really interesting and does a great job of telling a story from the inside. The cinematography, sound and technical aspects are impressive." Michael went on to give her some ideas on how her team could make productions for a wider audience. He provided some tips and tricks to make future films stronger. Susan was elated with his comments.

People & Peaks Productions will be provided to the educational system, so that local youth can learn more about local history, culture and traditions.

The documentaries will also be marketed to television, both nationally and internationally.

There is some anticipation that *People & Peaks Productions* has a strong potential to have huge spin-off effects for the entire economic region. The Foundation's film production company is in the beginning phases of building regional partnerships to promote the eastern slopes of Alberta through international tourism initiatives.

Many people do not know that Willmore Wilderness Park is Improvement District #25. The Willmore Wilderness Foundation is the steward of Willmore Wilderness Park and is actively maintaining its infrastructure, as well as marketing and promoting the Rocky Mountain playground. The Foundation intends to be sitting at the table with other Improvement Districts and

Municipalities in the near future, promoting Alberta's best-kept secret—Willmore Wilderness Park. *People & Peaks Productions* will detail the majesty and beauty of Alberta's Rockies, along with the historic values, culture and traditions.

The *Transition to Traditions* initiative is breathing a new life force into the mountain community and business sector, so that there is a new generation of activity. We thank the Government of Alberta's Rural Community Adaptation Grant Program, Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development, and to MLA Robin Campbell for their vision and belief in this exciting and unique project.

For more information go to <http://www.PeopleandPeaks.com> or <http://www.WillmoreWilderness.com>.

MARVIN (RED) CREIGHTON by Jim Babala - continued from Page 9

I had a great time talking about the good old days with Red, and as I had recently returned from New Zealand, we had something else in common to talk about. I had taken red deer, fallow deer and chamois. Red had made a trip to New Zealand in the late 1940s with Colonel Howard. The colonel had hunted in New Zealand on different occasions and was very impressed with the numbers of game animals there. He had talked with government officials there about starting a hunting and outfitting service for visiting non-resident hunters. He had made a trip with Red to New Zealand for this purpose, but Red decided against starting a business there. As Red put it, there was too much damn government red tape, bureaucracy and money problems controlled by the New Zealand Government.

At the time I visited him, Red was eighty-two years old and his mind was very keen and active. His memory could not have been better, even as a young man. His health was failing. He had a severe calcium deficiency and was just recovering from a broken arm. His bones were so fragile that as he went to throw out an old portable TV set, his arm bone snapped.

As Red told me, "Jim, it's hell to get old when your mind wants to do something but your body can't."

I have seen many old people who have had a hard time remembering things, but who were fine physically. Red's case was the opposite. His mind was sharp as a tack, but his body was worn out. While we were visiting, Red commented that

this would be his last winter as he didn't expect to be around for another one.

I looked at Red and said, "Hell, Red, you'll be here next fall and we'll cook up a feed of halibut and salmon. You take care, and I'll see you then."

Red invited me to spend the night with him, but I had promised friends in Edson I would join them on a deer hunt, as I still was hunting for a trophy mule deer. I left, telling Red I would see him the next October.

Red said, "I hope so, but don't bet on it, Jim, as there's not much left in this old hide."

I thought of this as I drove to Edson. Red contracted pneumonia and died in the Hinton Hospital early March—another of Alberta's great guides, outfitters, and outdoorsmen gone.



GRIZZLY FINDINGS

2010 Grizzly Bear Survey Report Synopsis

by Bazil Leonard and Jenn Houlihan

The Willmore Wilderness Foundation started the Grizzly Bear Survey to help achieve an accurate population census in Alberta. This is the third year that the Foundation has been running the survey. It is sponsored by the Alberta Fish and Game Association (AFGA), Wild Sheep Foundation: Alberta Chapter (WSF), and the Willmore Wilderness Foundation. Because of the partnership, we were able to advertise full-page and full-color ads in every issue of Alberta Bow Hunter's Association (ABA), Alberta Trapper's Association (ATA), and the Alberta Fish and Game Association (AFGA). We were able to advertise half-page full-color ads in Alberta Outdoorsmen Magazine. Our advertising campaign has proven to be positive, as we have had many more grizzly bear sightings this year.

Three years ago some of the scientists were reporting as few as thirty bears north of Highway 16. Our staff couldn't believe this unbelievably low count and wondered what planet the scientists were from. In the Grande Cache area, grizzlies were live-trapped in the school yard at Susa Creek. They were also reported to Fish and Wildlife as being on the Muskeg Co-op, Joachim Enterprises Co-op, and many other local locations. The bears were becoming more brazen and were coming into many of the local outfitter camps. The Foundation decided to "take the bull by the horns" and conduct a survey.

Jenn Houlihan has spent the entire year working on the Grizzly Bear Survey. She works closely with

Nate Webb, the Provincial Carnivore Specialist with Alberta Sustainable Resources Development (ASRD). All of Jenn's data is sent to Nate Webb and placed into the Provincial Database. In an e-mail to Jenn Houlihan dated August 3, 2010, Nate stated "Ultimately, we'll need to put the Willmore Foundation grizzly bear sightings into this format in order to load it into our system, which then makes the info readily available to all ASRD staff in the entire province. We can do this here in Edmonton, or if you have the time, I can explain to you how you can load your data directly into these files, or transfer it from your database into this one." Jenn is really excited about working with Nate, and the public will be getting a much more comprehensive grizzly bear census.

The following represents some of the key points that Jenn gathered in the 2010 Grizzly Bear Survey.

The survey to date has calculated five hundred and seventy-five sightings from February to November. We expect one hundred or so more sightings by the end of the reporting period (Dec 31). The reason we do not have all the sightings in from everyone is because most of the outfitters and guides are hunting until the end of November. They usually phone or e-mail their reports in December.

The number of grizzly sightings has doubled compared to last year's survey. So far eighteen sows have been spotted with triplets, equalling fifty-four cubs. Thirty-five sows have also been observed with twins, equalling seventy cubs. This data does not include sows with one cub. Momma

grizzlies appear to be doing fine.

We have collected a large image database, which can differentiate between bears that have been spotted in the same area. Jenn will be putting together a PowerPoint of all of the 2010 images, which will be shown at our conventions. We will be giving copies of the PowerPoint CDs to AFGA and WSF to show our appreciation for their sponsorship.

It is interesting to note that bears have been reported as far south as the Montana Border and spotted as far west as the Alberta-British Columbia Border. They have been seen as far north as High Level and as far east as the Whitecourt area. One interesting set of images we have shows grizzly bears walking right through the town of Cranbrook, B.C. One news report detailed how a bear walked right through Canmore, AB—in broad day light.

In October there was a report of a bear disturbing cows in the Dovercourt area north of Caroline. A bear claimed a dead cow as his own. The bear had been seen in that area almost every night. One other bear killed two miniature breeding donkeys on a woman's property just west of Grande Prairie in May. Officers told her that the bear had been trapped and moved out of Alberta into northern B.C. last year after killing another miniature donkey near Sundre. Grizzlies decided to sample some pigs north of Cochrane in the fall of 2009. I guess they had quite a feed.

There have been reports of grizzly bears charging people in the Sheep Creek area near Mountain Aire



This buffalo was spotted in
April at 7:00am
in Yellowstone National Park..

The photographer described the sound of a "horse and carriage" The buffalo was apparently scalded by a geyser at Yellowstone. The grizzly was chasing the buffalo and was quickly gaining on him. We have a newspaper article and link with many other images that accompany this story. For more information email Jenn Houlihan at grizzly@willmorewilderness.com

Lodge, Willmore Wilderness Park, Edson, and Lethbridge areas. A man was attacked on the Berland Road north of Hinton in June. Luckily his dog distracted the bear long enough so that he could get away with only a bite mark in his boot and a fairly small puncture wound in his foot. We have the official report that was issued by West Fraser Hinton Wood Products on this incident.

In October at Kvass Flats in the Willmore Wilderness Park, an experienced guide/hunter came across a bear that was moving an elk carcass. The bear acted very aggressive towards the man. A week later two hunters were on the flats and they came across what they believed to be a bear's cache. There were skulls and carcasses where the grizzly had buried them in a pit about six feet in diameter.

