

History of the Crow Wing Trail

The historic Crow Wing Trail first opened in 1844 and stretched from Upper Fort Garry to St. Paul Minnesota. Trader, Peter Garrioch and his friends, fearing the Sioux Indians on the west side of the Red River, decided to open a trail on its east side where there was a good supply of wood and water.

This new trail quickly became popular as a main trading route. From Fort Garry it followed the eastern side of the Red River through what are now known as the communities of St. Adolphe, Niverville, Otterburne, St-Pierre-Jolys, St. Malo, Ridgeville and Emerson.

The Crow Wing Trail Association was formed in 1999 to build the section of Trans Canada Trail from Winnipeg to Emerson. This regional trail association consists of representatives from the rural municipalities of Ritchot, Niverville, De Salaberry, Franklin, Emerson and Roseau River First Nation.

The development of the trail has taken several years. The Crow Wing Trail is not located on an abandoned railway track therefore the determination of where it would be located involved a lot of cooperation and work. Along the way significant cultural, historical and natural sites were identified, and where possible incorporated on the route. Connections between the 7 sections of trails have been made and most importantly funds have been raised and the volunteers found to build the trail.

Today, the Crow Wing Trail is the longest section of Trans Canada Trail in Manitoba stretching from Ritchot's northern border 191 km to Emerson. The Crow Wing Trail is a recreational trail promoting hiking, biking, horse back riding, cross country skiing and in some areas snowmobiling. The local trail associations welcome you to come and experience our section of the Trans Canada Trail.