

Media Release

ALTO AWARDS DISCOVER JASPER

JASPER, October 29, 2009 – The Jasper Discovery Trail Interpretive Project was among the winners of the *Alto Awards* on Monday night, picking up the 2009 ‘Friends of Tourism’ award at the ninth annual Travel Alberta Industry Conference in Banff.

The award, presented to the Jasper Discovery Trail Project Team by Alberta’s provincial Minister of Tourism for Parks and Recreation, Cindy Ady, is given annually to a non-profit group demonstrating *commitment to enriching Alberta's tourism industry and who, by their actions, inspire others and demonstrate what can be achieved by working together.*

“Jasperites can be proud of this achievement,” said Sue Cesco, General Manager for Friends of Jasper National Park. “We wouldn’t have been successful with this project without the support of all our partners in the community, local businesses and government agencies, all of whom made significant contributions to the project.”

The Jasper Discovery Trail Interpretive Project, spearheaded in 2006 by the Friends of Jasper National Park, is a multi-agency initiative, charged with the creation and installation of interpretive and directional signs along the Jasper Discovery Trail, a popular excursion in one of Canada’s flagship national parks. This ongoing initiative is working towards providing the thousands of annual visitors of the Jasper Discovery Trail with information about the trail, the town and the national park which, when complete, will enhance their enjoyment, understanding and appreciation of the area.

“The end product will be like having a knowledgeable local waiting on the Jasper Discovery Trail to answer all of a visitor’s questions and help them discover Jasper,” said Cesco. “So far, we’ve installed three orientation kiosks along the wheelchair-accessible trail, each complete with maps outlining the trail, townsite, facilities and the national park, including points of interest.”

In addition to trail kiosks, the project team installed 12 directional signs and dozens of trail markers, making the trail a learning experience while being extremely easy to navigate. An additional 19 interpretive signs have been completed and will be installed in November. With the help of volunteers, the installation will replace any remaining temporary signs and bring that phase of the project to a close.

The steering committee will be continuing to install interpretive materials along the Jasper Discovery Trail, including upgrading the signs on the four-sided kiosks within the townsite. “While we’re thrilled with this award, there’s still lots of work ahead of us,” said Cesco. “Right now we’re looking for people passionate about Jasper to lend a hand with the installation of the interpretive signs this November.”

Project partners will be formally recognized during the Friends of Jasper’s Moonlight Madness event in Jasper on November 27. Those looking to get involved with the project are encouraged to contact the Friends of Jasper National Park at 780-852-4767.

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For More Information:

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Discovery Trail team members (l-r) Loni Klettl (representing the Green Space Committee), Sue Cesco (Friends of Jasper) and Marci DeWandel (Jasper Trails Project) accept the award in Banff. Other team members include: Ken Walker (Parks Canada), Karen Byers (Jasper Museum) and Verne Balding (Municipality of Jasper).