



President's Report

Greetings from the Rockies:

We have had a very busy year with preparing the People & Peaks of Willmore Wilderness Park. There have been numerous trips up and down the highway to gather images, data and interviews for the Foundation's records. We have also been extremely busy hosting five fundraising conventions. We have already held fundraisers in Edson, Grande Prairie and Grande Cache. One more convention will be held in Jasper.

The Edson Shindig was well attended for our first effort there. We had the chance to honour Carl Luger at the event. Carl, a well-respected, long-time Willmore outfitter really touched the crowd with a PowerPoint donated by Whitefox Circle Inc. The Foundation thanked Carl for the maps he provided our organization. These maps have been critical in reestablishing the old trail systems in the park.

The Grande Prairie event was a great success thanks to Brian and Deana Bildson. We had over 225 in attendance and were able to honour long-time Willmore outfitter Glen Kilgour. It was great to have Glen and his wife Claudette present at the event. Due to the success and the growth of the Grande Prairie event, we will have to move venues next year to accommodate the growing interest. Make sure you book tickets early in 2007, as we had to turn latecomers away from the banquet and auction.

Once again we had a first time event called the Grande Cache Gala. The Grande Cache Trappers local was instrumental in making the fundraiser a very successful event. We honoured Ernie Basaraba, a long time Grande Cache Trapper who recently passed away. Half of the net profit of this event was donated to

the Grande Cache Trappers Association who gave our Foundation a BIG HAND in putting on the Gala. \$7,600.00 was presented to the Trappers Local 1066 Secretary, Shirley Luniw. This revenue has been earmarked to promote trapper education and public education programs about humane trapping. It is hoped that the Willmore Wilderness Foundation and the Trapper Local 1066 will get the Alberta Trapper Association to host a 5-day trapper education program aimed at youth. Other programs the donation will be earmarked for is a trap exchange program. One of the Willmore Wilderness Foundation's goals is to provide workshops and seminars on traditional

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Jan Palsen of Talisman holds up a \$10,000.00 check with Bazil

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Views from Sheep Creek

Brian Bildson - Executive Director

Greetings

We've had a very productive winter and spring, and much has been accomplished by the Foundation. We've successfully concluded three of our five fund-raisers. Edmonton banquet is only a week away and Jasper Mother's Day Extravaganza is rapidly approaching. A big thank you to all those who have assisted in making our annual banquets such a success. Our entire operating budget for the year comes from these banquets so they're very important to our survival.

The Foundation has finally been able to secure an administrative office in Grande Cache, which is long over due. We owe Basil and Sue a huge thanks for allowing their home to be turned upside down for the last couple of years. With this new space we now have room to archive the material we've been compiling and present a more professional image to the public, government, and industry. We would like to reassure members that we are cautious about incurring high administration costs and are committed to running a lean and mean operation.

The Foundation is waiting until the conclusion of the Edmonton fund-raiser to calculate our total costs, and profit, for the year from all of the events. At that point we will be finalizing a budget which will be presented at the annual general meeting in June. In that budget we will identify what projects we will be tackling for this year. It is important to the Board that funds raised be directed to as many on-the-ground

activities as possible. We will again be focusing on maintaining and opening as many trails as possible and hope to finally obtain permission from Community Development to place some signage on the trails.

On April 7th. I and my wife Deana, along with Basil and Sue, met with the Deputy Minister of Community Development, John Kristensen. Our original meeting had been scheduled with Minister Gary Mar, but a cabinet shuffle changed our plans. In the end it turned out to be a change for the better as Mr. Kristensen is the person who basically runs the department and has a lot of influence. We found him to be an enthusiastic supporter and user of the Willmore Wilderness. He listened to our concerns and explained many of the government's policies.

We spent quite a bit of time discussing the trail and signage issues, as well as planned changes in regards to trappers registered fur management areas. We'll be putting together an informational package for all Willmore trappers, which will examine this issue in greater depth. Mr. Kristensen will be attending our Edmonton banquet and we're encouraged by his strong interest in the Foundation.

In closing I hope to see you at the Annual General Meeting in Grande Cache on June 3rd and hopefully on the trails. Make sure you take time this season to enjoy the many wonders of the Willmore Wilderness.



Image by Stew Cameron

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Hungry Wolves Roam Russia

The following is an excerpt from an issue of New Scientist dated January 21, 1995. It is interesting in view of the opinion held by many that wolves do not attack humans. A view that is becoming more and more suspect as more research is done on the subject.

