

February 22, 2022

Mr. Alan Fehr, Superintendent  
Jasper National Park  
Parks Canada Agency  
Box 10  
Jasper, AB T0E 1E0

**Request for Annual Maintenance of Athabasca Pass Trail in Jasper National Park**  
**Request for Installation of Funded Simon Creek Bridge**

Dear Mr. Fehr:

Athabasca Pass National Historic Site extends from the Wood River up over Athabasca Pass and into Jasper National Park at Kane Meadows. This is an iconic and very important element of western Canadian history. It was the primary route for fur traders between the Columbia and Athabasca watersheds, from David Thompson's first crossing in 1811 to the 1850's. The history of the Community of Jasper itself is also deeply intertwined with this pass.

The Alpine Club of Canada is restoring this heritage trail on the west side of the pass, approx. 16 km from the trailhead on the Wood River FSR to Athabasca Pass. We plan to complete this work approx. September 7, 2022. The first 8 km has already been restored.

After this date, backpackers will be able to hike the full Athabasca Pass traverse, ending at Moab Lake. A boat charter will take backpackers from Sprague Bay Recreation Site (near Mica Dam) to the Wood River Bridge, from which they will walk 8 km to the trailhead. This alleviates the logistical concern of getting to the trailhead. Tourism Revelstoke will be marketing this route to the hiking community. There is certainly very significant interest in the hiking community in this full traverse Athabasca Pass backpacking trip.

The Columbia Shuswap Regional District commissioned the Golden and Area A Trail Strategy in 2018, which includes the Athabasca Pass Heritage Trail. At the top of the list of “Emerging Trends + Key Findings”, ie what the public wants in trails development, was the restoration of heritage trails. See Adobe page 20 of the Final Report:

<https://www.csrdfc.ca/AreaATrails>

We have contacted both the Shuswap First Nation and the Ktunaxa First Nation. Neither has any concerns about the restoration of this heritage trail.

I understand that Jasper National Park wardens access wildlife cameras in the Whirlpool River Valley annually, and usually do this by horseback. This means clearing deadfall off the trail from Moab Lake to Athabasca Pass. We are wondering if Jasper National Park could please complete this important trail clearing work annually, prior to August 15 of every year?

This will meet the need of servicing the wildlife cameras, while ensuring the trail is clear for the annual best period to hike this trail – August 15 to October 1.

I also understand that \_\_\_\_\_ has committed to privately funding the replacement of the Simon Creek Bridge. This bridge

site is 15 km west of Moab Lake on the Athabasca Pass trail. The old bridge was washed away by an ice jam in 2016. I understand several studies are underway or have been completed for this important bridge.

Could you please expedite the installation of this important bridge? This will allow backpackers to cross this creek safely. It is the largest creek crossing on this trail. This will once again allow backpackers to experience the history and remote beauty of the full trail up to Athabasca Pass.

Thank you very much for your service in the leadership and management of Jasper National Park. It is a beautiful jewel in Canada's National Park system and is an integral part of Canada's identity.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me.

With Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Trevor Willson".

Trevor Willson, P.Eng.

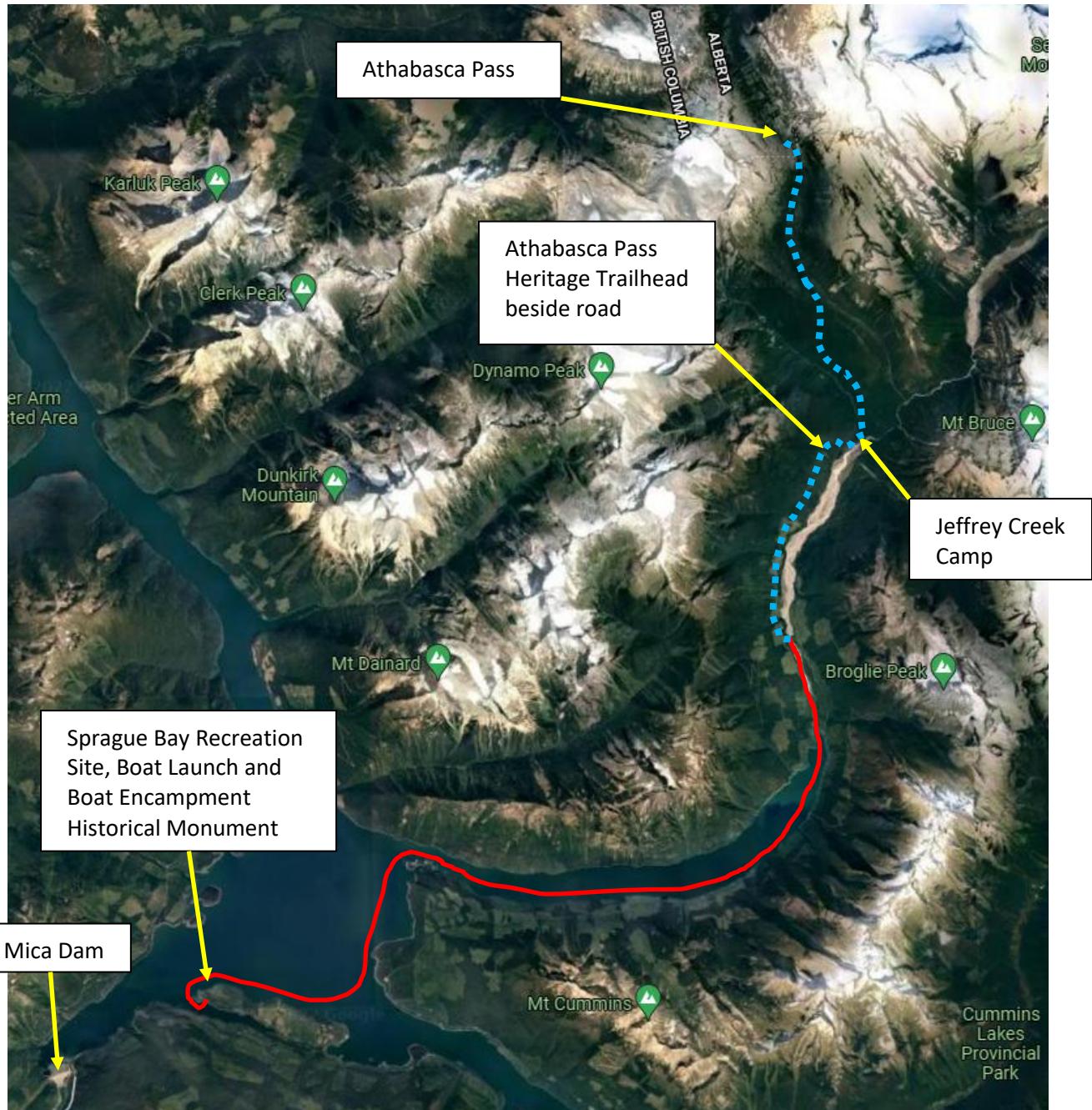
Athabasca Pass National Historic Site Management Plan

