

### 5.3 • Region 2 – Grand Valley Foothills

The Grand Valley Foothills includes the Hamlets of Madden, Cochrane Lakes, and Bottrel, and the Town of Cochrane (Figure 13).

The Grand Valley Foothills is situated in the Lower Foothills Subregion of the Foothills Natural Region. This area is often cooler and receives more moisture than the Grasslands. Topography is variable from west to east ranging from steeper slopes and ridges to gentle, rolling hills and plateaus.

Vegetation in this area is diverse and transitions from the forested higher elevations on the western fringes to agricultural use and ranching on the lower eastern side. Coniferous forests flank the Rocky Mountains while mixed wood forests are more prevalent in the lower elevations. Plant communities are dominated by species such as Aspen, Lodgepole Pine, White Spruce, and Balsam Poplar.

Soil conditions vary across the region and vary with elevation and proximity to the mountains. In the western zones surficial materials such as boulders, gravel, sand, and clay are present as a blanket over the bedrock while in the more easterly areas, organic deposits are found in coulees and valleys.

Parks and open space influences include the Bow River Valley, significant areas of crown land (to the west), Glenbow Ranch Provincial Park, Big Hill Springs Provincial Park, Haskayne Legacy Park, and Wildcat Island Habitat Area, and Perennoud Wildlife Habitat Area, which is a unique natural area donated by George Emil Perrenoud to Alberta Sport, Recreation, Parks and Wildlife Foundation. There is also a canoe segment from a point immediately downstream of the TransAlta Hydroelectric Dam (Ghost Reservoir) to an access point in Calgary near Bearspaw Dam Road.





“It is by riding a bicycle that you learn the contours of a country best, since you have to sweat up the hills and coast down them. Thus you remember them as they actually are, while in a motor car only a high hill impresses you, and you have no such accurate remembrance of country you have driven through as you gain by riding a bicycle.”

– Ernest Hemingway

Constraints	Opportunities
Access across the Bow River from Glenbow Ranch Provincial Park to Cochrane	Public access to Crown land to the west
Trans Canada Trail alignment interactions with the CPR railway along the north side of the Bow River between Calgary and Cochrane	Bow River and river valley as a protected natural area
Major transportation corridors	Glenbow Ranch Provincial Park and Haskayne Lands provide opportunities to facilitate the Trans Canada Trail between Calgary and Cochrane
Lack of access to the Bow River for canoe/kayaking between segments and limited access for portaging around the Bearspaw Dam to continue downstream	Open space associated with Ghost and Bearspaw Reservoirs Views of the mountains – view sheds and viewpoints
Integration of Perrenoud Wildlife Habitat Area and Wildcat Island – distances between sites and Wildcat Island is water access only	Development of cycling loops – Grand Valley and Cochrane Lake Pathway linkages emanating from Big Hill Springs to Cochrane, Bow Valley Provincial Park and West Nose Creek Valley
Crown land leases inhibit public access as the public must first ask for permission	Expand on-road cycling routes (within a highway right of ways) as exists in the Cochrane Lake area
	The Cowboy Trail (Highway 22) as a significant corridor within the County
	Connect Bearspaw Village with Haskayne Legacy Park
	Dedicated bike lane identified between Cochrane Lake and Town of Cochrane along Range Road 43



### RECREATION DISTRICT AND PUBLIC INPUT

#### Madden Recreation District Recreation Master Plan 2006–2010<sup>18</sup>

- Future needs include the maintenance of current facilities, upgrading the Community Hall's septic field, and the construction of cycling and walking pathway/trails.

#### Bearspaw Glendale Recreation District Recreation Master Plan 2008–2012<sup>19</sup>

- Short-Term – connected trails; walking paths and bike paths; fitness facility upgrading and expansion of existing facilities; sports fields; social venues i.e., community halls; Glenbow Ranch Provincial Park pathway access; and
- Long-Term Input – all-season multi-use field house; indoor ice rink; swimming pool (indoor or outdoor); tennis courts; curling rink; land parcels of a size suitable for the facilities noted above or an aggregation thereof.

#### Ranch Lands Recreation District Recreation Master Plan 2007–2011<sup>20</sup>

- Extensions and upgrades to existing facilities (completed).