“One day last November, a pack of wolves slunk out of the forests of Nizhniy Novgorod, crossed a river and attacked a herd of cattle. After killing two calves, they returned to the safety of the woods. The attacks, reported in the Sovetskaya Chuvashia newspaper, is a sign that the number of wolves in the region has reached an all-time high and hungry packs are becoming more daring and less afraid of humans. The upsurge in numbers stems from the massive decline in hunting in recent years.

In 1948, a pack of wolves suddenly appeared in Darovskoye district about 1000 kilometers east of Moscow. According to Mikhail Pavlov, a biologist from the Institute for Hunting and Fur Animals, now retired, in just one summer the wolves killed around 40 children -- and then disappeared almost as quickly as they appeared. The story was kept quiet for many years, but when Pavlov heard about it he began to study wolves, becoming one of the country's leading experts. He warns that the wolf population could soon be out of control again.”

(Hungry Wolves roam Russia again is by Vladimir Kotsepalov of Kirov Russia. The article is in the New Scientist magazine dated January 21, 1995.)

In just one summer the wolves killed around 40 children -- and then disappeared almost as quickly as they appeared.

cowboy school

Colt Clinic & Jr. Horsemanship Cowboy Clinic - Grande Cache

Colt Clinic - Instructors Tyler McMahon & Cody Leonard

Get your colt or horse ready for the mountain trails

\$200.00 per horse - for your choice of 5-days from June 15 - 25, 2006.

\$5.00/day for horse care - \$30.00/day for extra days - camping & meals available

Jr. Horsemanship - June 17 & 18 & June 24 & 25 (some evenings...TBA)

Youth fees are free - ages 8 - 13 years of age

Basic horsemanship & horse safety.

Lunch will be provided to youth. Parents are encouraged to come.

June 15 to 25, 2006 - Location: Smoky River Ranch - 9 am to 5 pm each day

Prior bookings are necessary to enrol in the Colt Clinic and Junior Horsemanship.

Phone 1-866-WILMORE or 1-866-945-6673



President's Report



Image by Stew Cameron

Our offices will have a skeleton crew on for the summer months as most of our volunteers will be out on the trails, collecting data, images and clearing old packtrails. The office will open full time on November 1/06.

activities in the Willmore Wilderness Park such as humane trapping, improving horsemanship skills, edible and medicinal plants etc.

At the Grande Cache Gala, Talisman Energy donated the Willmore Wilderness Foundation \$10,000 toward their book, the People & Peaks of Willmore Wilderness Park. We are grateful for the donation, which brings the publication one step closer to becoming a reality.

The 3rd Willmore Wilderness Annual Fundraiser held in Edmonton on April 22, 2006 was an outstanding success. We honoured long-time outfitter Tom Vinson and his wife Yvette. Long time friend of Tom, Judge Bill Wilson provided the audience an overview of Tom's outfitting career. He talked about how Tom Vinson was one of the instrumental people in lobbying Norman Willmore and the Alberta Government for the creation of the Willmore Wilderness Act.

The Mother's Day Extravaganza is scheduled at the Sawridge Hotel in Jasper on May 13, 2006. Some of the money raised at the Extravaganza will be donated to the Aseniwuche Winewak Youth Club to

attend the North American Indigenous games in Denver Colorado in July 2006.

The Willmore Wilderness Foundation is also planning a packing school in Grande Prairie on May 27 & 28, 2006 at Keddies Tack and Western Wear. For more information call 1-866-WILMORE.

We have signed a two-year lease for a new office in downtown Grande Cache. Our new premises are located beside the Liquor Warehouse, next to Michaels Super A. We have to wait one month for an Internet hookup, until April 28, as Telus has a backlog -- and there is a month waiting list. This new office will make the operations of the Foundation a lot easier, as we have been operating out of volunteer homes for 3 1/2 years.

We wish everyone great trips in Willmore this summer. Our offices will have a skeleton crew on for the summer months as most of our volunteers will be out on the trails, collecting data, images and clearing old packtrails. The office will open full time on November 1, 2006.

Happy Trails
Bazil Leonard

PACKING SCHOOL - GRANDE PRAIRIE

OLD TIME PACKER WILL TEACH YOU HOW TO PACK BOXES AND DO THE DIAMOND HITCH. WE HAVE OVER A COMBINED TOTAL OF 100 YEARS PACKING EXPERIENCE. INSTRUCTORS INCLUDE BAZIL LEONARD, PETE MCMAHON AND DANNY HALLOCK. THE WILLMORE WILDERNESS FOUNDATION WILL PROVIDE LIVE HORSES AND ALL THE TACK NECESSARY TO GET YOU STARTED PACKING. THE "DIAMOND HITCH" WAS A COWBOY'S CLOSELY GUARDED SECRET. LEARN HOW TO SAFELY PACK YOUR HORSE

IF YOU CHOOSE TO GO THE GRANDE PRAIRIE CLINIC YOU WILL GET A \$50.00 GIFT CERTIFICATE FROM KEDDIES TACK & WESTERN WEAR. KEDDIES WILL ALSO PROVIDE LUNCH BOTH DAYS.

