

THE DEWDNEY TRAIL PRACTICUM

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SUBMITTED TO LEN DUNSFORD

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#### DEDICATION

I would to dedicate this practicum work to a very special lady whose kindness and dedication has inspired my life. Gladys Anderson was my great aunt who passed away this last year. Her strength and love through difficult times will always have an impact on my life. She, like the Dewdney Trail, has left many memories that cannot be forgotten and will be passed on from generation to generation.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to extend special thanks to the people who have helped me during this practicum and in the writing of this report. Special thanks goes to Trena Buttnor, a graphic arts student at the college, and a resident of Rossland, B.C. Trena provided me with the graphic arts work for the cover of the brochure.

I would also like to thank Bob Keep and Dave Fitchet of the B.C. Forest Service as well as the Boundary Stockhorse Association and the Trail Horsemen's Society for their assistance and advise. Linda Salonen has assisted me in the typing of this report and I would like to thank her for her time and friendship. Lastly, thanks goes to Len Dunsford and Robert Crosby for their advise and encouragement.

### SUMMARY

The Dewdney trail is a famous historical trail that is being looked after by the B.C. Forest Service. The Forest Service has done a lot of work on the trail such as: putting up markers for every half kilometer, upgrading the trail and relocating it where necessary, and establishing good access to the trail via the Cascade Highway. Public involvement and usage of the trail still needs to get off the ground. The practicum that I have completed is designed to do that. A highway sign and a brochure for the trail has been completed and the horse riding clubs from Grand Forks and Trail are actively involved in the promotion and usage of the trail.

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## Introduction

The Dewdney Trail - an historical trail that sees little use today and appeared to be slowly forgotten by most. However, in recent years the B.C. Forest Service has worked hard to prevent this trail from becoming just a memory that gets distorted with time. And now the design of a highway sign and a brochure, along with the renewed interest in the trail from various horseriding clubs, leaves the Dewdney Trail with a promising future to compliment the trail's exciting past.

My practicum was designed to revitalize the Historical Dewdney Trail. I am pleased to say that the practicum appears to have at least started this. An eight by four foot highway sign complimented with a brochure have been designed and are included in Appendixes I & II at the back of this report. Equally as important the Boundary Stock-horse Association and the Trail Horsemen's Society have had a hand in the practicum and now have a renewed interest in the trail. This renewed interest will bring about more usage of the trail as well as more promotion. Lastly, this report will give some background information into the trail as well as the individuals who may be contacted for further information on the trail. One other note to make. The practicum, including this report covers only the preserved section of the trail from Christina Lake to Paterson which is approximately 39 kilometers of the total 590 kilometer Dewdney Trail.

(1)

### Dewdney Trail Location

The Dewdney Trail is located on the southern-most portion of British Columbia. Its total length is approximately 590 kilometers, running from the present day Hope in the west to Galbraith's Ferry in the east (headwaters of the Columbia and Kootenay rivers).

This section of the trail is one of the best preserved pieces of the original trail and is from Christina Lake on the west to the conjunction of the trail with Highway #22, near Paterson, on the east. Length of this restored section of the trail is approximately 39 kilometers.

### Access

There are several access points to this restored section of the Dewdney Trail. These access points all occur either along the Old Cascade Highway or via a secondary road off the highway. The proposed map and brochure indicate where these access points occur. Although presently there is not a map on the back of the brochure, the final product will include a map on the back with kilometers and access points clearly marked.

The eastern end of this restored section of the Dewdney Trail is located at a stop of interest marker, nine kilometers south of Rossland on Highway 22. The western end of this restored section of the Dewdney Trail begins three and one half kilometers up the Old Cascade Highway, located in the small Christina Lake Community. Other access points to the trail are found at Chandler Creek, Trout Creek, Big Sheep Creek and at Santa Rosa Creek.



## A Historical Overview

The story of the opening of the southern portion of British Columbia began on a quiet autumn evening in 1859. While camped at beautiful Rock Creek, two United States Army dispatch riders discovered gold.

Word of this new discovery was quickly carried to Governor James Douglas at Victoria. This presented the Governor with a problem. Because the area was easier to reach from the United States than from the west coast, the danger was that American miners would slip into the region over the back, that is, wrest all the gold from its ancient hiding places and decamp across the line.

To establish a Canadian influence in the region, Douglas had commissioned an energetic young surveyor named Edgar Dewdney to construct a pack trail - suitable for men and mules - but not for wagons. It was to run from Fort Hope on the Fraser River, over the Hope mountains to Princeton and thence through lush passes to Grand Forks, Christina Lake, Wildhorse Creek, Rossland and then up to present-day Cranbrook. A rugged tortuous route, but Canadian all the way.