Near Hinton there was a report of a man hunting deer in his tree stand. A grizzly bear came sniffing around and caught his scent. The bear took off. About an hour later the man went to have his lunch and a bathroom break. Well instead of climbing down the tree stand he just went off the side of the tree stand—which was probably a smart choice on his part. He looked down and saw this big bear standing below him with its nose at

his feet. He quickly started to stomp on his tree stand and yell. The bear dropped down and ran out of sight. The man quickly got off the stand and started walking to his truck about an hour away. He claimed this to be the longest hour of his life.

The survey indicates that there has been an increase of bears showing little fear of humans. It is evident that the bear population is steadily growing. Bears are adapting to new habitat and prey—donkeys, cows, and pigs and are getting more aggressive towards humans.

More people are participating and are aware of the Willmore Wilderness Grizzly Bear Survey, but we believe that there are many more grizzly sightings that have not been reported to us.

In conclusion, we live in a land where there are both predators and prey. Our ancestors were smart enough to maintain their role as the top predator, but with lack of management, the grizzly has lost his fear of man and is increasingly becoming the dominant predator.

We would like to thank AFGA and Wild Sheep Foundation: Alberta Chapter for their ongoing support. The 2011 Grizzly Bear Survey promises to be better yet—with the support of the public and their sightings.

We live in a land where there are both predators and prey. Our ancestors were smart enough to maintain their role as the top predator, but with lack of management, the grizzly has lost his fear of man and is increasingly becoming the dominant predator.



MOTION 507 – WILLMORE WILDERNESS PARK - APRIL 12, 2010



The Willmore Wilderness Act and Motion 507 ensures that future generations will be able to use Willmore Wilderness Park, just like the mountain men of yesteryear.

Thank you Robin Campbell

Photo by:
Susan Feddema-Leonard.



5:07 Mr. Campbell moved:

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to not bring forward changes to the Willmore Wilderness Park Act which would restrict traditional land uses such as outfitting, trapping, hunting, and fishing.

Mr. Campbell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure today to talk about Motion 507. The Willmore wilderness area is in my riding just north of Grande Cache, and it encompasses over 4,600 square kilometers of land. The purpose of this motion is to ensure that the government of Alberta continues to recognize as is the Willmore Wilderness Park Act. This act promotes the management and conservation of resources within the Willmore wilderness park and provides the legislative assurance of traditional activities like outfitting, trapping, hunting, and fishing. Activities like hunting and fishing are key elements of conservation, and it is those who participate in these activities who are the conservationists. By continuing to support their activities, as Motion 507 urges, the Willmore wilderness park will continue to be preserved for future generations.

Mr. Speaker, I think it's important to note that Grande Cache became the home for a number of aboriginal families in 1905 and 1906 after they were asked to leave Jasper national park, and today, you know, a hundred years later, many of the descendants of these families continue to hunt, fish, and outfit in the Willmore.

The Willmore is still a pristine wilderness area but does have some pressures. The mountain pine beetle has the capability of destroying the old-growth forests that line the river valleys within the 4,600 square kilometers.

Mr. Speaker, this is an area that is for the most part self-governed. Of course, SRD patrols through fish and wildlife officers and parks has their officers patrolling, but it's the people who use the landscape on a regular basis that understand its true value and keep its integrity intact. It is these people that clean the trails and look to see that those using the area do so in a responsible manner and at times help

those who are not experienced and get themselves in trouble.

This is a true wilderness area fraught with dangers for those not properly equipped or experienced in outdoor activities. In my own experience of over 25 years of guiding, I could spend the whole afternoon talking about people who've had to be rescued or supported because they were not outfitted properly or were outside of their capabilities. The Willmore is one of those areas, Mr. Speaker, that can provide that.

This area is also located on the Continental Divide. The divide provides many streams and rivers that supply water to the Peace and Athabasca rivers. Other rivers within the park are the Sheep, Jackpine, Smoky, Berland, Sulphur, Muskeg, and Wildhay. In many of these rivers and streams within the park are Rocky Mountain whitefish, rainbow trout, and bull trout.

Mr. Speaker, this park was created in 1959, when local residents were concerned about the amount of roads that the oil and gas sectors were developing through the region. Norman Willmore, who at the time was the MLA for Edson, lobbied for and eventually had the area declared a wilderness park where trapping and fishing would be permitted; however, all motor vehicles were restricted from the area. The only permitted transportation is by foot, horse, or bicycle. These regulations were reflected in the Willmore act.

Mr. Speaker, the current situation we face is that Alberta Tourism, Parks and Recreation along with Parks Canada and B.C. Parks have been considering a new nomination for UNESCO world heritage status of the Canadian Rocky Mountain parks, which could include the Willmore wilderness park along with other protected areas that are adjacent to the current UNESCO designation. I quote from the Alberta Tourism, Parks and Recreation website.

Alberta Parks is in early discussions with Parks Canada and B.C. Parks on the possibility of expanding the current Canadian Rocky Mountain Parks World Heritage Site. Should the expansion have clear benefits, the



project committee will consult with the public, affected stakeholders, communities, First Nations and Métis, and government departments in both provinces before proceeding with submission of a re-nomination package to UNESCO.

Parks Canada states:

Four other contiguous protected areas on the Alberta side would also merit consideration in a re-nomination of this site [the Canadian Rocky Mountain Parks World Heritage Site]. These include the Ghost River and White Goat Wilderness's (IUCN category I), Peter Lougheed Provincial Park, and the Willmore Wilderness Park. All of these offer high quality habitat, equivalent and complementary in value to the existing World Heritage site. The inclusion of these six additional contiguous provincial protected areas would result in a 13-park World Heritage complex and an approximate 25% size increase [in area].

Mr. Speaker, I think it's important to understand what the Willmore Wilderness Park Act says.

In this Act,

- (a) "land" means land of the Crown in right of Alberta;
- (b) "Park" means the Willmore Wilderness Park established by this Act.

Under part 3 of the act, Use of Park, it states:

The Park is dedicated to the use of the people of Alberta for their benefit, education and enjoyment, subject to this Act and the regulations, and shall, by the management, conservation and protection of its natural resources and by the preservation of its natural beauty, be maintained for the enjoyment of future generations.

Also, part 4 of the act says under industrial activities:

No person may conduct any industrial activities, including, but not limited to, mining, geological and geophysical explorations, water management, hydro-electric power and pulp and paper mills, saw mills and other forestry related industries, within the Park.

I think that the park and the act as it stands now will serve the province of Alberta well. I know that in my riding

there has been unanimous consent by the people in the Grande Cache area to leave the Willmore as it is. I've also attended a number of functions, Mr. Speaker, across Alberta put on by the Willmore wilderness foundation, where people have continued to say: "Leave the park the way it is. Let us be stewards of that land. We use it, we know what we're doing, and we have to look after it as it should be."

Mr. Speaker, I think that when you look at the UNESCO sites, there are a number of things that I have concerns over. One is the protection and management. Protection and management of world heritage property should ensure that the outstanding universal value and the conditions of integrity and/or authenticity at the time of inscription are maintained or enhanced in the future. All properties inscribed on the world heritage list must have adequate long-term legislative, regulatory, institutional, and/or traditional protection and management to ensure their safeguarding. This protection should also include adequately delineated boundaries. Similarly, state parties should demonstrate adequate protection at the national, regional, municipal, and/or traditional level for the nominated property.

Mr. Speaker, you know, I've spent some time dealing with UNESCO sites, being that I live in and represent West Yellowhead. I also live in Jasper national park, which is a world heritage site. I can talk to you about when we were involved in the Cheviot mine and trying to get that mine going south of Hinton, which was an expansion of the Cardinal River coal mine. I can remember the letter I got from the UNESCO world heritage people saying that the Cardinal River mine should not go ahead because of its proximity to a world heritage site. That mine is in production today, employs over 300 people, and is one of the main economies of the town of Hinton. It is also a wildlife sanctuary. There are grizzly bears, there are elk, there are deer, there are moose, there are wolves, and there are cougars all within that mine site. Sheep: actually, people pay up to \$250,000 for the minister's permit to shoot bighorn sheep, which come off that property of Cardinal River.

