

The Current

Issue 3 | Summer 2006

Columbia River Greenways Alliance: Building the Columbia Headwaters Greenway Trail Network



Photo credit: Sue Crowley © 2006

Our Mission

Since 2000, the Columbia River Greenways Alliance (CRGA) has developed partnerships with local governments and industry to plan for community green space connectivity and education. Our approach is collaborative: we acknowledge human-use and enjoyment of the environment and we see an integrated approach as critical to Upper Columbia Valley greenway development.

Our mission is to develop a network of open, natural places that maintain the wildlife habitat and the recreation legacy of the Upper Columbia Valley.

Current Projects

CRGA North (*Kicking Horse Country*)

- Heron Rookery Viewing Platform *Golden*
- Reflection Lake & Mt 7 Trailhead *Golden*
- Confluence Park Greenway *Golden*

CRGA Central

- Templeton Creek Private Lands, Public Access Greenway *Brisco*
- Radium to Athalmer Trail
- Sinclair Creek Interpretive Panels *Radium*
- Toby Creek Restoration *Athalmer (Invermere)*

CRGA South

- Source of the Columbia Walkway *Canal Flats*

Comprehensive

- eGuide to the Upper Columbia Valley

STRATEGY: Greenways

The Columbia River Greenway is a system of landscape elements that form a linked ecological network that provides increased support to previously isolated patches of the valley. Elements include:

Nodes or hubs: Environmentally sensitive areas - landscape elements or places vital to long-term maintenance of biological diversity. Nodes can also have cultural, recreational, educational and other human relevance. They may include wildlife or fish habitat, wetlands or agricultural lands located within a town or rural setting.

OUR VISION | The Columbia River Greenways Alliance envisions the region between Canal Flats and Donald as inter-



connected by land and water greenways that significantly contribute to ecological and economic stability of the region.

PROJECT PRECIS: Source of the Columbia

The source of the Columbia is a spring at the south edge of Columbia Lake by Canal Flats. CRGA has established a Community Walkway and Interpretive Preserve.

This is the south terminus for our valley-long greenway that features bulrushes, marshlands, wet sedge meadows, willow and birch shrublands, open spruce and trembling aspen forests.

The walkway will provide a beautiful site to residents and tourists. The designated trail will deter uncontrolled access from points along Highway 93/95. BC Ministry of Environment is fully supportive of the project.

The project area hosts 4 of the 43 species at risk in the East Kootenay: the Western Toad, Painted Turtle, American Bittern and Great Blue Heron. A *Species at Risk Assessment* by Robert S. Ferguson, RBio determined that the project will have minimal impact on these species.

PHASE 1 - SPRING & SUMMER 2006

Phase I will be carried out in spring and summer of this year and will include:

Graded parking area and information kiosk with interpretive panels. CRGA will leverage the abandoned airstrip, which mitigates most environmental impact.

Walking trail. CRGA will create an out and back trail to the spring proper, building off an old fireguard. An access control structure and extended fencing at the entrance will limit motorized traffic, preventing further degradation of the trail.

Boardwalks. CRGA will construct wooden walkways at critical, easily damaged ecological points near the spring to provide crossings at wetlands and water channels.

Points or sites: Features that elaborate on ecologically interesting aspects like a heron rookery or fish spawning area.

Paths or links: Corridors that enable people and animals to traverse from nodes in a manner that does not degrade the environment. Corridors may be flyways, animal migration routes, historic human travel paths, rivers and creeks, human-made trails with boardwalks, old roads, old fire guards.

CRGA efforts are aimed at enhancing and restoring these connections, so that we may continue to enjoy the Columbia Valley as a thriving eco-district with healthy ecology, community and economy.

STRATEGY: Education

The CRGA uses annotated maps, historic photos and quotations in our interpretative panels, positioned strategically at hubs and linkage points throughout the Columbia River Greenway. Our goal is to orient visitors to the greenway and to provide insight into the history of the area in concise, engaging terms.

We endeavour to meet the needs of a diverse audience – from the serious naturalist, hiker, paddler to the novice.

We also strive to provide local

landowners with helpful stewardship information.

STRATEGY: Restoration

Habitat restoration is a critical aspect of our work. We focus our efforts on natural elements that have suffered degradation through human use. Creek restoration can include the creation of channels and fish barriers to regenerate fish habitat. Restoration of a hillside might include strategic planting, prescribed by ecologists. We look for opportunities that combine restoration with the interpretation of these efforts.

OUR VALUES

| *Integration* of human use and social well-being with ecological gains | *Stewardship* through public education |



Achievement through *collaboration* | Solutions that *resolve conflict* | *Accountability* to our partners and our communities

PARTNERS

Many thanks to Tembec, Columbia Basin Trust, Village of Canal Flats, and Mark Kingsbury Foundation. The bulk of construction will be provided by Village of Canal Flats volunteers.