However, hardly had the road been finished than it became obsolete. The miners had already begun to wander away in search of new strikes.

Consequently, after 1861, the original Dewdney Trail fell into disuse. Figure one shows a section of the Dewdney Trail just out of Christina Lake. There remains many stories, some diluted by the passage of time, of the miners' past. One story tells about the death and burial of a man called Tom Walker. Walker, a Canadian, apparently got into an altercation over a claim with an American known as East Powder Bill. The end result was the shooting of Walker and then his burial.

Through all this, the Dewdney Trail was finally stated for completion by Edgar Dewdney in 1865. From Grand Forks to Christina presented no hazards, other than cutting through heavy forest growth, but, a good deal of time was consumed laying the route over the rough Cascade Mountains to Trail. From Trail, the pack trail followed the east bank of the Columbia River to Fort Shepherd situated near the American border. From Fort Shepherd, the Dewdney trail dipped south to parallel the border as it climbed to the summit of the Nelson Mountains of the Purcell Range. Here it turned northward to the source of Summit Creek and followed this to the Kootenay River Flats at Creston.

After crossing the Creston Flats, the trail wound towards a crossing of the Goat River. From there is followed a natural line - used today by both B.C. Hydro and the pipelines - until it linked up with the Moyie River.

Wherever possible, the survey avoided the flat lands and clung to the slopes of the valleys or the sides of mountains. All too frequently, flat country was subject to flooding, thus the avoidance of flat areas. This was a hard, costly and time consuming job. Figure 2 illustrates the work that was involved in constructing the trail.

Reaching the Moyie River at Yahk, the Dewdney Trail linked up with the original trail from Walla Walla to Wild Horse Creek. At this point, an enterprising man by the name of John Gailbraith had constructed a ferry and a log cabin trading store. A rough trail, built by the miners, led from his crude landing place to the gold fields. Using the miners' road, Dewdney completed his survey to the village of Wild Horse.

Today the trail gets little use. However, the location, along with the history of the trail, is still there. Improvements are being made, in hope that the trail will once again be recognized. The section of trail covered in this practicum is one section that is expected to see and increase in use by both hikers and horseriding clubs in the next few years.



Figure 1

A typical section of the Dewdney Trail.



Figure 2

More than a 100 years ago, a crew of trail-blazers used horses and heavy rollers on the Rossland section of the Dewdney Trail.

## The Highway Sign

Enclosed in Appendix I is the design for the proposed highway sign. This sign will be painted by a professional, therefore, any mistakes (dirty ink, smudged letters, etc.) will not appear on the actual finished product. Also, all the colors (for the Dewdney Trail, the Old Cascade Highway, creeks, etc.) will follow the specification layed out by the B.C. Forest Service. On the original map, I followed these as closely as I could for the materials I had access to.

There will be two highway signs constructed. One will be at the 3 1/2 kilometer marker on the Old Cascade Highway in the Christina Lake community. Presently there is a rather unappealing faded Parks sign there. The other sign will be located at the eastern end of this section of the trail. There is a stop; of interest marker located 9 kilometers south of Rossland on Highway 22 - this will be the location of the other highway sign.

### The Brochure

The brochure, which is enclosed in Appendix !!, is presently unfinished. The map of the Dewdney Trail (in Appendix !) needs to be reduced to fit on the back of the brochure. This map will also be slightly different from the map on the highway sign. The map will also include kilometer markers and kilometers for stops of interest (water falls, creeks, viewpoints, etc.).

The two highway signs will provide the location of the main distribution of the brochures. The B.C. Forest service in Castlegar and Grand Forks as well as the Boundary Stockhorse Association and the Trail Horsemen's Society will have several copies of the brochure for distribution to the public. The Regional Office (Nelson) for the Forest Service will also have copies and may distribute them throughout the different districts and regions.

### Public Use of the Dewdney Trail

The next few years are going to see an increase in the public using the Dewdney Trail. This of course will mean that the trail will need continued upkeep. The B.C. Forest Service should expect and allocate money towards this increase in use in the next several years. Also, all signage should be of high quality to detour vandalism. Vandalism occurs more frequently on poor quality signs more than on professional looking signs.

The increase in use could also present a problem because much of the Dewdney Trail passes through private land. Although legally this may not be a problem because the Trail's right-of-way is crown land, realistically problems may arise. The B.C. Forest Service should contact all of the present owners of the land and inform them of their intentions. They may be able to involve these landowners in the upkeep and promotion of the trail. Also signs should be posted to make the public aware of private land and to educate them to not build fires or camp on the private property.



### The Horse Riding Clubs' Use of the Dewdney Trail

Usage of the trail by the various horse riding clubs is very important to the preservation, promotion and enhancement of the trail. The more they use the trail, the better defined the trail will become and the more interesting the trail will be to the general public.