MAY 27 & 28, 2006
LOCATION: KEDDIES GRANDE PRAIRIE
9 AM TO 4 PM EACH DAY COST \$250.00



Willmore Wanderings

By Mark Engstrom

Winter will soon be over, and we'll all be back out in the Park for another season. I only made one trip into the Park since the last newsletter, a late November, five-day hunting trip to Kvass Flats. I was headed out by myself, but ran into a friend at the staging area; he was with his father-in-law and his father-in-law's business partner. I was invited to ride out and share their camp, which I gladly accepted. Hunting seemed poor, mainly due to a lack of snow. My friend harvested one whitetail deer, otherwise we were skunked.

As I pondered what to write for the spring newsletter, I reflected back on many memories of time spent in the Willmore -- of horses, of people, and of places...and of weather. If you spend any time in the Willmore, you are ever mindful of the weather. Good memories and not so good memories, but all remembered fondly: memories that spawn tales that get told around the campfire -- some you hear, some you were part of, and some you tell.

Here are a few of my Willmore memories:

...Jim Bruhm and I on top of a mountain eating fresh sheep steaks roasted over an open fire on balsam fir sticks. I had been drawn for a non-trophy sheep tag that year. Jim took me up a god-forsaken trail to a spot on top of a mountain where he told me there would be some ewes. He was right, but by the time I got one, it was late in the afternoon. We decided to camp out on the mountain. We hadn't really expected to stay overnight, so camp was a fire, saddles for pillows, horse blankets to lie on and slickers for blankets. By the time we got set up it was dark, and we were getting pretty hungry. The only food we had brought was a single can of beans, until the thought hit us we had a whole sheep to eat. I cut a good size roast off the hind end while Jim cut a couple of green balsam fir sticks. We then cut the roast into strips to cook on

the sticks, and let me tell you, beans and fresh sheep with balsam fir flavouring is extraordinary.

...Taking my daughter Ashley, who was 13 at the time and her friend Marta on a week-long trip into the Park. We packed up the horses and left Grande Cache. For about the first hour and a half, I would glance back and see both of them riding along grim faced. Finally I called back and told them just because we were going to be riding all day, didn't mean they couldn't have some fun as well. After that, they talked and laughed, and threw twigs back and forth and generally had a good time. The rest of the week went just as well; the kids had a great time, although I hadn't been so sure after that first ninety minutes on the trail.

...Same trip, last night -- two riders pull into camp; Greg Germscheid and his son, David. I am a Wellsite Geologist by trade, there's not a lot of us in Alberta, and if you can believe it, it turns out Greg is as well! He's spent a lot of time in the Willmore with his Tennessee Walkers; and the best part is he packs a guitar! After breakfast the next morning he entertained me and the girls, first with a 1950's cowboy yodelling song, then one for the youngsters -- a Tragically Hip song. He's one of the really good people I've met in the Park.

...Being so cold my fingers wouldn't work to untie a knot. Gord Leonard, Randy Tremblay and I were out hunting. We had been riding all day after spending a cold night in a makeshift camp at Walton

Creek; it had been snowing a heavy, wet snow since the previous evening. I don't think I've ever been as cold as I was that day. We were riding along the Sulphur River when we spotted three elk across the river, one good six pointer and two five pointers. I hopped off and attempted to untie the frozen string on the flap of my rifle scabbard, but I could not get my fingers to work. The elk gave us plenty of opportunity before fading into the trees. Gord told me later he was hoping we didn't see the elk; he just wanted to get to the Forestry cabin to warm up.

...My four-year-old daughter, Lacey chattering away like a chipmunk for the whole hour and a half ride out to Kvass Flats. Now, that kid can talk, and once she gets going she doesn't like to stop. Later in the day, while I eat lunch on the bank of the Smoky River, she plays contentedly in the sand and water, with a warm sun shining down. It's hard to beat a day like that, and the memories of it and other great days are what warms me up inside over the winter months.

If you spend any time in the Willmore, you will be left with indelible memories of your own: maybe of horses, maybe of people; of good trails and poor trails; of peaks and valleys, and creeks and rivers; of the plants and animals; and, of the weather -- because the Willmore Wilderness Park is unforgettable.

Editor's Note: Mark Engstrom is on the Board of Directors of the Willmore Wilderness Foundation.