The other thing that concerns me, Mr. Speaker, with UNESCO's designation is buffer zones. Wherever necessary for the proper conservation of the property an adequate buffer zone should be provided. For the purpose of the effective protection of the nominated property a buffer zone is an area surrounding the nominated property which has complementary legal and/or customary restrictions placed on its use and development to give an added layer of protection to the property.

Mr. Speaker, when you look at the size of the Willmore wilderness area, it's 4,600 square kilometers. When you get outside of the Willmore area, especially to the east and the south, you're into Grande Cache and the eastern foothills of the Rockies. One of the important economic developments that is happening across this country now is shale gas. Shale gas deposits are prominent within the Grande Cache and area south towards Hinton, and I can tell you that companies like EnCana, Talisman, CNRL are all working towards developing those areas. Those areas are also a major economic boom to this province. As we see conventional gas prices start to decline and we see oil prices up and down, we need the shale gas. Also, we have coal mines and coal mine deposits all along the eastern slopes of the Rockies.

5:10

If you look at a buffer zone, Mr. Speaker, what would be considered adequate? Is it one mile? Is it five miles? Is it 10 miles? Is it 20 miles? In the Grande Cache area the town of Grande Cache butts right up against Willmore Wilderness Park. You have Foothills Forest Products that, if they were within the buffer zone, would go under. That's 265 people unemployed in the town of Grande Cache. You've got Grande Cache Coal, which butts up right next to Willmore wilderness area. That would be over 500 people out of work in Grande Cache. You have ConocoPhillips, EnCana, CNRL, Talisman, you know, that employ hundreds of people in the Grande Cache area.

... continued on page 26



TALES AND TRAILS IN THE WILDERNESS – BY ETHEL MILLER

Chapter Seven: The Caribou Hunt



All of a sudden, Charlie pulled Casey to a halt and motioned to me to look towards the north. He could see a caribou coming in our direction, but it was quite a distance away. We had never hunted for caribou before and were not too sure how alert they were, but the wind was in the north so was in our favour.

Photo by Susan Feddema-Leonard.

In the late 1960s, we decided we would try to get a caribou on one of our fall hunting trips. During the summers when we had been out in Willmore Wilderness Park, we had often seen caribou in the areas we traveled. At that time we only had three horses. We planned on being out for a week in early September, so we borrowed Carl's four pack horses and rigging. That gave us five pack horses and lots of space to pack a good supply of food, a stove and tent. At that time we did not have our sail silk tent, but Carl had a huge 12' x 12' silk pyramid tent that he told us to take, along with a stove. The weather was really warm, and the leaves were all changing colour—just a beautiful fall. Charlie got a caribou license along with the usual elk and moose. I just got a deer license and didn't bother getting a caribou one, as we doubted that we would be lucky enough to come across a herd. A couple years earlier, I had taken a Hunter Trainer's course and carried a thirty-thirty in the scabbard on my horse. Charlie always carried a bigger gun, a model 95 Winchester 30 US caliber in his scabbard.

Carl helped us haul the horses out to Rock Lake on August 31st and spent the evening with us around the camp fire relating many tales of his trips out in the bush. He had brought along his sleeping bag and decided to stay the night so he could help Charlie pack up the horses in the morning and get us away in good time. It was a warm evening, so we didn't pitch a tent. Charlie and Carl just slept in their sleeping bags on the ground, but I chose to sleep in my sleeping bag in one of the trucks.

At the beginning of September, daylight didn't arrive too early, but Charlie and Carl were up early getting the horses fed, saddled and packed up for our trip. We planned to put in a pretty good day's travel and were on the trail in good time that morning. The four pack horses traveled well together and had been down that road many times. Our pack horse Joe got put into his place every time he tried to change his spot in the string of pack horses. I brought up the rear and had to keep an eye on the horses to make sure no ropes came undone or that any packs slipped. But this day, even though the day was hot—probably twenty degrees—we made good time and got to the head of the Hay (River) Campground where we set up camp. It was just a perfect day, warm but no flies around, and a mild breeze was blowing. The meadow out from the campground was knee-deep with grass.

From the camp you could look out and see where the horses were, but with the grass so good and water nearby, they didn't wander. They were all hobbled or on picket ropes, so we had a relaxing time once we had the tent and stove up. We gathered a good pile of wood but doubted that we would need to use much of it, seeing it was so mild. I took a few pictures around the campsite and out towards the mountains where there was not a cloud in the sky.

During the night I woke up. It was very quiet and felt quite chilly in the tent, but after a few minutes, I just sank farther into my sleeping bag and drifted off to sleep. What a surprise in the morning—the ground was covered with snow! Clouds were hanging low on the mountains west



of us and everything was wet outside. What a difference from yesterday. We were glad we had put a pile of wood inside the tent and had the stove set up. It was not snowing anymore but was very overcast, and there was quite a drop in the temperature.

After we had breakfast, we checked on the horses. They were all okay and eating away, but the picket ropes and hobbles were wet and dirty. We decided to take Charlie's horse Casey and my horse Sandy and go out towards the mountains to see if we could see any game. We left the pack horses hobbled in the meadow and headed out.

We went up towards Persimmon Creek but had not been on the trail very long before it started to snow again, and the clouds socked in around the mountain tops. It was difficult at times to see just where we were heading.

All of a sudden, Charlie pulled Casey to a halt and motioned to me to look towards the north. He could see a caribou coming in our direction, but it was quite a distance away. We had never hunted for caribou before and were not too sure how alert they were, but the wind was in the north so was in our favour.

We both got off our horses. Charlie grabbed his gun out of the scabbard and told me to hang onto Casey and get back out of sight with the horses. He would try to keep out of sight but get closer to the caribou. So I took the horses and got back behind some scrub and rocks. Sandy was always alert to things going on around him, and all of a sudden he let out a big whinny as he spotted the caribou. I gave his head a jerk and tried to keep him quiet as I was sure

he would have spooked the caribou. By this time I was not sure where Charlie was or how close he had got to the animal. But nothing doing, Sandy gave another whinny, and to my surprise, I could see the caribou coming towards us. It was snowing pretty hard by then. The caribou was half trotting, and every now and then, he would grab a mouthful of grass as he approached.

About this time though, Charlie had him in his gun sight and let fire. The caribou dropped to the ground. There were a couple more coming behind him, and they seemed to be curious and still kept coming closer to see what was happening. Because I didn't have a license, I was not able to bag one. I still had the horses in tow, and they seemed to be more afraid of the gunshot than the caribou were.

I tied up the horses and helped Charlie as he skinned, gutted and cleaned up the animal. It was getting bitterly cold on the bare hands. As we worked on the animal, I was thinking more about the cold than how I was using the knife, and the first thing I knew, I had taken a slice off my finger. It bled for a while, but shortly after I was not sure if it was my blood or from the caribou, as my hands were covered with warm blood! Caribou are pretty small animals, but the meat has to be the best tasting wild meat there is—at least in my opinion. There has not been a season on them for quite a few years now, but if they are all as curious as those were, it's no wonder that they were fast disappearing.

Once we got it dressed out, we decided to leave it there and get a pack horse to bring it back into camp. We picked up one of the pack horses,

Charlie pack-saddled him and once again headed out to where the animal was. Shortly before we got in sight of the kill, Charlie got off his horse and loaded his gun. We approached cautiously just in case a bear had come across the carcass while we were away. It was still snowing hard and no tracks were visible. Much to my relief, there was no bear there, and everything was the same as we had left it. The pack horse never flinched as the animal was loaded on his back, but my horse didn't care for the smell of blood. He did a bunch of snorting when I first tried to mount him because I still had blood on my hands from loading the meat.

Once we got back to camp, we unsaddled the horses and put them out in the meadow to graze before starting to cook supper. Darkness came early that time of the year, and with the snow still falling, it was darker even earlier. We always took along some reading material on our trips, but because we just had a candle to read by, we didn't read too long at nights.

