

# Ghost/Waiparous user opposes access plan

**Dear Editor:**

I would like to state that I and many other responsible users of the Ghost/Waiparous area are in fact strongly opposed to the proposed access management plan.

I am a resident of Cochrane and access the Ghost River Valley regularly with my lovely wife, two great children and our 10-year canine companion. We use this area to camp, hike, motorbike, mountain bike and connect as a family away from TVs, phones, computers, etc. We random camp almost exclusively. This is part of who we are.

I would like to respond to statements made by (M.D. of Bighorn Coun.) Hugh Pepper in his July 14 Letter to the Editor ("Waiparous plan needs to move forward soon").

To establish some credibility for my comments, I will say that I am a 39-year-old professional pilot who operates a \$48 million aircraft, responsible for the safety of up to 140 souls when I'm at work behind a locked bullet-proof door. I believe that I understand the concepts of responsible behaviour and risk management.

Mr. Pepper makes reference to a random survey as proof that the public has "bought in" to the idea of enhanced controls" of the Ghost/Waiparous area. I filled out that survey and it was clear to me that it was not designed

to determine public opinion but rather to support a predetermined course of action. There were almost no questions on the survey that reflected my personal opinion.

I am quite sure that Mr. Pepper is actually aware that the controls that he suggests the public is interested in are already in place. If law enforcement were to enforce existing laws, if conservation, fish and wildlife officers were to enforce and educate users, we would all see a needed increase in respect for this wonderful area.

Mr. Pepper refers to concern for the health of this important watershed. Detrimental impact on water quality, spawning and fish habitat has not been substantiated by quantitative study, according to a researcher hired by Fish and Wildlife with whom I spoke.

There are also no studies to substantiate the claim of adverse

*"... when we take a growing number of users and continue to reduce the size of the areas that they are allowed to access, we end up with over use, leading to more restrictions ..."*

— Michael W. Richter

effects on water quality for human consumption. I would think that the sediment that I see washed into the creeks and rivers by the violent thunderstorms we have in this area would be thousands of times more detrimental than multiple Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) stream crossings.

A further difficulty with the proposed solution of bridges for stream crossings is that while Fish and Wildlife support the idea, bridges conflict with the mandate of the Ministry of Sustainable Resources Development regarding permanent structures. These conflicts take time to resolve.

Mr. Pepper also criticizes Roger Meyer of

on this matter, I was shocked to find that my MLA had no knowledge whatsoever of the invasive document. How well do you think the general public is informed?

How many people realize that just over three years ago this provincial government designated tens of thousands of acres of wilderness as the Don Getty Wildland Provincial Park without any public consultation?

Consequently, my absolute favourite lunch spot is no longer available by motorcycle but it is still available to the commercial trail ride

operators. That doesn't seem fair to me.

Let's talk about access in general. If you hike, bicycle or can afford equine activity, access to the eastern slopes of the Rockies is almost unlimited, not to mention the federal and provincial parks. If you are an OHV enthusiast, you have only two choices close to Calgary: McLean Creek, and for now, Ghost/Waiparous. There are two major problems with this situation. The first is when we take a growing number of users and continue to reduce the size of

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# Off-road users need to respect the environment

From page 18.

the areas that they are allowed to access, we end up with over use, leading to more restrictions and eventually to closure of the affected areas.

The second problem is conflicting interests. If I were to suggest that since non-OHV users have so many other options of user areas that perhaps Ghost/Waiparous access were to be OHV only, many other user groups would be understandably sad and maybe even angry (that is how I feel). I won't suggest that.

However, I will make some suggestions. If Mr. Pepper supports the belief that OHV use is acceptable in these areas, then I'm sure that he would support the permitted re-opening of areas like Moose

Mountain, PowderFace, Sibbald Flats, etc. to OHV designated trails? That sounds fair to me.

If you are an OHV enthusiast and enjoy camping as a hobby, you better get involved or you won't have a place to do it in the near future if people like Mr. Pepper have their way.

Think about your actions. Respect the environment. Teach others that respect. Get a spark arrestor, legal and quiet exhaust system. Follow the rules. Pack out your waste. Get involved!

I personally would agree to pay for an annual access permit if the money went to pay for more conservation officers to ensure my safe and secure access to these treasured areas.

One final comment. Mr. Pepper compliments your excellent

coverage of this issue. I agree that there has been good coverage of

this important issue, however the coverage has been far from objec-

tive. If the *Cochrane Eagle* had been objective, I wouldn't have had

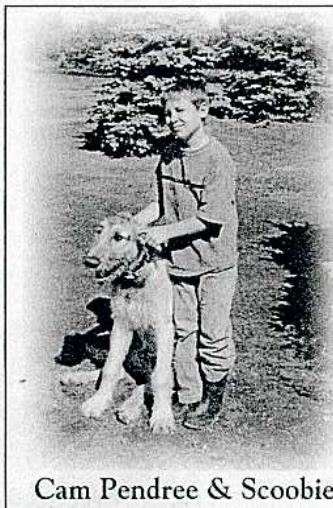
to write this letter now would I?