Willmore Wilderness Websites:

[www.Willmore Wilderness.com](http://www.WillmoreWilderness.com)
www.WillmoreWildernessPark.com
www.WillmorePark.com
www.MountainSolstice.com



An Important Warning About 'Tame' Wolves

By Valerius Geist Professor Emeritus of Environmental Science - University of Calgary, Canada.



On November 8, 2005, a 22-year-old third-year geological engineering student at the University of Waterloo by the name of Kenton Joel Carnegie was killed by four wolves at Points North Landing,



On November 8, 2005, a 22-year-old third-year geological engineering student at the University of Waterloo by the name of Kenton Joel Carnegie was killed by four wolves at Points North Landing, Wollaston Lake area, in northern Saskatchewan. This case is unique in that it is the first direct human fatality from a wolf attack in North America in recent times. There have been people bitten by rabid wolves and killed, but such kills "do not count," as it is the rabies virus, not the wolf-bite that killed.

Fresh snow allowed accurate track reading. Mr. Carnegie was by himself when he was approached by the wolves from behind. He fell three times before failing to rise. There have been other attacks in Canada, historical and recent. Mr. Fred Desjarlais was recently attacked and wounded by a wolf in Northern Saskatchewan. There are also unreported recent attacks by wolves in Saskatchewan, one of which I was informed on in some detail. A local rancher was attacked by three wolves while deer hunting. He killed two.

We are aware that the four wolves in question had been observed and photographed by others, and that Mr. Carnegie was aware of this. Unfortunately, neither he nor those who discussed the matter with him, as reported on by the Saskatoon Star Phoenix of November 14, 2005, were aware that tame and inquisitive wolves are a signal of danger. Consequently, the first requirement is that the general public, but especially outdoors people, be informed that when they see tame, inquisitive wolves, that they get out of there quick, but without undue haste, while being prepared to defend themselves. Running away invites an attack.

Why are tame and inquisitive wolves a sign of danger?

When wolves are well-fed, they are extremely shy and avoid humans. In my days in the northern wilderness I have seen wolves panic repeatedly when they crossed my track or got my scent.

We have other observations indicating that wolves are normally very cautious. However, when wolves run out of their preferred prey, they begin to explore alternative prey. They do so very cautiously, and over an extended time period. This exploration for alternative food is manifest in wolves becoming – increasingly - tame and inquisitive. My neighbors, my wife and I have had experiences in recent years (1999 – 2003) with one wolf pack which ran out of prey and shifted its attention onto farms and suburbs. I have been investigated three times in the open by wolves. The same wolves threatened my wife twice, once on our door step; the same wolves attacked and killed neighbor dogs, followed riders and "nibbled at" and killed livestock. They explored my neighbor's dairy cows by docking tails, slashing ears and cutting hocks. Other Vancouver Island wolves went on to explore humans by licking, nipping and tearing clothing (in a camp site on Vargas Island near Tofino) weeks before attacking and severely wounding a camper, Scott Lavigne, July 2, 2000.

He was saved from the attack by fellow campers Jim Beatty, Vancouver Sun pp. A1-2, July, 5 2000. The bottom line is, when wolves appear tame, stare at you and follow you, they are investigating you - and it's quite likely with lunch in mind.

A confounding factor is refuse about human habitations. Wolves drawn by hunger due to declining natural prey to human habitations, inevitably, run into garbage and refuse. Feeding on such can become a habit which leads to the habituation of wolves to people. Such wolves may not be particularly hungry when they extend their exploration of alternative foods to humans. Two wolves killed after the attack on the camper on Vargas Island were full of deer fawns. This suggests that habituated wolves may attack without being hungry. The bottom line: tame and inquisitive wolves are dangerous no matter how they became tame and inquisitive.

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Where The Money Goes

In 2006 the Willmore Wilderness Foundation has raised money for the following programs:

Public Relations

The Willmore Wilderness Foundation has a face at various public functions such as FNAWS, SCI, and APOS, government meeting, meetings with various ministers, municipalities and community groups. Some of the revenue generated helps cover the cost to these events. We have provided talks, lectures and discussion augmented with PowerPoints, to many organizations educating the audience about Willmore Wilderness Park.

Office & Accounting

We have opened a new office and have signed a two-year lease. As we have received no government grants, some of the revenue generated will be used to maintain the office. We have a toll free 1-866-WILMORE number that is manned, with the offices being manned by volunteer labour to this point. We get inquiries on the toll free number about trail conditions, places to travel in Willmore and general questions about the Park. The Foundation has hired Yvonne Lambert Accounting Services to look after their year-end and Revenue Canada statements. Estella Cheverie has volunteered her time to complete the day-to-day financial transactions and convention overviews. We are in constant contact with hundreds of members and past members of the organization via "snail mail," by email and by phone.