We stayed at the camp another day and rode out again the next day, but didn't see a sign of any animals. So the following day, we packed up and came back in with our caribou meat. It was considered a successful hunt.

*The final part of a story by
Ethel Miller (deceased) printed by
permission of her husband, Charlie Miller
(since deceased in 2007)*



WILLMORE WANDERINGS - LUCKY 13

By Mark Engstrom



October, 2010. I shifted on my seat as a rock dug into my backside. I had been sitting in the same spot near the top of a mountain for the last two hours, with a Swarovski spotting scope on a tripod in front of me. It was aimed at a bighorn ram who lay below me 240 yards away, down a steep mountainside. He had his back to me, facing to my left and looking down over the valley. There were other sheep with him, a few rams, and some ewes who had recently fed over into the rams, mysteriously appearing out of no where a half hour before. I had watched these rams from this spot, and from another spot around the bend in the mountain earlier in the day for another two hours. None of the sheep had seen me during the four hour wait. Suddenly he got up from his bed, turned and started feeding from my left to right, showing me the right side of his head through the spotter. I quickly determined his right horn passed for the required 4/5th curl, and a couple minutes later a single shot from my 270wsm dropped him on the spot. He slowly rolled over once, then twice, then picking up speed he rolled down the steep draw he was in, kicking up rocks and dust as he went. Finally he disappeared around a corner behind some poplar and fir trees growing low on the mountain. Years of searching for "the" ram were over!

I began bighorn sheep hunting thirteen years ago. Most years I have hunted them for at least two weeks, and often much longer. I've covered much of the Willmore Wilderness in search of the elusive bighorn, searching for old rams in hidden drainages that

have never been hunted. Over those thirteen years I have been successful in taking several non trophy sheep (ewes), but never brought home a ram.

I did shoot one though. My first year of sheep hunting, thirteen long years ago. I had a full curl, heavily broomed old ram lined up. He and three smaller rams stood facing me at one hundred yards. It was very windy, but I felt good when I pulled the trigger with my crosshairs on the old giants chest. I saw a ram drop on the spot. The joy of killing my first ram soon turned to horror though. As I walked up, instead of the giant, one of the smaller rams lay dead. He wasn't even a legal ram as he fell just short of the required 4/5th curl. I don't know what happened. This ram had been hit in the horn, from the side, and the bullet deflected downward into his head, with no exit, killing him instantly. Windy, yes. Buck (or ram) fever, probably. Bad shot, for sure. No matter, I was now in trouble. I'll admit a few options went through my head as I sat by the short sheep. Not all of them were of the noble variety. But I knew deep down what I was going to do, and that's how I ended up at the local Fish and Wildlife office with the illegal ram. I received a fine, and forfeited my trophy sheep tag. I was lucky not to lose my hunting license. This was a defining moment in my sheep hunting career.

In the years that followed, I became a sheep hunting addict. I love the country they inhabit, and the bighorn sheep itself is, to me, the pinnacle of hunting in Alberta. Every year I would prepare, plan and look forward to that first trip of the hunting season which is the bighorn sheep opener in late August. I keep



Mark Engstrom
on a Sheep Hunting Trip
in Willmore Wilderness Park
in October 2010

Photos courtesy of Mark Engstrom

a few horses, I think mainly so I can use them for sheep hunting. I do ride them lots through the spring and summer in the Willmore Wilderness, always watching for sheep, and in particular rams.

Now, being as I had shot a short sheep, I was very careful and picky on what type of ram I would shoot. I passed up a few legal ones, lamb tipped rams that were just barely legal, "squeakers" as they are called. There was no way I was going to sweat it out in the Fish and Wildlife office again as an officer put the square on a set of horns to see if it was legal or not. I also missed a gorgeous full curl ram, misjudging the distance and shooting under him. I bought a rangefinder right after that hunt. The years passed, and I remained snake bit. I had a run of three years where I knew people drawn for mountain

goat including 2008 when I was lucky enough to draw one of the rare tags, and spent those three years chasing goats instead of sheep.

Back to October 13th, 2010. Thirteen years after killing my first sheep, I finally killed another, this time legal, ram. That's why I call him Lucky 13. After he rolled out of sight, I laid my spotting scope and rifle on my backpack, leaving them there, and headed down the mountain with only my knife. I found the ram caught on some downed timber just into the trees growing low on the steep slope. Using my trekking pole I confirmed he was legal. Thirteen years of effort was rewarded with this fine old warrior of a ram, and I let out a big sigh of relief. Ten and a half years old, he had good mass, his horn tips broomed back, legal on his right, a fine trophy. Thankful to say the least, I respectfully

caped and quartered my quarry, taking until well after dark. He will now hold a place of honor among all my trophies.

I'd like to thank my friend Larry Clegg for being there with me on this trip, I enjoy being on the trail with you, they don't come much tougher than you. Larry is always happy, with a smile and quick wit, there's nothing that will faze him. I enjoy all the knowledge and stories that he is always willing to offer. On this trip, he endured what started out as a small sore that looked like a tick bite or pimple on his shin, and turned into a raging infection. He stuck it out until the end, even though it almost killed him. Thanks also to my brother Toe, and Traci, who rode out after I took this ram, to bring horse shoes and shoeing tools that I was in need of. Toe and I have been on many sheep trips over the years, I wish he had been there for this one. Next year is your turn brother!

**Thanks to the
Wild Sheep Foundation: Alberta Chapter
for supporting the 2010 Grizzly Bear Survey**



JENN'S JOURNAL - TWELVE-DAY TRAIL CLEARING EXPEDITION

by Jenn Houlihan



Jenn Houlihan, Administrative Assistant
Willmore Wilderness Foundation
photo by Susan Feddema-Leonard

...Was supposed to be twenty-one but you know how mountain weather can be

I had the pleasure of cooking for an eight-man crew for twelve days in one of the most beautiful places that I have ever seen, the Willmore Wilderness Park. Our journey started at Victor Lake on September 5, 2010. We rode seven hours from Victor Lake to our home of the next five days, Big Grave Camp. For the first part of the trip, we had the comfort of the Sulphur River Patrol Cabin—very comfortable, I must say. On the first day, we arrived at Big Grave shortly after nightfall. I scrambled to get a fire made so I could cook for the hungry crew. Bazil quickly instructed the boys to unpack and unsaddle our horses. The horses were sent to graze on the Big Grave Flats.

For the next several days, I explored and enjoyed my second trail-clearing expedition with Sue and Bazil. I saw the wonderful sculptures of the mountains and valleys, and the splendid paintings of the sunrises and sunsets. The Willmore is definitely a place that everyone should see. I feel blessed to have spent time there and am looking forward to many more years. I plan on traveling within the boundaries of this magnificent jewel for years to come.

We call our trail crews *Willmore Warriors*. Our eight-man

crew consisted of Bazil Leonard, outfitter; Susan Feddema-Leonard, cook/film maker/nurse; Dan Hallock, main wrangler/trail hand; Angeen Hallock, wrangler; Banjo Hallock, chainsaw man; Tyler Hallock, chainsaw man; Eli Hallock, trail hand; and Jenn Houlihan (myself), cook. We were trailing with twenty-four horses and one Daisy Dog.

I have a lot of good memories of this trip but one stands out the most. About four days into our adventure, Bazil, Sue, Angeen and I went to scout the trail from Rocky Pass to Porcupine Lick. I was riding my freshly-started wild mare Mildred. I had no problems riding or working with her. It was a pretty rough ride for a young horse considering we had to plough through muskeg, beaver dams, and thick over-grown trails. Well, Murphy's Law certainly applied here. I decided not to bring my rain gear, and it rained cats and dogs! To make matters worse, the rain turned to snow.