#### Public Input Specific to this Region

- Develop a perimeter pathway/trail along the break of slope in Haskayne Legacy Park and Glenbow Ranch Provincial Park;
- Develop hiking/day use areas to the west of Cochrane;
- Develop pathways from Glenbow Crossing to Glenbow Ranch Provincial Park; from Crossfield to Madden and along Highway 22 to Cochrane, and southwest to Bearspaw from a loop west of Airdrie;
- Identify and protect Big Hill Springs Creek and the creek valley north of Big Hill Springs Provincial Park as a conservation area; and
- Secure the road allowance to Big Hill Springs Provincial Park for public access.

<sup>18</sup> Madden Recreation District, 2006, *Recreation Master Plan 2006–2010*, Rocky View County

<sup>19</sup> Bearspaw Glendale Recreation District, 2008, *Recreation Master Plan 2008–2012*, Rocky View County

<sup>20</sup> Ranch Lands Recreation District, 2007, *Recreation Master Plan 2007–2011*, Rocky View County

## AMENITY STUDY: PHASE 1<sup>21</sup>

### Cochrane Lake

- Space and facilities required for the majority of recommended amenities for suggested focus area for community development – large facilities such as arenas should be based on a regional demand and consider expansion of multi-use facilities in Cochrane.

### Bearspaw

- Existing amenities includes a gymnasium, two community centres, an historic site, a stage, a K-8 school, a playfield, baseball diamonds, six playgrounds, two golf courses, and a site for recycling;
- A regional scale multi use facility is proposed – immediate development should focus on increasing outdoor amenity space, park spaces, and pathway connections to enhance community hubs; and
- Development should consider providing space for amenities to service the Bearspaw area – schools, indoor recreational facilities, permanent recycling facility for concentrated areas.

## GRAND VALLEY FOOTHILLS CONCEPT PLAN

A description of proposed parks and open space, pathways/trails, cultural centres, and niche staging areas is provided below.

### Pathways and Trails

- A new section of the Trans Canada Trail is proposed from Calgary along the north side of the Bow River to Haskayne Legacy Park and Glenbow Ranch Provincial Park, and then across the Bow River via a pedestrian bridge to Cochrane;
- Staging areas are identified at the intersections of Highway 1A and Grand Valley Road;
- A pathway follows Big Hill Springs Road from Range Road 34 to Highway 22;
- A pathway starts from the City of Calgary at Nose Creek Parkway and follows Nose Creek to Camden Lane (Township Road 264) and continues west to Big Hill Creek and follows Big Hill Creek to Cochrane (along an easement currently leased to others). A branch of this pathway follows Big Hill Creek to Big Hill Springs Provincial Park and continues north to Big Hill Springs Road;
- A pathway emanates from Glenbow Ranch Provincial Park and generally follows Range Road 32/Lochend Road as well as Glendale road in a northerly direction and intersects with the pathway described above;

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<sup>21</sup> Nichols Applied Management, Management and Economic Consultants, 2009, *Rocky View Amenity Study: Phase I*, Rocky View County



- Pathways are proposed from Highway 1A that follow Beaupre Creek Road, Wildcat Hills Road/Weedon Trail, and Range Roads 44 and 43 back to Highway 1A;
- A pathway follows Highway 1A from the Ghost River Reservoir to the town of Cochrane;
- Recognizing quiet paved roadways and beautiful vistas within this region, there are a variety of cycling routes proposed; and
- A cycling route is proposed from Cochrane along Highway 1A to the western boundary of Rocky View County, potentially connecting to Canmore.

#### Significant Cultural Sites

- Bottrel General Store, the Bottrel Cemetery, and Glenbow Ranch Provincial Park.

#### Proposed Staging Areas

- Staging area is proposed at the intersections of Highway 1A and Grand Valley Road;
- A canoe segment is identified from the Ghost Reservoir via a portage around the Ghost Dam and continuing along the Bow River to an access point at Cochrane; and
- Another canoe segment is from the Cochrane access to Bearspaw Reservoir, where a portage is required around Bearspaw Dam to continue downstream to Calgary.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Expand on the regional plan in more detail to identify and evaluate existing and proposed parks, open spaces, and pathways/trails for the Grand Valley Foothills Region;
2. Develop a land use concept for land uses adjacent to Glenbow Ranch Provincial Park; and
3. Encourage the development of the Trans Canada Trail from Calgary along the north side of the Bow River to Glenbow Ranch Provincial Park and Cochrane.