PowerPoints, Newsletters, Website & Database

The Willmore Wilderness Foundation continues to stay on the cutting edge preparing PowerPoints to honour old time outfitters and trappers and educate the public on Willmore Wilderness Park. Some of the revenue generated goes to help in the preparation of these multimedia presentations. The Foundation sends out bi-annual newsletters that have been

prepared by volunteer labour. There is a cost involved with mailing these out to members, non-members, government and NGO's. This organization maintains four websites for the public to use. They are as follows:

www.WillmoreWilderness.com
www.WillmoreWildernessPark.com
www.WillmorePark.com
www.MountainSoslstice.com

We have also been cataloguing a database of images, interviews and information on Willmore Wilderness Park for future use.

People & Peaks of Willmore Wilderness Park & more books

Some of the funds have been used for travel to interview and gather historical data, some of which will be used in the People & Peaks of Willmore Wilderness Park. Some of the information will be used in future publications. We have a second book half finished on the post-1960's outfitters. (This will be published once we get book one printed.) We are also compiling a book of Ishbel (Hargreaves) Cochrane's 1942-1946 journals and Susan Feddema-Leonard's diaries, which outlines the reopening of the long-forgotten trails. Both women's journals outline travelling the same country. Ishbel travelled the area with good trails in the 1940's and Feddema-Leonard journeyed into the country trying to re-open the same trails enjoyed by the Hargreaves and Cochranes 60 years ago.

Grande Cache Trapper Local 1066

Funds donated to the Grande Cache Trappers Association Local 1066 will go to provide Trapper Education in the school; a trap exchange program; an ATA Trapper Education Course; and public education on trapping

Youth Sponsorship

We are helping to sponsor the Aseniwuche Winewak Sports Club to attend the North American Indigenous games in Denver Colorado.

Youth Trapper Education

The Willmore Wilderness Foundation is on a waiting list to sponsor a Trapper Education Program for Youth put on by the Alberta Trappers Association. Adults who are young at heart are also eligible to attend.

Youth & Adult Horsemanship

The Willmore Wilderness Foundation will be hosting a junior horsemanship clinic. We will also be hosting a 10-day clinic to start colts on June 15 to 25, 2006. This will be for teen, young adults and those who are young at heart.

Trail clearing

1. We will be clearing a portion of the trail between Big Graves Flats and Little Graves. Due to windfall and the river washing out portions of this trail, it is in dire need of some work. We will be clearing this portion of the trail during the last two weeks of July.

2. We will be scouting trail from the Summit of the West Sulphur down to the Smoky River in an attempt to connect the east and western portion of Willmore Wilderness Park. We plan to clear an old pack trail from the Smoky (across from the mouth of the Hardscrabble) to the upper Jackpine.

If anyone has ideas or projects that they feel would be worth consideration, feel free to contact the Foundation Office at 1-866-WILMORE.





People & Peaks of Willmore Wilderness

Find about the old time outfitters of Willmore Wilderness:

Hargreaves Brothers
Jack & Fred Brewster
Carl Luger, Tom Vinson
Art Allen, Leonard Jeck
Jerry Stojan, Glen Kilgour,
Tom Groat & sons Joe & Judd
Tom McCready
Dave Simpson,
Emma & Nick Nickerson
& more...

Donations towards the People & Peaks of Willmore Wilderness Park have been jumpstarted with a \$10,000 donation from Talisman. Individuals or organizations who donate \$100.00 or more will get an honourable mention in the book plus one book for every \$50.00 contributed. The retail value of the book will be \$60.00. Help build the Book Publishing Fund. The Foundation has a special account set aside for this book.

The old time outfitters share the secrets of the mountains. They talk about the trails, hunting areas and downright funny stories.

Willmore Wilderness Foundation
is pre-selling ...



'People & Peaks of Willmore Wilderness

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T0E 0Y0 Canada
1.866.WILMORE

Join Our Membership

Find out about what's happening in Willmore Wilderness. Get the latest news, issues & new developments! We will keep in touch with our members in a newsletter twice during the year.

Find out about what's happening in Willmore. Get the latest news, issues and developments! We will keep in touch with our members in a newsletter twice during the year. 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 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. Membership renewals will be sent out 14-days prior to this meeting, along with a formal notice. The membership year runs from June to June.

Yearly Membership is as follows:

- \$20.00 for the 2006-2007 year
- \$25.00 for the 2007-2008 year
- Life Time Membership is \$500.00
- Corporate Membership is \$100.00

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Four Intrepid Adventurers

Submitted by Shirley McFall

Exploring the Willmore Wilderness has been a dream which has run deep for many decades in our family. Through my father's southern Alberta ranching days to the teaching years with a hobby farm out of Edmonton, there were always four destinations he wanted to explore by horseback; Cyress Hills, Porcupine Hills, Sweet Grass Hills and Willmore Wilderness.

