

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

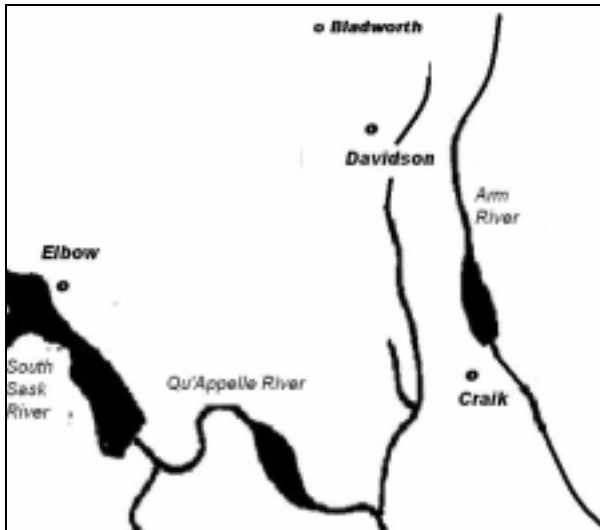
No.9, Fall 2005

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)

TRTA Newsletter

You will note that this is TRTA Newsletter No.9. Initially the mailing list was not extensive as we got established into a routine of one per quarter.

For those that have been added to our mailing list lately, you can see past issues on the web (www.craik.ca/trta). Our intent is to continually have articles on the beautiful aspects of our local geography. This Newsletter has an article on the Black and Silver Lakes north of Bladworth. Look up previous articles on Iskwao Creek, Arm Lake, Mistusinne, Arm River Camp of Plenty, Alexander Lake, and others. Yet to come, Elbow Sand Hills, Ridge Creek, Eyebrow Lake, Sprattsville, Hustler, Rensby and other old

school districts. Briggs SD is discussed in this issue.

The Next TRTA Meeting

October 17, 2005

At the Arm Lake Birding Site

(4.3 km north of Craik Cemetery)

1:30 PM Official Opening Ceremony, then

3:00 PM refreshments at Craik Eco-Centre

4:00 to 6:00 PM TRTA Planning Meeting



TRTA has taken the responsibility of organizing an official "opening" for the Arm Lake observation platform to explain its significance to the region and to acknowledge its sponsors.

A committee from the Midlakes Community Coalition (MLCC) took the initiative to approach Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC) to see if they would help set up the educational aspects of the site. DUC in turn attained some funding from SaskPower to make signs. The platform was mostly built at the Wilkins Farm using a cultivator frame donated by Mid West Tractor. Don Wilkins did all the welding and moved it to the site. Permission to use the site was graciously given by the Bakken family (by current co-owner Kerry Bakken who said it could be a memorial to his grandfather Oliver Vibert who previously owned the site).

Dignitaries from the region's local governments (and possibly from the Provincial government) and from Ducks Unlimited Canada will be there to give greetings and participate in the ribbon cutting ceremony. Barb Hanbidge of DUC will discuss the importance of nature preserves and Glenn Hymers will discuss the local plans to use this site for educational purposes. With inclement weather, the meeting place will still be at the platform but the talks will be at the Craik Eco-Centre.

TRTA members would appreciate everyone available to join with us at the Eco-Centre to discuss future activities. Note that the terms of reference for TRTA as given one the top of this page are very broad, so ideas on any topic would be appreciated.

Black & Silver Lakes, Bladworth

A sign on LRT (No.11) at Bladworth points north for the Black Lake road. Going north about 4 km one suddenly comes over a hill to see Black Lake and usually, throngs of birds. Black Lake is in a channel that runs west, and if one travels west about 3 km one sees that the channel connects to another lake, Silver Lake. Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC) has constructed a small dam on the west end of Silver Lake to help keep it deeper because the creek channel between the two lakes sometimes goes dry. Lawrence Beckie, who lives nearby, said that in the old days families used to canoe or skate between the lakes when the water levels were high. The water comes from local drainage and underground springs coming from the Allan Hills, some 10 km to the north.

Lawrence Beckie has been an ardent Birder for years, and through the Canadian Wildlife Survey and other organizations he has helped document the intensity of birds in the region. He gave data to J. Frank Roy who wrote the book “Birds of Elbow”. Flock after flock of migrating waterfowl congregate at Black and Silver Lake each spring and fall. DUC has many projects in the Allan Hills to encourage waterfowl nesting, thus making Black and Silver lakes an ideal collection area for fall migration.



Black Lake, Bladworth, SK



Black Lake Bay & waterfowl



Monument for Briggs School No.841, SE 4 – 29 – 1 - W3

Around the lakes and along some of the drainage channels that feed the lakes there is considerable bush, pasture and hay land. Some places are marked as wildlife preserves. Ron Turner, who ranches in the area and is a member of TRTA, says that a TRTA equestrian trail could easily be developed around the lakes - starting/ending at his ranch.

The pioneer settlement history of the Black & Silver lakes area is very interesting. Between 1903 and 1914 it became one of the largest of Croatian communities in Canada. At the original Briggs school site a monument has been erected to honor the early settlers. Names on the stone include Sam Briggs, Sam Beckie, Geo.Butler, Pavelicks, Prpichs, Tomlenovich, Sarich, Sekulich, Rosenquist, Woydon, Doshen, and Persick.

Davidson Riding Club Thriving

This western riding club has been active for more than 50 years, with members coming from an area along No.11 highway from Dundurn to Chamberlain, and east-west between Nos. 2 & 19 highways. Riders and coaches meet regularly at the riding rings either at Hanley or Davidson to practice Gymkhana events and take workshops. Some workshops are open to the general public. Once a year DRC sponsors an open trail ride at interesting places in the region.



On the August Sunday that this editor visited the club, there were 14 riders practicing for the upcoming Riding Club Association annual competitions, 23-24 September in Moose Jaw.

Editors Note: as we print I note that the Davidson Leader has reported some results.

For more information on the Davidson Riding Club contact Gloria Kadlec, 306-567-4295

Trans-Canada Trail Progress

The Saskatchewan Trail Council (STC) held their first annual general meeting at the Craik Eco-Center on September 24. STC was formed last year, taking over the responsibilities formerly undertaken by the Sask Parks and Recreation Association (SPRA). TRTA now needs to join them.

One of the main responsibilities of STC is to support the development of the proposed Trans-Canada Trail across Saskatchewan. Portions of the Sask trail are well organized and registered with the Trans-Canada Trail Association (TCTA), HQ in Montreal, but large gaps exist. Good registered trails are now usable in SE Sask along the Qu’Appelle Valley (especially between lake resorts), along the South Sask River from Tugaskie (Douglas Park) to Outlook, and the extended Meewasin trail at Saskatoon. One of the gaps is between Buffalo Pound Lake (Moose Jaw) and Elbow. TRTA will be suggesting that one alternative route would be from Chamberlain to Craik along the Arm River and then over to Elbow. There will be more about this in the next Newsletter. Also see: www.tctrail.ca.

It is becoming urgent that each province have a completed “cross province trail” (at least tentatively registered with TCTA) before 2010 as it is proposed that the Olympic Flame will be run across Canada on the Trans-Canada Trail (sponsored by CNR?).