On the way back, we came across a log that had fallen across the trail. The other horses jumped it. When it came our turn to jump the log, I went flying forward and landed on Mildred's neck. Bazil stopped in front of me and let me use his saddle horse to push myself back into the saddle. Sue was shocked that I didn't fall off and said, "You got a pretty good horse if you can land on her neck without her freaking out." I would have to agree with



Willmore Warriors

Trail Clearing Crew

September 2010

from left to right:

Danny Hallock

Bazil Leonard

Banjo Hallock

Eli Hallock

Tyler Hallock

Other *Willmore Warriors* include:

Angeen Hallock

Jenn Houlihan

Susan Feddema-Leonard

Photo by Jenn Houlihan

Sue on that one. Mildred never flinched, but instead let me get back on and try again. I'm so proud of that little wild mare, which I had started earlier in the year at a Willmore Wilderness Foundation clinic.

This experience has taught me that no matter how warm it is and how blue the sky is, NEVER forget your rain gear in camp. You just may end up coming back from your ride with a cup of water in each boot.

I really enjoyed my stay at Porcupine Lick. On the first morning, we woke up to six inches of fresh, sticky snow. Angeen my tent mate and I woke up after our tent was flattened like a pancake because of the snow. Our surroundings were white—our camp was white—everything was white. You couldn't walk out of the cook tent for more than ten minutes without becoming covered in snow. It was nice to wake up to

such a perfect winter's day.

This trip was a wonderful experience that I will cherish forever. Waking up to a Willmore sunrise is something that I will never forget. I encourage everyone to experience the deep connection with this pristine mountain landscape. Willmore Wilderness Park is something that should live on—keep it wild and free.

Remember, if you fall off—get up—dust off—get right back on!

**Thank you
Alberta Fish & Game Association
for your support
with the 2010
Grizzly Bear Survey**





WILLMORE WILDERNESS PRESERVATION AND HISTORICAL FOUNDATION
BALANCE SHEET
AS AT DECEMBER 31, 2009

	2009 \$	2008 \$
ASSETS		
Current		
Cash	150,440.67	12,318.76
Accounts Receivable	37,320.88	8,749.00
Prepaid Expense	6,890.96	6,890.96
Security Deposits	200.00	4,025.00
	194,852.51	31,983.72
Capital Assets		
Building	287,000.00	0.00
Equipment	11,996.31	10,561.31
Office Equipment	6,307.53	8,419.24
Camera, Video & Film Equipment	24,858.16	0.00
Computer	23,223.85	23,223.85
Furniture & Fixtures	2,450.00	2,450.00
	355,835.85	44,654.40
Less: Accumulated Amortization	8,658.97	8,658.97
	347,176.88	35,995.43
	542,029.39	67,979.15
LIABILITIES & EQUITY		
Current Liabilities		
Accounts Payable	9,006.86	6,100.77
Long Term Liabilities		
ATB Mortgage Payable	148,583.44	0.00
	157,590.30	6,100.77
Equity		
Retained Earnings	384,439.09	61,878.38
	542,029.39	67,979.15

Edson Shindig (DANCE)

featuring Laura Vinson & dance the night away with the TRUCKS
Saturday, Feb 5, 2011
Royal Canadian Legion: Joe Wynn
Live and silent auction
Banquet buffet - \$50.00 tickets
Doors open at 6 p.m. and dinner at 7 p.m.

Grande Cache Gala

March 5, 2011
Mountain Métis Hall
Live and Silent Auction
Roast Beef Buffet - \$35.00 tickets.
Doors open at 6 p.m. & dinner at 7 p.m.



WILLMORE WILDERNESS PRESERVATION AND HISTORICAL FOUNDATION
STATEMENT OF EARNINGS
FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2009

	2009	2008
	\$	\$
REVENUE		
General Sales	977.07	1,430.85
Grants	541,050.00	31,220.82
Memberships	1,530.00	9,028.50
Book Sales	11,726.84	39,015.38
Donations	35,150.00	15,268.00
Fundraising Proceeds	107,671.41	157,302.91
Rental Income	1,200.00	0.00
Interest	64.77	24.81
	<u>699,370.09</u>	<u>253,291.27</u>
OPERATING EXPENSES		
Accounting & Consulting	16,152.91	1,200.00
Advertising & Promotion	9,547.59	4,039.47
Donations	6,883.72	1,947.00
Fundraising Costs	73,382.93	103,161.78
Bank/Credit Card Charges & Fees	2,834.42	2,910.24
Insurance	2,154.00	650.00
License, Fees & Permits	2,405.13	555.00
Loan/Mortgage Interest	1,583.97	0.00
Supplies	9,154.15	11,000.48
Equipment & Trail Costs	191.61	1,370.08
Conventions, Banquets & Meetings	494.24	2,731.09
Training & Clinics	4,482.40	5,669.96
Office	16,567.89	13,432.01
Utilities	3,973.60	2,556.94
Property Taxes	6,519.22	4,256.03
Book & Film Production Costs	33,202.58	0.00
Telephone & Fax	3,549.77	2,975.19
Rent	6,287.50	28,700.00
Maintenance & Repairs	22,184.82	2,646.13
Travel	12,716.94	8,365.44
Wages & Benefits	38,647.49	40,257.11
Sub-Contracts	103,892.50	42,890.00
	<u>376,809.38</u>	<u>281,313.95</u>
EARNINGS (LOSS) FROM OPERATIONS	<u>322,560.71</u>	<u>-28,022.68</u>

**Grande Prairie Roundup &
People & Peaks Film Fest**

Saturday April 9, 2011

Five Mile Agricultural Society Community Hall - Grande Prairie, AB

Live and Silent Auction - \$50.00 tickets.

Doors open at 6 p.m. and dinner at 7 p.m.

Schedule for the People & Peaks Film Fest TBA

Audited May 18, 2010

Y L Services

Accountant - Yvonne Lambert



MOTION 507 – WILLMORE WILDERNESS PARK – APRIL 12, 2010

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The only thing that wouldn't be affected – and I don't know if that's true or not – would be the jail. We have a federal institution in Grande Cache that employs about 300 people. That would be the only economic employment in this community. Also, it would affect, you know, right down along the eastern slopes.

Mr. Speaker, while I'm talking about the Willmore wilderness park, I'd be remiss to also not talk about Y2Y, which is Yellowstone to Yukon. These areas also employ the eastern slopes. This is something that we as a government and all our colleagues in government should be aware of. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-Varsity.

Mr. Chase: Thank you very much. I want to applaud and support the hon. Member for West Yellowhead for bringing forth this legislation. I will be voting in favour of it, but I do have reservations that I want to get on the record. First off, if we had the accomplishment of our land-use framework, for which I want to offer a bouquet to our current finance minister, the MLA for Foothills-Rocky View, for getting the discussion going – if we actually had a land-use framework bill in place with all its regulations, then this Willmore wilderness park, that's the subject of Motion 507, would be dealt with under designated land use.

At the same time I'd like to offer a challenge to the Minister of Sustainable Resource Development, the MLA for Grande Prairie-Smoky, to follow up the work that was begun by the hon. Member for Foothills-Rocky View but has yet to be completed. With the sustainable resources network based on six watershed regions being the basis for land use, I think a lot of the conflicts between land usage will be dealt with.

I'm hoping that at some point this government moves from the concept of multi-use to priority use. You know, without going Roger Miller on you, there are certain activities, roller skating in a buffalo herd being one of them, that you cannot do simultaneously in the

same area. Right now in Alberta we have over 350 parks and protected areas, yet only 40 of these have management plans. So for the Willmore wilderness park to be protected, the enforcement has to be there as well to ensure that the traditional usages, as the hon. member has pointed out, since the early 1900s are maintained and protected. What we do need is oversight through a management plan, and we need the enforcement through combination and cross ministerial co-operation between the ministries of Sustainable Resource Development and Tourism, Parks and Recreation, and we need also, obviously, co-operation through the Ministry of Environment to ensure that the pristine and natural nature of this area is preserved.

Now, the hon. Member for West Yellowhead pointed out what the act states. I would like to add to it. The Willmore Wilderness Park Act also permits the Lieutenant Governor in Council to make regulations increasing or decreasing the size of the park. I hope there is never a thought of decreasing the size of the park. Most importantly for myself and the members of my caucus, it prohibits industrial activity in the park, including but not limited to mining, geological and geophysical exploration, water management, hydroelectric power, pulp and paper mills, sawmills, and other forest-related activities. In other words, it keeps it at its historical purpose, which was the conservation and protection of its natural resources.