PROJECT PRECIS:

Confluence Park

The confluence of the Kicking Horse and the Columbia Rivers has been used for years by locals as an informal summer play spot for families. Increased demands on the site have sparked the need for increased formal green space within the town.

DEVELOPMENT

This Golden area greenway includes 105 hectares of beach and forested lands from the Kicking Horse River south to the Old Float Plane Base. Development commenced in 2004 with the interpretive concept. 2005 work included park planning, walking and biking trail construction, interpretive signs at Reflection Lake. This year we'll implement interpretive signs on the Rotary-Greenway Trail.

BENEFITS

Nestled along the Columbia River, the Confluence Park picnic area is a natural legacy, providing families an opportunity to view area eagles and osprey and watch the Columbia River as it changes its

temperament through the seasons. With linkages to the Rotary Trails, users can enjoy a beautiful walk or cycle from the Confluence through the town of Golden to the Reflection Lake and Mount 7 Trailhead. Future plans have the Rotary-Greenway Trail continuing south to the historic Golden sawmill.

PARTNERS

CRGA has teamed with the Town of Golden, Golden Initiatives, Canada Youth Corp, Golden IGA/Coca Cola, Golden Rotary Club, and BC Hydro to build this civic greenway. 18 of Canada World Youth and many Golden community volunteers helped build the CRGA-Rotary Greenway.

Partnering



Partners 2005

BC Hydro
 BC Ministry of Environment
 BC Ministry of Forestry & Range
 Canada Youth Corp
 Columbia Basin Trust
 Columbia Shuswap Regional District
 Golden Cycling Club
 Golden District Community Foundation
 Golden IGA & Coca Cola
 Golden Initiatives
 Golden Rotary Club
 Mark Kingsbury Foundation
 Parks Canada
 Resources for Community Collaboration
 (Sonoran Institute)
 Regional District of East Kootenay
 Tembec
 The Town of Golden
 Village of Canal Flats
 Village of Radium Hot Springs
 Western Economic Diversification
 Wildsight

Message from the Chair

2005 was a productive year for the Columbia River Greenways Alliance (CRGA): we have built a strong base of greenway nodes and linkages within each of our operations zones.

We have created 19 greenway development partnerships, established 10 segments of our Valley Greenway across our South, Central, and North zones and we have sourced \$218,329 in contributions.

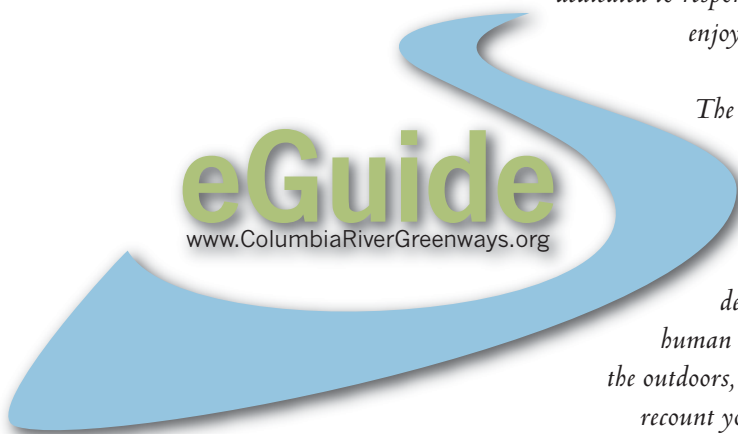
We sincerely appreciate the efforts and contributions of our project partners and we invite you to become a partner today: our work is real and tangible and you, your organizations, your family and friends can share in our success.

Ross MacDonald
 Chair, CRGA

The CRGA is an organization dedicated to responsible human use and enjoyment of the outdoors.

The CRGA eGuide is an innovative spin on the traditional website: as an organization dedicated to responsible human use and enjoyment of the outdoors, we encourage you to recount your experience online.

Where do you like to go and what you like to do in the Columbia Valley?



Trust Fund

A CRGA Trust Fund is being developed to support our long range vision. Endowment gifts can be arranged through our Executive Director.

CRGA Contact

CONTACT: Peter Sprague, Executive Director
ADDRESS: Box 2874 Invermere, BC V0A 1K0
EMAIL: info@columbiarivergreenways.org
WEB: columbiarivergreenways.org

CRGA is a registered charity
 86386 4666 RR0001

Directors 2005

Mandy Cattle	Ross MacDonald
Colin Cartwright	Doug Macintosh
Sue Crowley	Mark Read
Paul Galbraith	Mark Shmigelsky
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