

MANITOBA RECREATIONAL TRAILS ASSOCIATION, INC.

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Trans Canada Trail Guides Go Gold

White Point, Nova Scotia – October 21, 2006 – Today in Nova Scotia, Interpretation Canada announced the winners of the Awards of Excellence and Manitoba wins the gold! For over twenty years, IC has been recognizing excellence in interpretation at museums, visitor centres, zoos, parks and along trails. This year Manitoba takes home the gold for the Trans Canada Trail Guides – a series of six guides that help you explore the trail across Manitoba.

"Attractive, easy to use, consistent design...Lots of great information. Good quality paper make them keepers." commented one judge. "Excellent. As a hiker/backpacker I would appreciate this product." another judge remarked. The guides, which fold out like a map, are printed on paper that is virtually indestructible. The guides' format allows for easy updating of the evolving route.

Each of the six guides takes a section of the TCT and highlights that region's landscapes, birding hotspots, architecture, history, local heroes, plants and animals, and things to do and see along the trail. "I like the links to GPS coordinates, neat idea for a self-guiding experience." another IC judge pointed out. The "Geospots" on the guides are a version of "Geocaching" where trail users can use their GPS units to find special features along the trail – like a treasure hunt.

Each guide has a recommendation for a local cuisine to try – a local cultural flavour. Try the kielkje and schmondftat as you travel through the Mennonite area of Guide 3, taste kobassa and borscht in the Ukrainian area of Guide 1, or catfish and pickerel from the fishing communities of Guide 5.

"We wanted Manitobans and visitors to experience the diversity of the province," said Sherry Dangerfield, of S. Dangerfield Interpretive Planning, who created the guides for the Manitoba Recreational Trails Association, "there is such a range of habitats and cultures to explore. We are hoping the guides appeal to a wider audience – teachers, nature and history buffs – beyond people using the trail."

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"REPRESENTATIVE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT



OF THE TRANS CANADA TRAIL IN MANITOBA"

The Manitoba Recreational Trails Association, Inc., is a charitable organization whose mission is to provide the support, knowledge, technology and resources necessary to promote the construction and use of recreational trails throughout Manitoba, thereby improving the economy, the environment, and human well-being.

Dangerfield, who picked up the award today in Nova Scotia, has won a number of interpretive awards in Canada and the U.S. "It is nice to bring the gold home to Manitoba, it has been a while. The competition is always stiff; we were competing with museums, interpretive centres and national heritage sites across Canada. To be one of the best in the country is quite an honour," said Dangerfield, "we are sharing the gold award with the Royal Tyrell Museum in Alberta – an honour in itself."

Other reviewers of the guides have given them high accolades. "One of the best guides to the Trans Canada Trail yet to be produced..." said a review by Michael Haynes of Trails Canada. The National Association for Interpretation in the U.S. said, "This is not your typical 'bookish' information/trail guide... Each trail guide offers a wealth of short and concise stories and a variety of subject matter... The regions are brought to life through exploration and discovery... This series has a really creative, rich, fun, inviting and inspiring mix of graphics and interpretation!"

The guides were developed with grants from Manitoba Culture and Heritage. "The provincial government has been very supportive of development of the TCT in Manitoba. It sees the economic spin offs the trail will have for the many communities along the 1,300-kilometre route. It is a great opportunity for community development," said Elisabeth Ostrop, Executive Director of the trail association. "With the latest announcement of funding for the trail we are looking forward to completing the remaining sections soon."

For more information on the guides contact the Manitoba Recreational Trails Association. The guides are available from Manitoba Map Sales on Century Street or bookstores, outdoor stores and trail associations across the province.