The point of this act is to allow First Nations and Métis and, to a degree, guiding outfitters to continue to practise their historically approved activities within the park. I understand, but I will come from the other side of the debate, about making it a world-protected site, because I believe that with the proper enforcement, that would potentially add extra security to the area because there would be a global standard in terms of the protection of this wilderness area. I do want to raise, however, some concerns that were brought to us by the Alberta Wilderness Association concerning Willmore Wilderness Park because I want to have them on the record. Hopefully, this motion will address these

Mr. Campbell moved:

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to not bring forward changes to the Willmore Wilderness Park Act which would restrict traditional land uses such as outfitting, trapping, hunting, and fishing.



concerns. Willmore wilderness concerns:

- *A management plan that addresses key concerns for the Willmore, including wildlife, watersheds, wilderness protection, fire programs, trail system maintenance and recreation is urgently needed.*

As I stated before, we have over 350 parks and protected areas and very few management plans to guarantee that they are kept in a maintained manner. I know you can love a park to death, but in this case the park, to some degree, has not been managed and enforced to the extent that I believe it deserves.

Another concern that the Alberta Wilderness Association brings forward:

- *Pressures for inappropriate resource development such as commercial recreational use. Recreational developments including a downhill ski operation, golf course and alpine village, as well as new roadways for off-road vehicles have been proposed in and near Willmore Wilderness Park.*

Now, the hon. member talked about a buffer zone, and hopefully that will be part of this motion because it's absolutely essential that we don't have overlap and cross-purposing within this natural site.

The Alberta Wilderness Association also has concerns over

- *commercial sales and inappropriate development of registered traplines that include increased and out-of-season use of ORV's and the growth in size and numbers of associated cabins.*

- *Non-commercial recreational use [is a concern]. Trails must be maintained for the safety of park users and to limit their impact on the park. The rules of the area, including a prohibition on off-highway-vehicle use must be enforced.*

In other words, we've got this pristine jewel; let's maintain it in its pristine, natural state.

- *Pressure to remove boating prohibitions for the section of the Smoky River in the park.*

- *As I stated to begin with, lack of official stewardship is allowing trails to become eroded in some areas and unsafe in others due to lack of maintenance.*

I've seen that in my own personal experience working in Cataract Creek. The danger of not maintaining pathways means that you end up closing them, and

you limit the recreational experience.

- *Backcountry guardianship is almost non-existent and few parks people know the Willmore, except perhaps from aerial overviews.*

We talk about police feet on the beat. Well, we need people, conservation officers and SRD, regularly patrolling this area along with the people that usually sit on a regular basis and provide their input and observation and their love turned into enforcement.

- *Lack of fire has allowed the former excellent wildlife habitat of the area to become overgrown with shrubbery and trees and poor for ungulates in particular. Fire hazards are also building to the point where conflagrations may be supported once the area burns. A program of controlled burns to create habitat and relieve fuel loads is important.*

Fire suppression is also nature suppression.

- *Species at risk such as the grizzly and mountain caribou are not receiving adequate official attention.*

These are the concerns, and I believe they're just concerns that the Alberta Wilderness Association has put forward. However, it is my belief that by working with associations such as the Alberta Wilderness Association, the government can accomplish this. I will end as I began. The important work begun by the current finance minister, the Member for Foothills-Rocky View, must be followed up on by the Minister of Sustainable Resource Development, the Member for Grande Prairie-Smoky. This is something that is of value to all Albertans, whether we live in the north or not. We need to designate our parks and protected areas, and we need to protect them. Thank you for allowing me to contribute.

5:20

The Deputy Speaker: The chair has a list of speakers here. The first three would be the hon. Solicitor General, the hon. Member for Cypress-Medicine Hat, and the hon. Member for Rocky Mountain House. The hon. Solicitor General.

Mr. Oberle: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity to participate in this debate. I thank the hon. Member for West Yellowhead for

bringing forward this very interesting topic that kind of hits near and dear to my heart as a practising forester in the province of Alberta for many, many years. It's kind of interesting that we've always set aside pieces of land in our province and around the world to protect although it was always poorly defined exactly what protect meant. Certainly, Alberta has a history and examples of protected areas. Jasper and Banff are jewels of our national parks system. Wood Buffalo park: we've had protected areas for a very long time.

The discussion around protected areas and what they should be and what they provide and all those things was refined greatly over the years. Somewhere around the time that the United Nations released the Brundtland commission report, there was a world-wide effort to start talking about protection of ecosystems, functioning ecosystems, functioning populations, those kinds of things. There was a mad rush, you know: Canada's convention on biodiversity and those sorts of things.

We've talked about protected areas more and more. Somewhere along the line we've towed along this very old concept that we can increase the level of protection for a piece of land by being increasingly restrictive of its use. In some places it's a park. We can put trailers and have weekend camping, but nobody is talking about protecting an ecosystem in that case. We might be protecting a scenic view shed or something like that.

By being increasingly restrictive of use, eliminating industrial activity and eliminating hunting, fishing, trapping, other uses up to the point where we would build a chain fence or a wall around a piece of ground: now it's really protected. And that might, in fact, be true if our objective was to protect some static entity; historic rock paintings, for example. It could be very clearly demonstrated that if humans weren't allowed anywhere near it, that's how it's going to last the longest, and if you allow people up to touch it, that's how it's going to last the least. In that particular case, being very restrictive of access does in fact lead

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to increased or more rigorous protection.

What about if the value we're trying to protect is not static? Ecological values – for example, functioning ecosystems, functioning populations – are not static, and simply putting a fence around them doesn't preserve them for future generations. That's been proven in spades. You know, some of that thinking came out of Cape Breton Highlands national park, where they allowed a system to evolve that was all over-mature spruce and fir. The budworm came in and cleaned it out, just wiped that park out in a matter of weeks at way higher levels than normally would have happened because we didn't intervene and create a population situation there that would have handled a spruce budworm outbreak.

You may be able to make the argument that we're setting ourselves up for disaster from fire or pine beetle in some of our parks by doing exactly the same thing: refusing to intervene. But you'll notice that in Jasper park, for example, they've been quite proactive over the last few years about habitat maintenance or landscape vegetation maintenance. They're doing burns. They're actually doing single-tree logging events. It's wonderful, and they're trying to maintain a condition for future generations. That's the point of protection when it comes to an ecosystem. It's a dynamic system. You have to decide what future condition you want and then: what action and tools do I need to take in order to make that future condition hold true?

In just ignoring it, it isn't going to happen. The only thing that you know is that it won't stay in its current condition. It's going to change. Our forests are dynamic, and the populations that live in them are dynamic. So we require management plans. I agree with the hon. member and the hon. Member for West Yellowhead. We do require management plans because we want to define what condition we want to maintain this protected area in and what we have to do to ensure that it stays in that condition.

The "what do we have to do?"

requires some form of intervention. It's often habitat intervention, controlled burns or some other disturbance, that will alter the vegetation pattern on the landscape, but it could be population intervention as well. In that regard, I wholeheartedly support the efforts of the Member for West Yellowhead in that I believe that hunting, fishing, trapping, those activities, are highly effective management tools and can be used in accordance with a management plan to make a system unfold the way we want it to unfold, which will give us the future desired condition that we want, which is why we protected the area in the first place. Merrily sticking our heads in the sand, putting a fence around something, and saying that it's protected will not work. We need active management tools, and the tools that the hon. Member for West Yellowhead defined are certainly part of a wide tool box of interventions that we could do in order to achieve a desired condition in a protected area. I strongly support the member's motion, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member for Cypress-Medicine Hat, followed by the hon. Member for Rocky Mountain House.