As a family we led a historic trail ride from Cyress Hills Saskatchewan to Cypress Hills Alberta in 1987. However, we never had the opportunity to explore the Porcupine Hills by horse; Sweet Grass Hills are not accessible to the public and by the time Willmore Wilderness became a reality, age and health had intervened for my father.

Last March at the Willmore Wilderness Foundation fund raiser I was excited about the chance to bid on an adventure package which included riding in the Willmore Wilderness and white water rafting. So I got the trip for four for a weekend not knowing if I could rustle up three other people to share in my adventure.

I pulled together a team of intrepid adventurers consisting of four women with riding skills ranging from 'absolutely terrified' to experienced. Our water experiences were equally diverse.

The four of us headed out for Grande Cache on a rainy Friday evening in June loaded down with a variety of gear hoping the weather would improve. Sue and Bazil Leonard of High Country Vacations covered all details from the very hospitable bed and breakfast accommodations with EJ's Roost, to coordinating our departure with Wild Blue Yonder Rafting.

The Leonards made this a memorable girls' weekend away. I have no doubt the 'scared stiff' greenhorn will never forget riding in the mountains for

five hours in the rain. I made her comfortable by providing her with lessons in advance, a 'Tush Cush' the day of, and Bazil ponied 'old faithful' - the dude horse for the entire distance. The next least experienced rider had never ridden in mountainous and river terrain. Thank goodness she heeded my warning to prevent her horse from pawing in the water as we heard later from Bazil that a number of riders were dumped in the water the previous week! I threatened that I'd be sure to get a picture if she were to dip in two feet of river overflow for whatever reason.

As we safely arrived at the Leonards' base camp we were welcomed by the sun discovering a gap in the clouds and a herd of about 100 grazing elk cows and calves. During our brief lunch stop at the cabin we were able to peel off the slickers and rain pants to sun-dry.

The entire ride was extraordinary: the challenging mountain riding, beautiful scenery, the waterfalls, animals, rain and hospitality ending in a fireside dinner, made it memorable. We closed off the day with hot baths and wine, mentally and physically preparing ourselves for day two.

Day 2 dawned grey and socked in but after we had a satisfying hot breakfast, our gear was rearranged for a day on the water and again in the rain. The rafting company prepared us thoroughly for a safe day on the water. The 'land lubber' of our group was out of her comfort zone as we climbed a slippery switchback trail down to the starting point on the Sulphur River. The whitewater was high, thrilling; the riverbanks steep with craggy cliffs. By the mid point we converged with Smoky River to leisurely float down to our final destination.

The hot chocolate and homemade cookies at the end of the trip were

a welcome source of heat to warm us up from the inside out.

The 'four intrepid adventurers' returned to the bed-and-breakfast to pack up and have quick warm-up baths. We piled into the car heady from fresh air, exercise, fine hospitality and laughter.

The Willmore Wilderness Foundation's efforts to promote awareness through eco-tourism is laudable especially when backed up with fabulous opportunities for people to get in touch with the area.

Notice

Willmore Wilderness Foundation's
Annual General Meeting

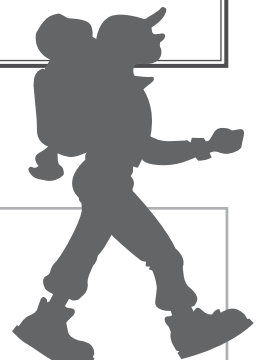
The AGM will be held at
Smoky River Ranch on
Saturday June 3/06 rain or
shine.

Time: 2 pm

A barbeque will be held
after the meeting.

Everyone is welcome!

advertise in the willmore wilderness newsletter





An Important Warning About 'Tame' Wolves ... continued

By Valerius Geist Professor Emeritus of Environmental Science - University of Calgary, Canada.

... continued from Page 6

The argument, that there is little danger from wolves because they have rarely attacked humans in North America, is fallacious. There are very good reasons why wolves in North America, as opposed to Europe, have attacked people rarely. In the past decades we have experienced in North America a unique situation: we had a recovery of wildlife. Few North Americans are aware today that a century ago North America's wildlife was largely decimated and that it took a lot of effort to bring wildlife back. This restoration of North America's wildlife, and thus this continent's biodiversity, is probably the greatest environmental success story of the 20th Century. Such a recovery begins with an increase in herbivores. It is followed after a lag-time by an increase in predators. While predators are scarce, and herbivores are abundant, wolves are well fed. Consequently they are very large in body size, but also very shy of people. We expect to see then no tame or inquisitive wolves. Wolves are seen rarely under such conditions, fostering the romantic image of wolves so prevalent in North America today. However, when herbivore numbers decline while wolf numbers rise, we expect wolves to disperse and begin exploring for new prey. That's when tame, inquisitive wolves appear.

