

Three Rivers Trail Association Newsletter

(Arm River – Qu'Appelle River – South Saskatchewan River)

Three Rivers Trail Association (TRTA), Box 367, Craik, SK, S0G 0V0.

Events & Archives: www.craik.ca/trta

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The TRTA Objectives:

- To promote the beauty of valley vistas, the prairie geography and the 'spirit' of the land;
- To give an understanding and appreciation of grassland ecology by identifying points of interests and associated trails in glacial pothole country, sand hills, wetlands, and old glacial valleys;
- To make maps showing birding trails and heritage sites; and
- To mark hiking and equestrian trails with metal posts showing the **TRTA Logo:**



The TRTA Area:



The TRTA Board of Directors:

Gloria Kadlec, Bladworth
Bob Doig, Chamberlain
Lyle/Christine Benz, Aylesbury
Sterling Schollar, Craik
Doug McIvor, Girvin
Don Wilkins, Girvin
Ed Spratt, Davidson (Chairman)
Shirley Eade, Craik (Sec./Treasurer)

Trail Ride May 22, 2005, a Success

On May 21 Craik had a very heavy rain. Some people thought the trail ride would be canceled. However, Sunday morning was clear and sunny. Some of the riders took time to have a pancake breakfast at the Craik Park. Riders and wagon teams met at the Buffalo Hunter, west of No.11, and headed west through town.

About 30 people enjoyed the bright sunny day, going to and from the Iskwao Valley. The lunch stop was in Schollar's native grass pasture, near the Hudson's Bay Company Look-out. Pelican Eco-Tours cooked the Buffalo Burgers for us. Lunch and refreshments were delightful, thanks. So were the vista, fresh air and no mosquitoes (a pre-season delight).



Art's Belgians take the lead to Iskwao Valley-May 22



Ron Turner (center) was the trail boss – May 22, 2005

Potential Off-Road Trails Along Louis Riel Trail (No.11)

1. Birding - TRTA has had the interest of developing Birding Trails since its inception. Recently TRTA participation in the new Birding Platform at Arm Lake has perked the interest of some TRTA members to help develop other local birding sites so that a Birding Trail could be set-up. The Pelican Eco-Tours Company at the CSLP Eco-Center in Craik might be interested in organizing tours. Local tours would take in Arm Lake, Iskwao Creek and perhaps Eyebrow Lake.

On a larger scale, an internationally famous Birding Trail from Saskatoon to Regina could be set-up. A tour would include stops at the Blackstrap, Allan Hills, Black Lake (near Bladworth), the Davidson Dam, Arm Lake, Iskwao Creek, the Qu'Appelle Dam, Eyebrow Lake, Lovering Lake (near Aylesbury) and Lumsden/Wascana valleys. Tourism Saskatchewan is aware of this potential and has promised to help promote Birding Trails patterned on a successfully developed model in Texas. However, a local group willing to promote tourism would have to organize meetings with professional helpers and Birder Associations.



Arm Lake Observation Site – Platform and Plaques

2. Cycling - Bruce Stiener, a TRTA member, has drawn attention to several business people in Davidson of the economic value of promoting, supporting, sponsoring cycling activities along the Louis Riel Trail. He points out that the Saskatchewan Cycling Association (SCA) has organized a centennial rally from Lloydminster to Duck Mountain Park (past Yorkton) about 750 km. Communities along the Yellow Head route will be hosting them, with many of them staying at motels and using restaurants.

TRTA has identified several interesting sites and trails not far off LRT. A cycling trail that zig-zagged across LRT could take in White Cap, Blackstrap, Outlook, Allan Hills, Arm River, Elbow, Qu'Appelle Dam, Craik Eco-Center, Trails End Aylesbury, Chamberlain, Buffalo Pound, Lumsden and Craven. The cycling tour could easily be set up for 6 days and cover 400 km or more. Practice with 'hosting' could start with shorter tours. Motels are available at Dundurn, Davidson, Outlook, Elbow, Craik and Lumsden, with camping available at many places. Bruce Stiener has given a tentative proposal to the Davidson Business Association and other groups, and they could develop a cycling tour in cooperation with SCA.

Back Roads for the Urbanite

TRTA has identified many interesting hiking, equestrian and cycling trails, but in so doing, many back roads have been traveled. TRTA would be willing to make maps showing the back roads to these places which would be readily accessible to the adventuresome city

driver or tour bus. Even mud holes on dirt road are not so scary anymore. Wildlife, prairie, and wetlands can easily be explored (not available along highways).

By looking at the provincial maps and staying on the numbered grid roads and paved highways, one misses much interesting Saskatchewan scenery. For example, west of Craik, the grid road No.732 is paved as it goes through the Iskwao Valley. Just a mile to the north, another very passable road goes through the valley and shows off the beauty of the valley. Compare the photos.



Iskwao Valley; paved road, through before you know it



Iskwao Valley, old gravel road, curved both up and down the hillsides; you will most likely see wildlife.

Events, News and Future Plans

Fall Ride: At our last TRTA meeting, there were so many Sask Centennial events planned that we decided not to plan a fall event. However, the mandate for TRTA is much wider than just planning events, and since many good trails have been identified around Craik, it is suggested that any group who wishes to have a trail event, contact us to get maps of trails and information which include, lunch sites, lookout sites, heritage sites, possible dangerous areas, etc.

Parades: Many of our members have been riding or showing off teams in town homecoming parades, e.g., Craik, Holdfast, Bladworth, Eyebrow, Humbolt, Davidson (still to come) and probably others I have missed or are still to come.

Arm Lake Birding Site: It is open, but Ducks Unlimited, MLCC, and TRTA will likely sponsor an "event" there this fall to inaugurate the educational aspects of the program. There will be a press release, photo-ops for the press, and some dignitaries will declare it "open". Meantime, Pelican Eco-Tours of Craik and TRTA can give guidance to the site.