Mr. Mitzel: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure and an honour to rise today to speak to Motion 507, proposed by the hon. Member for West Yellowhead. At first blush, when I looked at this, it looked like a negative motion, a move that would not bring forward changes. But on a closer look at it, it's apt. It's very apt. This motion focuses on preserving the Willmore Wilderness Park Act. I'll go a step further, then, from what the other hon. members have said. It's been suggested – and I think the suggestion could possibly be true – that by the inclusion of the Willmore wilderness into the UNESCO world heritage site designation, there may be no need for the Willmore Wilderness Park Act once this designation is made.

Therein, Mr. Speaker, lies the problem. As we've been discussing, the Willmore Wilderness Act was passed in 1959. It was an act promoted by locals, introduced in 1959 by Norman Willmore,

the MLA for Edson. This act established the Willmore wilderness park, where traditional land uses, including trapping, hunting, fishing, and outfitting, would be permitted and preserved. This act also restricts all motor vehicles from the area, where the only permitted transportation is by foot, horse, or bicycle. The Willmore Wilderness Act was clearly legislation created by the people for the people of Alberta. It was created so that there would be assurances of the proper management and conservation of resources within the park as well as ensuring the perpetuation of traditional activities such as outfitting, hunting, fishing, and trapping.

Alberta has a rich history of locally driven environmental legislation that protects our environment as well as traditional land uses; for example, the Wilderness Areas, Ecological Reserves, Natural Areas and Heritage Rangelands Act, which became law in the late 1990s. This act defines and preserves significant ecological areas across Alberta. They were divided into wilderness area designations with respective specific regulations. Similar ecological reserves, natural areas, and heritage rangelands had their own distinct regulations as well, with ecological reserves being the most restrictive.

I was a part of the discussions for the areas in my part of the province; namely, the southeast of Alberta. I co-chaired the committee that looked into all the applications and met with stakeholders to determine the significance of each area and then recommended the approved areas for designation. Our committee was charged with not only coming up with appropriate areas but were given parameters that stated there must be a certain percentage of Alberta lands designated in both ecological reserves and in natural areas.

At the beginning, Mr. Speaker, there was no mention of heritage rangelands. This particular designation came up when the committee could not come up with the desired percentage for natural areas. Our committee agreed to the new designation with restrictions: one, that it would remain under Alberta agriculture,



as the grazing leases were then; second, that all existing uses would be maintained. Since then, heritage rangelands, because it's within an all-inclusive act, is now under Alberta Tourism, Parks and Recreation. The mandate of this ministry is somewhat different from the mandate of Agriculture.

5:30

Another example. The Alberta Hunting, Fishing and Trapping Heritage Act is another example of legislation that protects our traditional land uses and also our cultural values. This act created a statutory right to hunt, fish, and trap that could be defended in court. I had the honour of bringing this act forward and having it proclaimed. Again, this is legislation that many Albertans support, specifically because it's part of their heritage. That's why so many Albertans support the Willmore Wilderness Park Act, not only because it was established by locals but because it has proven effective in maintaining and sustaining the Willmore wilderness park.

The Willmore Wilderness Park Act is a clear example of locals pursuing environmental sustainability in a way that maintains traditional land uses. Willmore park, Mr. Speaker, is considered one of the best-kept secrets, in large part due to the act that regulates it. The land stewardship of this park is exceptional, which may be why some have suggested it be incorporated into a UNESCO world heritage site. If for the past 50 years the Willmore Wilderness Park Act has led to effective management of this park, there is no need to change it. I support the act as it is now. It doesn't need to be amended or abolished to fit in with any international guidelines or regulations. The present act is a strong piece of legislation that will ensure the environmental sustainability of this park as well as the traditional land uses well into the future.

For me, the concerns far outweigh the advantages of being a UNESCO site. I thank our hon. colleague from West Yellowhead for introducing this motion, and I do not have anything whatsoever against UNESCO or the strong mandate that they have and the prestigious

recognition that designation as a world heritage site would bring to the Willmore wilderness. What is of concern to me, Mr. Speaker: as I noted in my example of what has happened with the heritage rangeland designation, being now administered by a totally different body from what it was originally intended with a vastly different mandate, these grazing lands are now under parks administration. This is what I fear may happen: to a much larger degree it's an organization – and I'm talking about UNESCO – not located in Alberta and not having the same knowledge of the history and values of Alberta and Albertans who would suddenly be in charge. I'm sure the intent is to have things remain as they are right now, but as my previous example showed, I'm suspicious of management by people who are not from here but, rather, from around the world and with headquarters in New York. With that, Mr. Speaker, I would urge all members of this House to stand in support of Motion 507. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member for Rocky Mountain House, followed by the hon. Member for Calgary-Buffalo.

Mr. Lund: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thanks to the hon. Member for West Yellowhead for bringing this very important topic to the floor of the House. I had the privilege of being in the Willmore wilderness along about '57, '58, in that time frame. I was one of those bad guys with industry going into that pristine area.

Mr. Groeneveld: Still are.

Mr. Lund: Okay. I had the opportunity to be in that area again a couple of times not that many years ago, and I was really pleased to see how little things have changed and how this act actually has protected the area. As the Member for Peace River was talking about with an ecosystem, with an area of that size certainly you are able to protect an ecosystem and have it work. Of course, it's over 50 years since it was proclaimed a provincial park by Dr. Norman Willmore. Incidentally, I believe he was the minister that was killed in an accident between here and Edson on the highway. I remember that situation was a very sad occasion because he certainly knew the portfolio that he had and did a

lot of good things with it.

When you look at the activities that are permitted in that area, it's very, very important to recognize that our parks act is a very protective piece of legislation. It does give the opportunity for management plans that can vary some, but it restricts a lot of the activity that would tend to destroy an ecosystem. As the Member for Peace River was talking about, these things do change, so there are times when perhaps we need to intervene. I remember about 15 years ago or so, when rabies was going rampant and a lot of the wildlife was dying from that disease, there was some intervention in that case to try to limit the area that was being affected.

But I'm really worried if we start turning these things over to, say, UNESCO. For the life of me, I don't understand why some Albertans would be supporting this particular move. It's not a lot different than the Y to Y, the Yellowstone to Yukon, concept. That would be taking a strip all along the national parks from the Montana border clear up and through Alberta and on into Yukon. This concept, of course, was something that we dealt with back in the year 2000, even with the national parks. I remember meeting with one of the superintendents. He suggested to me that we should have a buffer zone in Alberta for the park, and they would manage the buffer zone. I said: that's fine as long as we have an area inside the park that we would manage. Of course, that wasn't acceptable. So it was a one-way street. With so many things like this, that's really the way it works.

The people in Alberta that promote this sort of thing: you have to look at where they're coming from and what their ideas are. Quite frankly, they are in the minority, and this is the only way that they feel they could get the opportunity to govern, not just to have input – we provide them input – but actually get the opportunity to govern. When you look at the park act, when you look at what it's done for the Willmore,

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I don't believe they could manage it any better. I think it's just wonderful the way it's currently being managed.

To think about turning this over to an organization like UNESCO – I remember an incident that we had down at Dinosaur provincial park where an oil company drilled a well just inside the park. If I remember right, it was 70 feet. That was an interesting one. It created a huge, huge incident. Because it's a UNESCO site, it got international play. Quite frankly, it was a stupid mistake that somebody made. If you look at the boundary of the park, it's right along the lip of the valley except for this one little place where there was a quarter section that came up maybe a hundred feet and then back over, just a little triangular area. Somehow the surveyors missed it. The well went in. They drilled. It started producing. Then somebody discovered that, well, really, it's on the edge of the park. It was one of those wells where there was no surface disturbance. The road that came into it: there was some disturbance there. They managed to reseed with the natural grass so that all you would see as you were coming up to it in a helicopter would be this little green strip. That's all you could see. But it was an international event, and that was all because it had been turned over to UNESCO.

5:40

I'm really pleased that we have this opportunity to nip this in the bud. There are areas like the one at Dinosaur provincial park. There's access to the area. If you'd turned this over – there are some that are saying: well, it's a great thing to do because of tourism. Well, really, that means that you're going to have to have the access in there, and you're going to have a lot more people accessing the area. Of course, they're not satisfied with just leaving it in the wilderness state. There are a lot of things that happen if you have too many people going into an area.