How do we know?

Firstly, because wolves have been raised by scientists in captivity, we have developed a detailed understanding about how wolves explore novelty. This information is discussed by colleagues in my profession. I am an ethologist, that is, a student of animal behavior. In my profession becoming acquainted with how animals habituate is essential to surviving field work with tame animals unscathed. Secondly, I have had personal experiences with a wolf pack that settled about our house on Vancouver Island for four years, ran out of prey and gravitated to farms and suburbs. I wrote down the experiences of my neighbors, my wife and myself

as these wolves were, for the first time to my knowledge, not acting like recent North American wolves. Rather, they acted as if they were Russian wolves. I penned a letter on this to Erich Klinghammer of Wolf Park, Illinois, a veteran wolf biologist; the letter was published by the Virginia Wildlifer (May 2003 issue pp. 39-43). Thirdly, I am editing a book on Russian wolves written by a linguist, Will Graves, who worked as translator in Moscow for the US armed forces. The Russian experience delineates with considerable precision when wolves become dangerous. Fourthly, the book by Heptner et al. on the Mammals of the USSR has now been translated into English by the Smithsonian Institute, and is consequently available in English. Read the section on wolves! Ironically, the experience of the Russians is similar to that of American pioneers as recorded in some detail by Stanley P. Young (1946. *The Wolf in North American History*. Idaho: Caxton). That wolves can pose a lethal threat is, therefore, not a Red Riding hood fairytale.

One cannot defend the current romantic notions about harmless, friendly, cuddly wolves! It is necessary that the public be informed that there exists a large amount of experience and information to the contrary. And the public should know the signs of danger before heading into the wilds. And tame, inquisitive wolves are one such sign!

Unfortunately, that's not all one should be aware of when doing outdoor activities in areas with increasing wolf populations. Expanding wolf populations will, invariably, begin to overlap regions in which small predators carry rabies. Consequently, it becomes likely that some wolves become infected with rabies. Such wolves are highly dangerous, not only because in their mental derangement they become exceedingly aggressive inflicting deep, multiple bite wounds, but also because the bite of a rabid wolf is lethal – unless treated quickly. Anyone bitten by a rabid wolf needs to get to a hospital very quickly for treatment. In the past lethal control

of wolf populations was the response to rabid wolves in Canada. However, that's after the fact! How to deal with this potential problem before the fact is the crux of the matter. Not going out alone, carrying arms and a cell phone may be part of the answer.

And here is a third concern without a simple solution. As indicated earlier, as a landscape is re-colonized by wildlife, herbivores are followed with some lag by carnivores, which in turn are followed after a longer delay by the pathogens and parasites. Some of these require both, herbivores and carnivores, to complete their life cycle. If we generate dense wolf populations then it is inevitable that such lethal diseases as Hydatid disease become established. This disease is based on a tiny tape worm (*Echinococcus granulosus*) which lives in the gut of canids – wolves, domestic dogs, coyotes - in great multitudes. It produces tiny eggs which are passed out in large volume in the feces of infected canids. Normally these tiny eggs spread out on forage consumed by deer, elk, moose etc. Once ingested the eggs develop into big cysts in the lung, liver or brain of the infected herbivore. Each cyst contains huge numbers of tiny tape-worm heads. The disease kills the host outright or makes it susceptible to predation. When its lungs or liver are consumed by wolves, dogs or coyotes, cysts included, the tiny tapeworms are freed, attach themselves to the gut, and grow and produce eggs, closing the cycle.

Humans pick up the disease from the fur of infected wolves, dogs or coyotes they handle, or from the feces they disturb. Wolf scat can be contaminated with millions upon millions of tiny tape worm eggs. These eggs, like fine dust, can become readily air born and landing on hands and mouth. The larvae move into major capillary beds – liver, lung, brain – where they develop into large cysts full of tiny tape worm heads. These cysts can kill infected persons unless they are removed

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Image on page 11 by Stew Cameron



LET IT BE

a poem about the Willmore Wilderness written by Harry Edgcombe

I am patrolling the Willmore
For the Alberta Forestry,
Following the track of the horse & pack
The way it used to be.

The years have slipped by,
All too quickly it seems.
Many changes have been made
in the forestry trade.
For the past it is memories & dreams.

Today I am back where I started
Patrolling the mountains once more;
With horses three, and only me.
It is the same as it was before.