It is important that these riding clubs promote the trail within their respected clubs. It is also important that they provide easy access of information on their clubs to the general public. Information on the Dewdney Trail should also be kept by the various clubs, and this information should be easily available to the public.

The horse riding clubs are very important to the future of the Dewdney Trail. I appreciate their cooperation and involvement in this practicum.

## Conclusions

The Dewdney Trail, rich in history, is a fascinating subject that the general public knows very little about. The Dewdney Trail could be attracting visitors to the Kootenays should its identity be revealed. My practicum was designed to increase the public awareness of the trail on a long term basis.

Now that the Highway sign and brochure have been completed, the trail could really take off. Hopefully this trail will not be lost in a lack of effort, lack of funds or in lack of promotion. If the public's interest is awakened on this section of the trail, it is hoped that the rest of the trail will also generate attention. A highway sign, a brochure and a report - the beginning of the re-establishment of a great trail.

It is said that man is not healthy if he cannot carry with him an aura of a past, a present and a future. Few exploits of our history better demonstrate this than the old, the present and the future of the Dewdney Trail.

### Recommendations

I have briefly discussed a few of my recommendations in the body of this report. However, there are a few others I would like to make.

The brochure is in need of a map on the back of it. This map should not be exactly the same as the map on the highway sign. This map must be of use for the public while they are hiking or horseback riding the trail. The map needs to have kilometers clearly identified. Kilometers on the map should be marked for every two kilometers as well as for the points of interest (creeks, viewpoints, etc.).

Hopefully the future will see a rapid increase in the usage of the Dewdney Trail. Therefore, a plan should be drawn up for interpretive stops along the trail. This will include signs along the trail that will be located at rest areas and give some thought-provoking information. This will require a great deal of time and funds but would be a worthwhile project that could set new standards for the B.C. Forest Service.

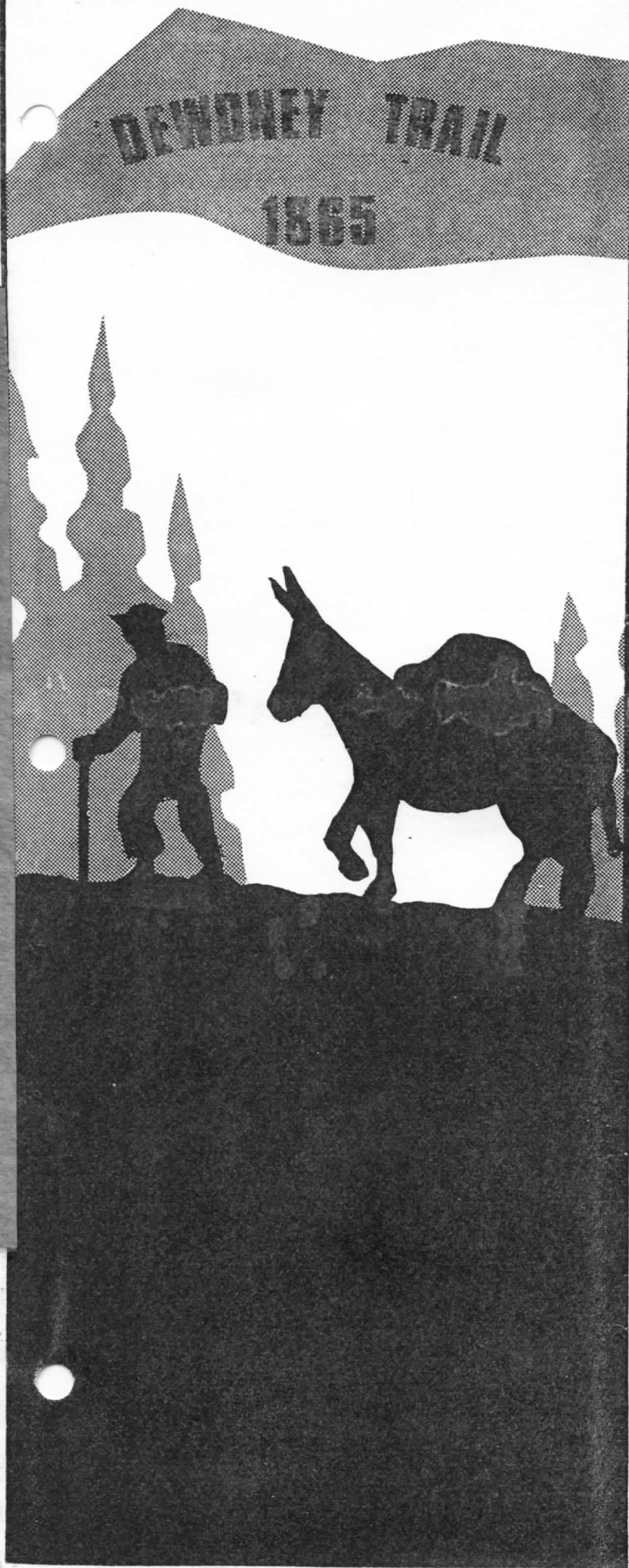
Slide shows, presentations and planned day hikes (or horse rides) will go a long way towards promoting the trail. These need to be planned and not just talked about.