I'm very pleased that we are going to pass this, I would hope unanimously, to send the right message out that this motion is a good motion and

that we don't want to change it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-Buffalo, followed by the hon. Member for Grande Prairie-Wapiti.

Mr. Hehr: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is indeed an honour to rise and speak to this motion, Motion 507, on the Willmore wilderness park. I'd like to thank the Member for West Yellowhead for bringing forward this legislation as it looks like good legislation for both the park and the people whom this act is meant to serve and to assist in their way of life. For instance, traditional land-use activities are an important way of life for the aboriginal communities in the Willmore area, and we should not be seeking limitations on these practices without good reason. We heard some of those good reasons brought up by the Solicitor General, that these forests and these areas do not live in isolation, that you don't just put up a fence or a brick wall, that these forests and wild areas don't prosper in that way. It takes interaction in the way they've always been used and have interaction with, I guess, other beings and other activities to make these wild areas flourish.

Now, the second component of that is that although we like to have these areas that have all this activity going on in them to sustain the health of the area, there's a tipping point when there is too much human interaction. That's why conservation organizations such as the Alberta Wilderness Association believe that consumptive activities like hunting and trapping are sustainable, but they have to be managed properly under the values of healthy wildlife populations and biodiversity. That's where this act and our protection of this park have to be co-ordinated with our Sustainable Resource Development department to monitor the effects of any activity in the Willmore wilderness park.

Like I said, I agree with this act. I agree on having healthy, active wild areas such as the Willmore wilderness park. They have to have some of these activities. We also have to monitor these as Alberta is 3.5 million people, heading for 5 million

people. Lots of activities with industry are going on in that area and industry that should go on in that area, but with all that activity, with us doing some of these things, it needs continued monitoring and continuing enforcement. The boots-on-the-street analogy by my hon. colleague for Calgary- Varsity was very right. Without adequate enforcement these good things we do in this Legislature become meaningless.

On that note, I would encourage some of these things to be done through our land-use framework and through the development of our policies and practices through that framework and the various divisions that are laid out in there. There are also some areas that are noted for improvement from those in the park itself. Willmore wilderness park needs an updated park management plan that addresses a number of concerns voiced by environmental and conservation groups. A draft plan was apparently prepared in 1980 but not finalized. Like I said, the government needs to move forward on the implementation of the land-use framework, and consultative mechanisms with aboriginal populations need to be renewed and strengthened in advance of any discussions about traditional land-use activities.

Nonetheless, despite these reservations and despite this advice, if I could call it that, to the government, I think this is a good step forward and will allow for sound forestry management and sound management of the Willmore wilderness park as well as allow for traditional usage by our aboriginal communities of many and much of the wilderness and streams and for trapping and the like.

Nevertheless, those are my comments. Thank you very much for allowing me to speak on the record on this very good motion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member for Grande Prairie-Wapiti, followed by the hon. Member for Strathmore-Brooks.

Mr. Drysdale: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased and honoured today to speak to Motion 507. The purpose of Motion 507 is to ensure that the government



of Alberta continues to recognize the Willmore Wilderness Park Act as it is. The Willmore Wilderness Park Act promotes the management and conservation of the resources within Willmore wilderness park and provides the legislative assurance of the traditional activities like outfitting, trapping, hunting, and fishing.

Activities like hunting and fishing are key elements of conservation. Hunters and fishers are true conservationists. By continuing to support their activities, as Motion 507 urges, the Willmore wilderness park will continue to be preserved for future generations. Albertans have exemplified their dedication to conservation, and as such Motion 507 promotes that Willmore wilderness park stay fully within Alberta jurisdiction. The Willmore Wilderness Park Act has proven effective in maintaining and sustaining Willmore wilderness park for the past 50 years and will continue to do so in the future.

Mr. Speaker, I've been going to this park since the 1960s as a boy with my dad on horseback trips, and I can attest to you that this park has been maintained and is in as good a state today as it was 40 years ago. In fact, I have pictures of the side of a mountain from a friend of my dad's from the 1930s, and looking at the same site last year, the site looks better today than it did then because back then it was burnt. The whole side of the mountain was burnt black and didn't look that great, but it looks good today, I can tell you. In fact, it's even harder to find the old trails. Like, there used to be trails from the natives and the hunters from years ago back there. Now you can't even find the trails on horseback. It's grown back into its natural state.

I suggest that we leave the park in the control of Albertans, as it is. It's beautiful back there in the mountains, the intersection mountain where the Alberta-B.C. border is and where it bends to go south. If you get up on that mountain, you can see a long ways, and you can see no sign of man or interference. I'd like to keep this for my children and my grandchildren.

I would like to thank my colleague the Member for West Yellowhead for bringing Motion 507 forward. I fully

support it, and I encourage all members to support it. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member for Strathmore-Brooks.
5:50

Mr. Doerksen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's also my privilege to rise today and speak in favour of Motion 507. I would like to also thank the Member for West Yellowhead for bringing this motion forward. I've listened with interest and intently to the presentations that have already been made this afternoon and certainly support the sentiment that has been expressed. I have to admit that I have not actually been in the Willmore wilderness park but had the opportunity to visit it online to view some of the absolutely fabulous pictures that have been taken and put online with regard to Willmore. While I haven't actually been to the park, I certainly support the principle that other members have brought forward here this afternoon. When you look at an area that's 46,000 square kilometers and it has been protected by local input and the dedication of local residents of that area for more than 50 years and hearing the other members who have talked about the way that this park has been preserved and protected by the existing Willmore Wilderness Park Act, I see no reason why we would want to further restrict activity that has gone on in that area for very many years.

I had the opportunity to go on the Willmore Wilderness Foundation website. The mission of that organization is to preserve the history of the area, focus on the advancement of education of the park, restore historical pack trails and sites, and enhance the use of the Willmore wilderness park for Albertans and visitors alike. That is a success story that I certainly want to support.

Again, the principle of not adding further restrictions when there is not a need to do that, I think, is something that we need to respect. I want to thank the Member for West Yellowhead for bringing that issue forward. It's one that he certainly knows well and has a great deal of experience with, and I appreciate his asking me to make some comments

with regard to this afternoon. Mr. Speaker, I certainly support the intent of this motion and look forward to being able to support it. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: Do any other hon. members wish to speak on the motion?

Seeing none, the chair shall now call on the hon. Member for West Yellowhead to close the debate on Motion 507.

Mr. Campbell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Motion 507 may not be popular among certain environmentalists who have urged a greater global control over Alberta lands and especially the natural lands, but I can say that Motion 507 will instill confidence in Albertans who are concerned about the ramifications of transforming the Willmore wilderness park as a UNESCO world heritage site.

The Willmore Wilderness Park Act has proven effective in maintaining and sustaining our Willmore wilderness park. The Willmore wilderness act is an example of locals pursuing environmental sustainability in a way that maintains traditional land uses. Mr. Speaker, the Willmore wilderness act is popular among many of the locals in the Grande Cache area as well as many Albertans from all over this great province who participate in activities in the Willmore wilderness park.

I would ask all my colleagues to support this motion, and I would like to thank all of my colleagues who spoke today on behalf of it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[Motion Other than Government Motion 507 carried]





Youth Mentored in Traditional Skills

The Willmore Wilderness Foundation recognizes that our youth are the future... for both the continuation of our lifestyle and the preservation of Willmore Wilderness Park. For over a decade the Foundation has been mentoring youth on the trail, showing them the ways of the land.

We dedicate this issue to all the hard working youth who had the desire and drive to learn the old ways.

Pictured above is Tyler Hallock & Logan Leonard cleaning up debris left in the Park at an abandoned weather station. Thanks to a grant from the Alberta Conservation Association we were able to clean up this mess plus miles and miles of red ribbon left behind by the Pine Beetle crews. While there is much more to do, we can take comfort that we have a young contingent of **Willmore Warriors** in training today!



Conserving Alberta's Wild Side

From Left to Right: Willmore Warrior Trail hands Banjo Hallock, Logan Leonard, Dylan Kowalski, Eli Hallock, Tyler Hallock with Chehala Leonard in the background.