



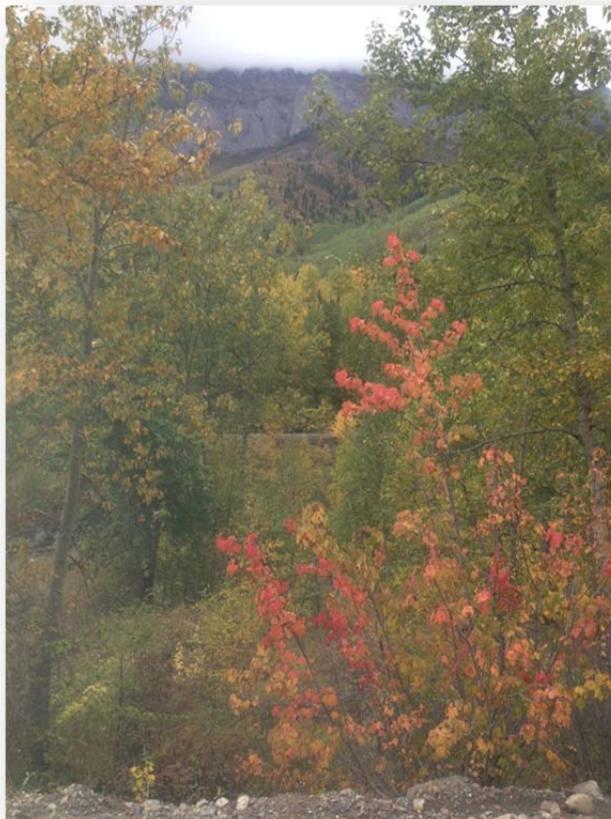
## BC Conservation Officer Service

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# Access Management Compliance and Enforcement Program (AMCEP) September Report

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*Compiled by Conservation Officer Patricia Burley  
September 1-30, 2014*



View of China Wall within Wigwam Flats AMA, September 2014

## Introduction

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The September Access Management Compliance and Enforcement Program (AMCEP) Report is the fourth report for the 6 month period for 2014 completed by Conservation Officer (CO) Burley. This is the third year that CO Burley has been the designated Access Guardian in the Elk Valley from May 15-Nov 15. The AMCEP was developed in 2009, but did not have a set contract until 2011 for a potential 5 year commitment. CO Burley's priority focus is on the Access Management Areas (AMA's) for the 6 month period within the Regional District of East Kootenay's Electoral Area A. Currently, the AMCEP is the only Conservation Officer (CO) position in all of British Columbia. Thank you to the RDEK, Columbia Basin Trust, other stakeholder groups and the Communities of Fernie, Sparwood and Elkford for making the essential program a success. The following information is some highlights from the month of September.

September 1st was the official opening of the 2014 East Kootenay hunting season. From September 1st-9th was the bow only season where hunters could hunt for mule/white tail deer bucks, elk, moose and black bear. The rifle season opened on September 10th and continues until November 30th; bow and smaller animals are still open after November 30th. Sheep and Mountain Goat Limited Entry Hunting draws (LEH) open on the 10<sup>th</sup> as well. It is the most exciting time of the year for hunters, but also the busiest time of year for the CO's. Although 90% of the hunters are ethical and follow the hunting regulations, there are about 10% who make honest mistakes or deliberately break the law by poaching wildlife. The CO's are run off their feet at this time of year conducting patrols and reacting to complaints that are reported from other hunters/public through the Report All Poachers and Polluters Hotline (RAPP 1-877-952-7272) or to their work cell phones. It is recommended and preferred that all reports be made through the RAPP line as the calls go directly to the CO on duty for a faster response.

CO Burley started her hunting patrols on September 3<sup>rd</sup> when she had two RAPP complaints regarding illegal motorized use within Grave Prairie AMA. During the bow only hunting season, bow hunters are hiking through the bush trying to quietly sneak up on their game, when a truck or ATV drives past them in a non-motorized area. Naturally the bow hunter would be frustrated and that is the time when the hunter could make the report to the CO's through RAPP line. CO Burley responded to the RAPP calls, obtained evidence and issued a warning ticket to one of the hunters on the ATV.



Figure 1: Grave Lake, near Grave Prairie AMA, early September morning.