**Michael W. Richter**

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#### YOUTH GYMNASTICS - FALL PROGRAMS 2004

PROGRAM	AGE	DAY	TIME	CODE	DATES
<b>CAN-GYM PROGRAM - GIRLS</b>					
<b>BURGANDY/RED</b> (\$150)	6-10	MO	4:30pm-5:50pm	F04CGG101	Sep20-Nov29
	8-12	TU	4:30pm-5:50pm	F04CGG103	Sep21-Nov23
	8-12	TH	4:30pm-5:50pm	F04CGG107	Sep23-Dec2
	6-7	SA	12:30pm-1:50pm	F04CGG109	Sep25-Dec4
	8-12	SA	2:00pm-3:20pm	F04CGG310	Sep25-Dec4
<b>TAN / BROWNIE</b> (\$150)	6-10	MO	6:00pm-7:20pm	F04CGG202	Sep20-Nov29
	8-12	TU	4:30pm-5:50pm	F04CGG203	Sep21-Nov23
	6-7	SA	12:30pm-1:50pm	F04CGG209	Sep25-Dec4
<b>PURPLE / BLUE</b> (\$150)	7-12	TU	6:00pm-7:20pm	F04CGG304	Sep21-Nov23
	7-12	SA	2:00pm-3:20pm	F04CGG310	Sep25-Dec4
<b>TWIG/SILVER</b> (\$185)	6-10	TU	4:00pm-6:00pm	F04CGG410	Sep21-Nov23
	6-10	SA	2:00pm-4:00pm	F04CGG411	Sep25-Dec4
<b>ADV. REC. (FIELD &amp; TRAMPOLINE)</b> (\$300)		TU/TH	6:00pm-8:00pm	F04CGG0610	Sep21-Nov23 Sep23-Dec2
<b>CAN-GYM PROGRAM - BOYS</b>					
<b>BURGANDY/RED</b> (\$150)	6-9	MO	4:30pm-5:50pm	F04CGB101	Sep20-Nov29
	6-8	SA	12:30pm-1:50pm	F04CGB109	Sep25-Dec4
<b>TAN / BROWNIE</b> (\$150)	7-12	MO	6:00pm-7:20pm	F04CGB201	Sep20-Nov29
	7-12	WE	4:30pm-5:50pm	F04CGB202	Sep22-Nov24
<b>PURPLE / BLUE</b> (\$150)	8-14	SA	2:00pm-3:20pm	F04CGB310	Sep25-Dec4
<b>TRAMP &amp; TUMBLING</b>					
<b>BROWNIE</b> (\$150)	7-9	TH	4:30pm-5:50pm	F04CGT101	Sep23-Dec2
		SA	12:30pm-1:50pm	F04CGT109	Sep25-Dec4
<b>SILVER/GOLD</b> (\$150)	9-14	SA	2:00pm-3:20pm 5:30pm-7:50pm	F04CGT1410 F04CGT1412	Sep25-Dec4 Sep23-Nov24
<b>RHYTHMIC GYMNASTICS</b>					
<b>BEGINNER</b> (\$100)	5 & up	WE	6:00pm-7:00pm	F04CGR3300	Sep22-Dec1
<b>ADV. LEVEL 1</b> (\$400)	5 & up	TU/TH	5:00pm-6:30pm (2 day course)	F04CGR2200	Sep21-Apr 28
<b>ADV. LEVEL 2</b> (\$400)	5 & up	TU/TH	6:30pm-8:00pm (2 day course)	F04CGR1100	Sep21-Apr 28

#### PRESCHOOL GYMNASTICS - FALL PROGRAMS 2004

PROGRAM	AGE	DAY	TIME	CODE	DATES
<b>GYMNATOTS</b> (\$100)					
	2-3	MO	10:00am-10:50am	F04CGP202	Sep20-Nov29
		TU	9:00am-9:50am	F04CGP204	Sep21-Nov23
	2-3	TU	10:00am-10:50am	F04CGP205	Sep21-Nov23
		TU	1:00pm-1:50pm	F04CGP206	Sep21-Nov23
	2-3	WE	1:00pm-1:50pm	F04CGP210	Sep22-Nov24
		TH	9:00am-9:50am	F04CGP211	Sep23-Dec2
	2-3	TH	1:00pm-1:50pm	F04CGP213	Sep23-Dec2
		FR	9:00am-9:50am	F04CGP215	Sep24-Nov26
	2-3	SA	9:00am-9:50am	F04CGP218	Sep25-Dec4
		SA	10:00am-10:50am	F04CGP219	Sep25-Dec4
2-3	SA	11:00am-11:50am	F04CGP220	Sep25-Dec4	
<b>KINDERGYM</b> (\$110)					
	4-5	MO	10:00am-10:50am	F04CGP402	Sep20-Nov29
		MO	1:00pm-1:50pm	F04CGP403	Sep20-Nov29
	4-5	TU	9:00am-9:50am	F04CGP404	Sep21-Nov23
		TU	10:00am-10:50am	F04CGP405	Sep21-Nov23
	4-5	TU	1:00pm-1:50pm	F04CGP406	Sep21-Nov23
		WE	10:00am-10:50am	F04CGP409	Sep22-Nov24
	4-5	WE	1:00pm-1:50pm	F04CGP410	Sep22-Nov24
		TH	9:00am-9:50am	F04CGP411	Sep23-Dec2
	4-5	TH	10:00am-10:50am	F04CGP412	Sep23-Dec2
		TH	1:00pm-1:50pm	F04CGP413	Sep23-Dec2
4-5	FR	10:00am-10:50am	F04CGP416	Sep24-Nov26	
	FR	1:00pm-1:50pm	F04CGP417	Sep24-Nov26	
4-5	SA	9:00am-9:50am	F04CGP418	Sep25-Dec4	
	SA	10:00am-10:50am	F04CGP419	Sep25-Dec4	
4-5	SA	11:00am-11:50am	F04CGP420	Sep25-Dec4	
<b>KINDERCRACKER (MUST BE RECOMMENDED BY A COACH)</b> (\$110)					
4-5	MO	1:00pm-1:50pm	F04CGP603	Sep20-Nov29	
	TH	10:00am-10:50am	F04CGP612	Sep23-Dec2	

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