<https://www.pc.gc.ca/en/lhn-nhs/ab/athabasca/info>

# Athabasca Pass Heritage Trail

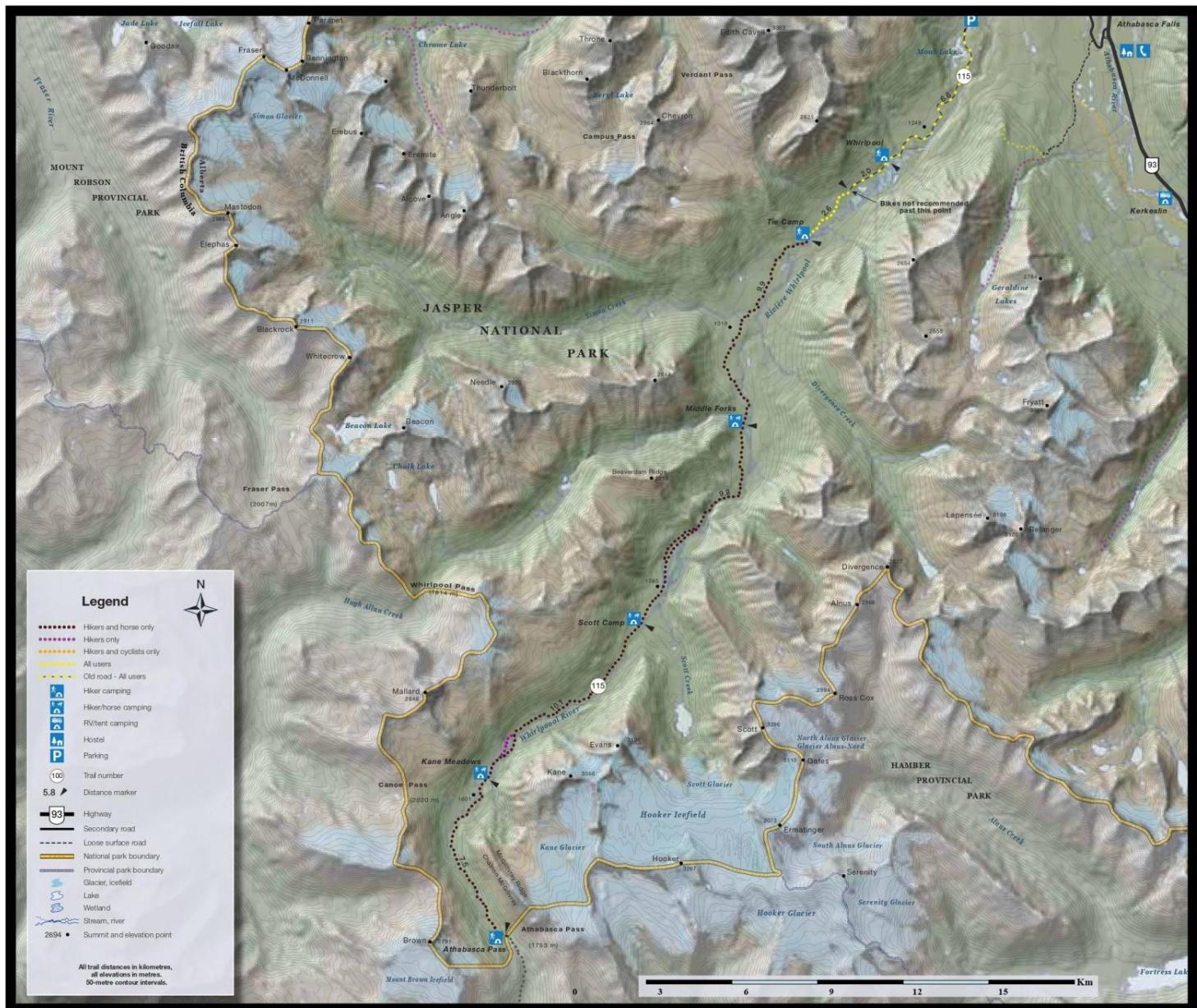
73 km

## Map of Full Traverse – Wood River to Moab Lake



— BOAT

····· HIKE







Panorama from Jeffery Creek Campground



Restoration Work – September, 2021