Time has no real meaning,
Today is all that is real.
You find your way through the
mountains gray.
Happy is the way I feel.

There is a message carried in
on the breeze
A meaning that is easy to see;
A message told by the mountains old,
LET IT BE. LET IT BE.

This is not the land for loggers
Who fells and cuts up the tree,
Not for oil or ore
-- they have been here before.
LET IT BE. LET IT BE.

The message rings loud and clear:
This is not the land of industry!
No motel or store on the valley floor.
Just LET IT BE. LET IT BE.

All around me the world is gleaming,
The streams are rushing along.
Spring has aroused the bear
... from its mountain lair,
The valley is singing a song.
A song of a land of beauty,
A land that is wild and free
From the shimmering glow
of the mountain snow,
LET IT BE. LET IT BE.

As I ride along the mountain trail
An owl sleeps in an old dead tree.
He opens an eye as I ride by,
And hoots, LET IT BE.

As I pass through the Rock Creek valley,
There are changes new to me.
The forest fire scene has all turned green
Where a blackened mantle used to be.

A little farther on my way,
You can see where
the mountain's broken,
Memories sadden for a spell
as I pass the cliff where she fell;
A young girl's life was taken.

That night in camp at the summit,
My mind goes wandering ahead,
To the Indian grave and the life it gave
To the man that lies there dead.

He sleeps alone on the mountain trail,
Facing the morning sun.
His message to me is Let me be!
Please tell it to everyone.

I am a Ranger
That has gone down this trail before.
I have loaded my tack on a horse's back
And ready for what is in store.

I have read the signs in the mountains,
I have known what it is like to be free
With beauty grand in this wild land,
It is very plain to me.

We should leave the park as it is,
Don't change a land that is free.
The message is clear for all to hear,
LET IT BE. LET IT BE.

Endnotes: After his retirement from the Forest Technology School of the Alberta Forest Service at Hinton, Harry returned as a Patrolman for the Willmore Wilderness Area during the summer and fall of 1982. His job was to patrol the area by horse as done in Dominion Forestry days before 1930, and in early days of the Forest Service. He checked the trails and cabins, doing what maintenance he could and making notes of work that should be done. He also checked the traditional camping areas to assess cleanup work that was needed. He visited with travelers in the Willmore including guides and outfitters, most of whom were old friends, and travelers -- and with all, he shared stories and ideas for protecting and managing the Willmore. It was an area he loved, and enjoyed sharing with his family and wide circle of friends. His time on the trail gave him an opportunity to reflect, and to formulate the idea for this poem that he completed that fall. The poem speaks volumes -- both about the land and himself. PJM 1996-06-12





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We welcome feedback to this publication and any suggestions or ideas for future articles. Contact our Editor at info@willmorewilderness.com



Pine Beetle Update

According the April 12, 2006 Alberta Government Pine Beetle Bulletin, survey and control operations are underway in Willmore Wilderness Park. The surveys should be completed by the end of April. Control operations are expected to be complete by the end of May. All accessible trees have been controlled in the Smoky area. Due to steep terrain, a rappel crew worked at five sites where infected trees were identified. 7480 trees are to be cut and burned in Willmore Wilderness Park. To date 1820 trees have been cut and

burned, which equates to 24% of the detected trees. The government of Alberta has pursued an aggressive strategy which has limited the spread of pine beetles in the province. There are two million hectares of pine forests at risk along the eastern slopes-- with an estimated commercial value of 23 billion dollars. For more information on the pine beetle you can go to <http://www3.gov.ab.ca/srd/forests/health/mpb.html> or contact Erica Lee at Erica.Lee@gov.ab.ca.

An Important Warning About 'Tame' Wolves ... continued

By Valerius Geist Professor Emeritus of Environmental Science - University of Calgary, Canada.

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surgically. It consequently behooves us (a) to ensure that this disease does not become wide spread, and (b) that hunters and guides know that wolf scats and coyote scats should never be touched or kicked. Therefore, do not touch or kick wolf feces – on principle! Avoid it and do not disturb. (c) In areas with Echinococcus, skinning of wolves and coyotes must be done with great care, using gloves and masks! (d) Never feed the offal from deer, elk and moose to domestic dogs! If the gut of the domestic dog is filled with Echino-

coccus tape worms, then the house and yard in which the dog lives will become infected with the deadly tape worm eggs. These can then develop into big cysts in humans using said habitation. Ranches are especially endangered. Information about the prevalence of hydatid disease in Canada and the United States can be readily acquired from the Internet. Historically it was uncommon – as were wolves!

There are still other diseases which will spread with “completion of the ecosystem.” We face a potential public health problem.

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