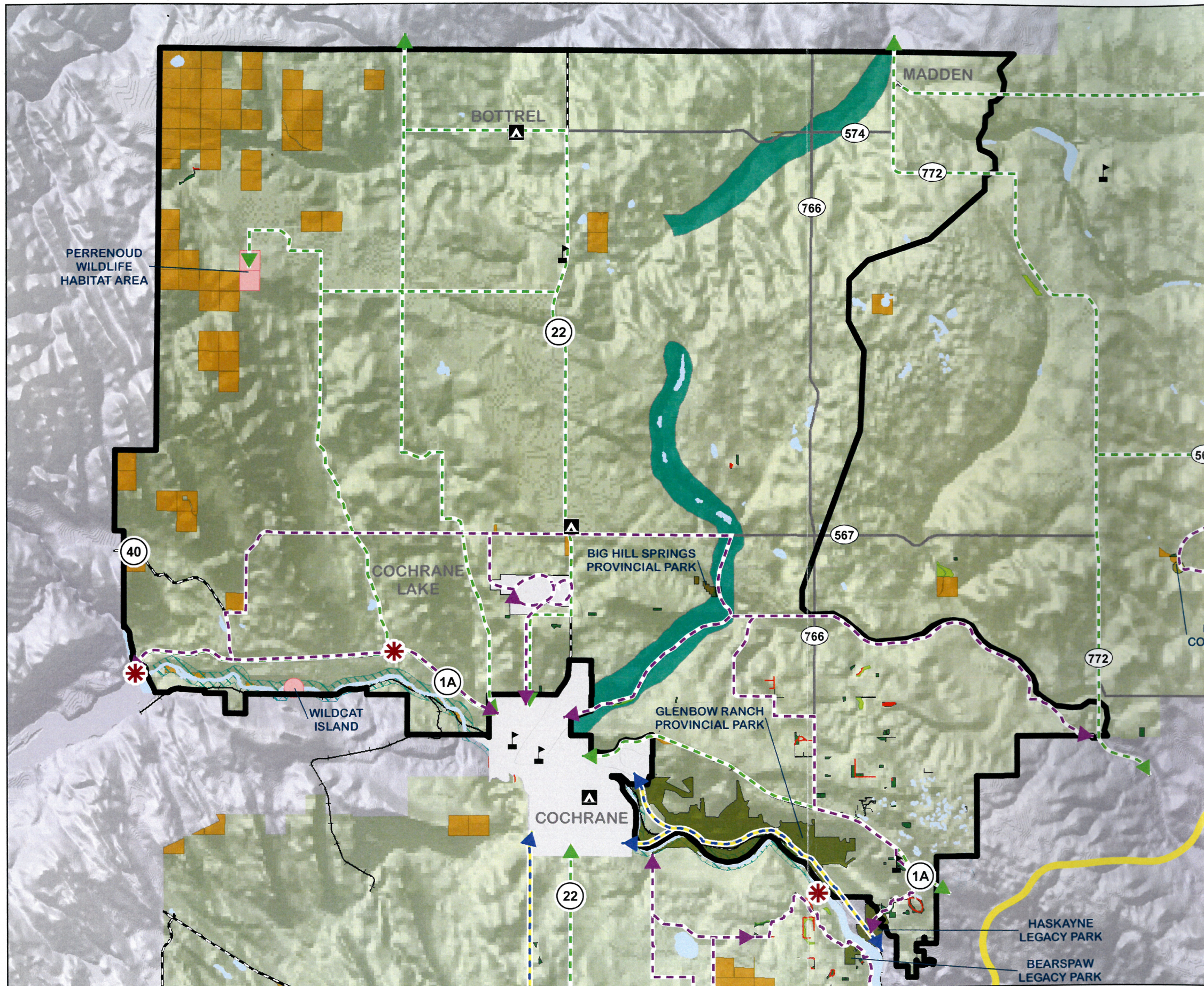
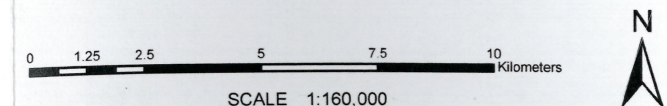


Figure 13 • Grand Valley Foothills

- Proposed Staging Area
- Campground
- School
- Conceptual Bicycle Route
- Conceptual Pathway
- Calgary Greenway
- Proposed Trans Canada Trail
- Existing Pathway/Trail
- Primary Highway
- Secondary Highway
- Railway Line
- Geographic Region
- Provincial/Calgary Park
- Environmental Reserve
- Municipal Reserve
- Conservation Area
- Provincial Natural Land
- Environmentally Significant Area
- Crown Land
- Proposed Environmentally Significant Area



**ROCKY VIEW COUNTY**  
Cultivating Communities

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