

Saturday, November 6, 2010
10-46

CRD Opens Sepa Lake Accessible Trail **Sepa Lake Trail named to Forest Capital of Canada Legacy Trail Network**

South Cariboo – The community of 108 Mile Ranch, BC is the latest community in the Cariboo Chilcotin to develop a wheelchair accessible trail. It's called the Sepa Lake Accessible Trail and was built in partnership between the Cariboo Regional District (CRD), the 108 Greenbelt Commission, and the provincial government through the Towns For Tomorrow funding program.

Trail improvements at Sepa Lake include a wheelchair accessible outhouse, trail resurfacing, signage and reducing the steep trail grade over the Sepa Lake Bridge. The trail is approximately two kilometres of easy grade on the green circle portion of the trail while the blue diamond trail offers a mid level difficulty spread over seven kilometres.

"I am extremely pleased that we have now completed the Sepa Lake Accessible Trail," stated CRD Chair and Electoral Area G Director Al Richmond. "However, this was just the next step in making the south Cariboo, and the greater Cariboo Chilcotin as one of the most attractive wheelchair accessible tourism destinations in the world."

The location was identified as a priority site in the CRD-commissioned regional Wheelchair Accessible Trails Inventory and Assessment Study completed by Kary Fell of CARE consulting in 2008. CARE is also providing ongoing consulting services on the project.

"Our region is full of some of the most beautiful outdoor recreation in the world. It's great to see that we can make it more accessible," says Cariboo-Chilcotin MLA Donna Barnett.

In celebration of the CRD's Forest Capital of Canada designation, the Sepa Lake Accessible Trails has also earned the distinction of being named to the newly created Forest Capital of Canada Legacy Trail Network. This legacy project was developed with hopes that future Forest Capital of Canada communities will continue to add trails to the network throughout their reign. The first trail named to this network was the Sister Creek Recreation Site Accessible Trails.

"This is an exciting day for the 108 Greenbelt Commission, and we are extremely proud of this new trail," says Graham Allison, Chair of the 108 Mile Greenbelt Commission. "I feel that the Sepa Lake Trail and its accessible facilities will provide residents and visitors of all abilities a safe and pristine area to enjoy our great outdoors."

Construction funding was provided by the provincial Towns for Tomorrow and the Union of British Columbia Municipalities Community Tourism grant programs with substantial contributions of in-kind effort from the partners. Ongoing management of the Trail will be provided by the 108 Greenbelt Commission.

The Board passed a resolution in 2006 to work towards developing the Cariboo Chilcotin as a world leader in accessible outdoor recreation and tap into niche tourism markets for persons of low mobility. On August 9, 2008, the Tatlayoko Community Association developed and officially opened the first Wheelchair Accessible Trails in the Cariboo Regional District. The Association built two kilometres of accessible trail, along with an accessible washroom and a picnic area. Other priority wheelchair accessible sites that have been launched this year include the Sisters Creek Recreation Site Accessible Trails in Kersley, the Cottonwood Historic Site and the Horsefly River Salmon Spawning Channel. Currently in development is the Kosta's Cove Trail on Ten Mile Lake in the north Cariboo.