

# Blackfoot Integrated Management Plan criticized

Care for a slice of blackfoot integrated?...

"Yum, sounds scrumptious. what's in it", you say? Well, its the Departments of Energy and Natural Resources 'New Improved' recipe for the development of the Blackfoot Grazing Reserve, one of the few remaining natural wooded areas left near Edmonton. Here is how its made. Ingredients:

- Several hundred Cow Units 1 c.u.=1 cow+1 calf
- 125 Moose
- 100 Elk
- 90 White Tailed Deer
- + other assorted species
- 24000 acres of natural woodland and lake country
- Hundreds of meters of Ungulate fencing
- Assorted construction machinery
- A few tons of grass seed

### Instructions:

Thoroughly mix up in a large provincial bureaucracy, add a pinch of recreational opportunities and a dash of wildlife protection. Finally, garnish heavily with approximately five and a half million public dollars. Let simmer for a few years, then serve well before its hot, on a silver public platter.

### The Result:

Cough! Cough! BIMP! The Blackfoot Integrated Management Plan. Augh! As an added bonus, the recipe includes desert consisting of a complimentary ready made supply of assorted prairie pastries and meadow muffins.

"Who is this culinary mastermind" you ask? Why none other than our very own provincial government. While many divisions have had their fingers in the pie (so to speak), the Department of Energy and Natural Resources are principally responsible for the development of the plan. Some say this joint approach to planning has led to unrealistic heights, for many interest groups have mustard (sic) opposition to the proposal.

Essentially, the development plan for the Blackfoot Reserve has three main objectives:

1. Improve Grazing conditions,
2. Provide recreational opportunities,
3. Develop wildlife protection measures.

The planning team proposes to implement the first objective by

clearing, cultivating and seeding approximately one-third of the naturally wooded acreage of the reserve. This will result in the development of seven large meadow fields for improved cattle grazing at a cost of roughly two and a half million dollars. Each plot will be enclosed with a barbed wire fence to facilitate easier cattle management.

The second objective will be implemented through the creation of five, day-use staging areas, complete with washrooms, parking and picnic facilities, as well as three backcountry shelters.

Shoreline improvements for canoeing are proposed on two major lakes. In addition, a new trail network is being devised utilizing a portion of the old existing trail system. Approximately two million is also allotted for these developments.

Finally, wildlife measures

will include the erection of a wildlife ungulate fence surrounding the park along with habitat improvements. A regulated hunting program is also to be introduced into the area. In all, around one-half million is allotted for wildlife protection measures.

In addition to the five and a half million as outlined, to be spent on the capital development for the whole project, the estimated operations costs will range in the neighbourhood of half a million dollars per year.

Admittedly, it is a difficult task to try and accommodate the diverse demands of the public in an area such as the Blackfoot. However, the conspicuous absence of available techniques to evaluate the cost-benefit to the public, creates suspicions about the factor influencing the provincial government's priorities and decisions.

The public is questioning the reasoning behind the plans heavy emphasis on cattle grazing. Citizens and interest groups are concerned about the two and a half million dollars of public money being spent to convert natural woodland into meadows, especially when the cattle grazing capacity will not increase from what it is now. In order to more accurately reflect the department of Energy and Natural Resources high priority for grazing, perhaps their development proposal could more appropriately be termed the Blackfoot Meadow Muffin Management Plan.

Many recreationalists are furious at the proposed plan and argue that it does not improve the recreational potential of the area. They resent the destruction of a majority of the existing trail network, the imposition of seven large barbed wire cattle pens on

the natural environment and the lack of planning for future increased recreational demand on the area. Justification for greater consideration of recreational opportunities is clearly evident from the already overcrowded conditions of surrounding parks such as Elk Island and Miquelon Lake.

Finally, many environmentalists and recreationalists alike have little faith in the cosmetic wildlife protection measures proposed in the plan. The alteration and destruction of significant portions of the wildlife habitat, coupled with disruptions from men and machinery will inevitably decimate significant portions of the wildlife populations. Fish and Wildlife officials however believe that some game, such as the white tailed deer population could multiply due to the increased forage area created from new grazing pastures. It will be an interesting exercise in wildlife domestication I suppose.

If the already strong opposition to the existing plan is unsuccessful, next December, the public will get its chance to witness government gourmets at work. If you find the Energy and Natural Resources Blackfoot recipe distasteful, I suggest you skip dessert.

Larry Nugent  
Rec. Admin 3

## SU president misleads public

I was rather surprised on Tuesday to pick up a copy of the *Gateway* and see an article titled "Ridiculous referendum passes." It was not the title of the article but some of the comments from the past Students' Union President, Phil Soper, which I found misleading at best. As such, I felt that some clarification was necessary.

First off, his criticism of the Eugene L. Brody Funding Board members regarding the amount of information provided to students regarding this referendum is interesting, considering he himself is a member of that Board. Furthermore, the omission of any reference to the numerous, lengthy discussions occurring this past year in Students' Council should be noted, and I found it to

be almost purposefully misrepresentative. When the matter of the Eugene L. Brody Funding Board Bylaw was first brought forward for discussion, it became quite clear that the Bylaw originally drafted a few years previously was vague in its purpose. After all the smoke cleared and Students' Council decided that a referendum would be held to determine the Board's purpose and to determine whether a referendum was to be held next year. In the *Gateway* article in question, the fact that Mr. Soper was one of the Council members who pushed for a referendum to be held this year is not mentioned.

Perhaps the two most objectionable points in the article in question are comments of Mr. Soper's regarding "tightening up

the bylaw and returning it to its original purpose." and his comment that some people question whether the Board's purpose was fulfilled this year. What is not mentioned here is that granting criteria were brought to Students' Council from the Chairperson of the Eugene L. Brody Funding Board, that Students' Council subsequently approved the criteria, and that the Board for the remainder of the year followed those same criteria which were approved by Students' Council. Thus, although Mr. Soper makes reference to "tightening up the bylaw" to reflect what he would like the bylaw to say, Students' Council has already made its decision on the matter.

Glenn Byer  
Science III

## Arts Councillor defends Women's Centre

RE: Women's Centre  
For the past month I have been reading the debate between the different members of the women's centre and some engineering students. The two different groups obviously have conflicting views. Surely, we cannot judge either side by the relatively few letters to this paper. They must be judged on their activities as a group.

My View:  
a) The women's centre works towards educating students

about different issues such as pornography, equal work equal pay, rape, sexism, machismo, etc... On various occasions as I make my way through campus I witness Women's Centre members distributing literature, organizing films, providing speakers and helping other women with whatever questions the latter may have.

b) Some engineering students also organize activities (needless to say for their personal joy). Sunshine girls in the Bridge

"newspaper" are provided and on engineering week CAB is turned into a night club (not a very decent one either) where various women become the subjects of male exploitation.

Most of us (men) complain about women seeking to dominate us. Maybe they should feed us a little bit of our own medicine.

Clearly my letter is in defense of the Women's Centre and rightly so. I believe credit should be given where it is due.

Oscar

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- Backgrounds of computing knowledge and familiarity with previous Students' Union elections an asset.

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4 student members who are registered in either Spring or Summer Session or who will be registering

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- coordinating extracurricular activities for Spring and Summer Sessions
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- aiding the Vice-President (Academic) in his/her work with the Director of Special Sessions in areas of mutual interest

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For information and/or applications, please contact the Students' Union Executive Offices, 259 Students' Union Building, 432-4236.

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Thursday, 8 April 1982