I also recommend that this report, either whole or in part, be readily available for public distribution. The more the public knows about the trail, the more appreciation the trail will receive.

APPENDIX I

Appendix I is enclosed separate from this report.

APPENDIX II



Welcome to the famous Historical Dewdney Trail. The story of the opening of the southern portion of British Columbia began on a quiet autumn evening in 1859. While camped at beautiful Rock Creek, two United States Army dispatch riders discovered gold!

Word of this new discovery was quickly carried to Governor James Douglas at Victoria. This presented the Governor with a problem. Because the area was easier to reach from the United States than from the west coast, the danger was that American miners would slip into the region over back trails, wrest all the gold from its ancient hiding places and decamp back across the line.

To establish a Canadian influence in the region, Douglas had commissioned an energetic young surveyor named Edgar Dewdney to construct a pack trail - suitable for men and mules- but not for wagons. It was to run from Fort Hope on the Fraser River, over the Hope Mountains to Princeton, and thence through lush passes to Grand Forks, Christina Lake, Rossland, Wildhorse Creek, and then on to present day Cranbrook. A rugged and tortuous route, but Canadian all the way.

As your travel along the trail, imagine yourself as a prospector in the eighteen hundreds looking for Gold.

#### Dewdney Trail Location

The Dewdney Trail is located on the southern-most portion of British Columbia. Its total length is approximately 590 Kilometers, running from the present day Hope in the west to Galbraith's Ferry in the east (headwaters of the Columbia and Kootenay rivers).

This section is one of the best preserved pieces of the original trail and is from Christina Lake on the west to the conjunction of the trail with Highway #22, near Paterson, on the east. Length of this section is approximately 39 Kilometers.





EDGAR DEWDNEY

### Access

There are several access points to the trail. These access points all occur either along the Old Cascade Highway or via a secondary road off the highway. Please refer to the map on the back of this brochure for location of the various features.

The eastern end of this restored section of the Dewdney Trail begins at a Stop of Interest marker, nine Kilometers south of Rossland on Highway 22. The western end of this restored section of the trail begins three and half kilometers on the Old Cascade Highway off Highway #3 in Christina Lake. Other access points to the trail are found at Chandler Creek, Trout Creek, Big Sheep Creek. and at Santa Rosa Creek.

### Stop at the Sites

There are several areas that can be used as stops of interest and rest areas. Be sure to look for the view points, campsites and creek areas that are pointed out on the map. Enjoy yourself and don't forget to sign in at the trail head sign.

### Preserving the Trail

To keep the trail in good shape to be used by future generations, it is important, that you, the trail user, participate in the trails maintenance. Here are some general guidelines that you can follow to be a part of this trail.

- 1) Flick a stick and kick a rock.  
If you see rocks and sticks on the trail don't hesitate to move them to a safe area.
- 2) Report any large debris on the trail.  
You can do this by contacting the Forest Service at 442-5411 or 365-2131.
- 3) No Motorized Vehicles Permitted on the trail.
- 4) Respect Public Property.  
Do not camp or build fires on areas where the trail crosses public property.
- 5) Yield the right of way to Horses.  
If your hiking, respect the horseback riders on the trail.
- 6) Pack in - Pack out.  
Be sure to clean up all the your sites after use, and don't deposit garbage along the trail.

This trail is Managed by the B.C. Forest Service in cooperation with the Boundary Stockhorse Association and the Trail Horsemen's Society.

For further information regarding the Horse Riding Clubs and the Dewdney Trail please contact either

The Boundary Stockhorse Association at Box 1752, Grand Forks B.C., V0H 1H0. 442-2055.

and/or

The Trail Horsemen's Society at Box 356, Trail, B.C. V1R 2Y8. 367-6200.

The B.C. Forest Service in Castlegar and Grand Forks would be pleased to assist you in any way regarding the Dewdney Trail.

To contact the Forest Service either write or phone the office in Castlegar or Grand Forks.

B.C. Forest Service

845 Columbia Ave. Castlegar,  
B.C., V1N 1H3. 365-2131.

Sagamore Ave, Box 2650, Grand  
Forks, B.C. V0H 1H0. 442-5411

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