



## **ILM Success Story: Kakwa Copton Industrial Access Corridor Plan**

The Kakwa Copton area, located in west central Alberta, encompasses a significant forest area, the Kakwa River watershed and Copton Creek. The area has significant ecological values, including:

- habitat for the largest mountain goat herd in the province;
- prime grizzly bear habitat;
- spawning grounds for bull trout; and
- wintering grounds for caribou.

The region also contains many natural resources which attract forestry operations, coal mining, and oil and gas extraction.

### **What was the issue?**

The Government of Alberta has issued allocations to industry over much of the area and each operator needs access, by road, to their resources.

However, if each operator were to make its own way into this area, the result would be a fragmented landscape with many roads. The consequence is that other land users like hunters and recreationalists may then enter sensitive habitats that are currently difficult to access.

The challenge was to find ways to share—and therefore minimize—the footprint created by access roads.

### **How was the issue managed?**

Sustainable Resource Development (SRD) initiated integrated planning with the forestry and oil and gas companies operating in the area. The goal was to get participating industrial land users to share primary corridors under an integrated corridor access plan.

One of the challenges was to get all of the industrial land users to share their data and information. Typically, oil and gas development plans are confidential due to the competitive nature of the industry. An innovative solution was to hire a third party through which all could share confidential information. The third party protected company-specific information and provided a comprehensive view of the range of access needed into the area through a state-of-the-art GIS application.

Once all of the information was on the table, the group was able to identify collective access needs, discuss access options and evaluate these options against:

- engineering specifications,
- environmental sensitivities,
- potential shared benefits and conflicts, and
- terrain constraints.



## **ILM** Integrated Land Management

*Shared Responsibility - Shared Future*



The result was the Kakwa Copton Industrial Access Corridor Plan. By implementing this plan, the overall footprint is expected to be about 45 per cent less than it would have been with a non-coordinated approach.

### **Who were the partners/collaborators for this project?**

- Alberta Energy
- Alberta Sustainable Resource Development
- Burlington Resources Canada
- Canadian Forest Oil
- Canadian Natural Resources
- Conoco Phillips
- Devon Canada
- Grande Cache Coal
- Hunt Oil Company of Canada
- Husky Energy
- Nexen
- Petro-Canada
- Silvacom
- Talisman Energy
- Weyerhaeuser

### **What happens next?**

Primary corridors that are identified in the plan will guide future access into the area. The plan may need to be amended jointly by the industry partners and government:

- as new information becomes available; or
- as mineral rights are granted that can't be accessed by the proposed primary corridors.

In the meantime, the corridor plan helps keep access focused on key routes, which helps to mitigate impacts on the vast majority of this magnificent area.

It is the group's hope that this successful model demonstrates how Alberta can achieve desirable results in access management through mutual cooperation and collaboration.