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Province contributes to exploration of Athabasca Landing Trail

Athabasca... The Alberta government is providing a \$50,000 grant to the Athabasca Landing Trail Steering Committee, a partnership between municipalities and recreation and heritage organizations working to develop and promote the historic Athabasca Landing Trail.

“We are proud to support the collaborative approach the committee is taking to explore recreation and tourism opportunities in the region,” said Cindy Ady, Minister of Tourism, Parks and Recreation. “This is the first step towards building another attraction that will help Albertans and visitors get active, enjoy nature and explore our province.”

Provincial funding will support the first phase of the project to develop a conceptual master plan for the trail. Work on the plan will begin this month and will include research, community consultation, an assessment of the existing trail route, and recommendations for improving and enhancing trail opportunities. The plan is expected to be completed by July 2009.

“The Athabasca Landing Trail will create a valuable link in the Trans Canada Trail system and will provide continuity and access to other routes like Alberta’s Capital Region River Valley Park, Alberta’s Iron Horse Trail and the Peace River Trail,” said Jeff Johnson, MLA for Athabasca-Redwater and Chair of the Alberta Recreation Corridors Coordinating Committee. “As our provincial trail network grows, so will the opportunities for everyone to benefit from outdoor recreation.”

The Athabasca Landing Trail played a key role in delivering goods and services between Edmonton and Athabasca in the late 1800s. It was an important transportation route for settlers in the area. The committee aims to re-establish the trail by following the original route as closely as possible.

 Expected trail users include hikers, equestrian riders, cyclists, cross-country skiers, snowshoers and more.

“Our goal is to emphasize the cultural landmarks and the historic importance of the trail, and honour the families who settled there,” said Rob Woito, Chair of the Athabasca Landing Trail Steering Committee. “We want to encourage outdoor enthusiasts to explore Alberta’s heritage in this region. The proposed trail route passes through urban areas, farmland, parkland and forests, so there is tremendous potential for a wide range of activities for everyone to enjoy. We envision a trail that will draw visitors year round.”

The grant will be matched by contributions from five municipalities along the 150-kilometre corridor running from Lamoureux to Athabasca with additional project funding and support provided by Alberta TrailNet Society.

Communities situated near or along the trail include Athabasca, Bon Accord, Clyde, Colinton, Fedorah, Fort Saskatchewan, Gibbons, Lamoureux, Meanook, Nestow, Perryvale, Rochester, Tawatinaw, Waugh and Westlock.

Editors Note: A photograph of the cheque presentation and a map of the proposed Athabasca Landing Trail are available online at www.tpr.alberta.ca under the Newsroom tab.

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