The BC Conservation Officer Service was challenged in early September for the ALS “Ice Bucket Challenge” to support ALS research by a fellow work colleague who is living with the disease. The COS raised some money and was donated to ALS.ca. A video was compiled of CO’s from across the Province taking part in this challenge. CO Burley and Inspector Caravetta will be seen in the video taking the ice bucket challenge; <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bijG6UDTdZc>

On September 5th CO Burley attended Chauncey Todhunter AMA to check hunters as well as to place locks on the new Todhunter gate and East Ewin gate. The previous day there were two complaints within this AMA where motorized traffic was driving on the closed roads into the closed area. CO Burley was informed by many Elkford locals that the Fording Highway is like a highway of hunters. CO Burley patrolled Chauncey Todhunter AMA on the opening day of rifle season and within the early morning hours had checked 9 hunters, all within compliance of the hunting regulations. She handed out the Outdoor Access Guide and answered any questions they had regarding the AMA area.

During September 10-11<sup>th</sup> CO Burley patrolled Grave Prairie AMA; opening of rifle season. Grave Prairie is the busiest AMA year round that the CO’s patrol. During the hunting season it receives a huge influx of hunters from around the province to hunt and camp during the hunting season. This small area is condensed with wildlife because of its grassland habitat, hence the reason so many hunters hunt there. During the patrols CO Burley checked 27 hunting licences and firearms as well as one angler and a group of off road recreationists. One violation ticket was issued to a man that was driving out of a year round closed road off of

Harmer Road. There was a yellow AMA sign up and a tree across the road, but the hunter still drove into the closed area looking for elk.

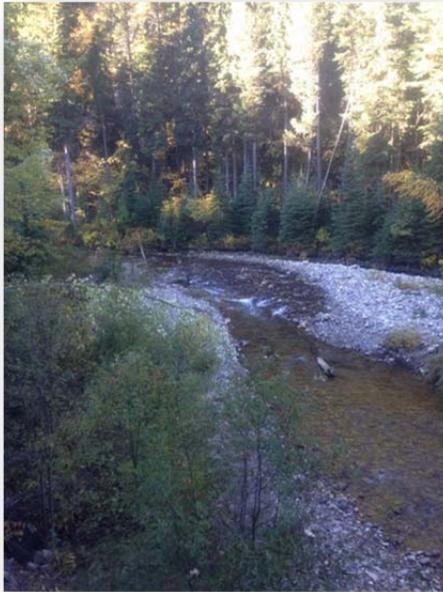


Figure 2: Harmer Creek within Grave Prairie AMA.

On September 12<sup>th</sup> while CO Burley was setting a bear trap in Elkford, she received a RAPP call regarding a potential grizzly bear that was shot for protection by a hunter within the Chauncey Todhunter AMA. CO Burley investigated the incident with the hunter and concluded that the bear was not seriously injured, but could perhaps still be in the area for a couple days. A notice was posted for other hunters to be cognitive of their surroundings due to this incident. In late September another report was made to RAPP that a hunter found a dead grizzly bear that had been shot on top of a 7X6 bull elk. The COS recognizes that while hunting, mistakes will be made as to the size or class of animal that is shot, especially when there is a season that has a restriction because of antler or horn size. Section 75 of the Wildlife Act states that if a person kills or wounds wildlife either accidentally or for protection of life or property, that person must promptly report the killing or wounding of the wildlife to an officer. If a hunter makes a mistake and kills an animal that is not legal and reports himself, he is generally dealt with in a much less severe manner than the person who shoots an illegal animal and does not report it and is subsequently caught. To ensure that legitimate mistakes are treated as such, it is important that if an accident happens a call is made as soon as possible to the Conservation Officer Service to report the accidental killing of wildlife. There has been a larger than normal amount of 5pt bull elk shot and left and self-reported to the COS this year. CO Burley wrote an article for the Fernie Free Press regarding some of the illegal activity that had occurred within the Elk Valley with regards to shot and left animals. Since the article was sent, there has been another 5 self-reported and 3 shot and left elk files.

<http://www.thefreepress.ca/community/279984102.html>

Wigwam Flats AMA proved to be the busiest AMA during the month of September with complaints from the public regarding illegal activity. Six patrols were conducted which does not include the RAPP reports that were made to the COS for investigation follow up (approximately another 8 files). CO Burley issued one warning ticket to the operator of a pickup truck that was parked on a landing off of the Lodgepole FSR. She dealt with other files in the AMA regarding vehicles parked in the closure, driving in the closure, camped in the closure, disrupting legal hunts and a potential 5pt elk shot and left. CO Burley conducted hunter checks on the Ram and Lodgepole junction. A number of illegal camps and trailers were evicted from the area. 56 hunters were checked by the CO's in this area during the month of September.



Figure 3 and 4: Gas line along Ram Creek FSR within Wigwam Flats AMA. Fig 3: A trailer is parked in the distance. The gas line is closed to motorized traffic; the trailer was evicted.

In September CO Burley had a meeting with Canfor who is supporting the deactivation of the Deadmans Pass Road within Alexander Creek AMA. Canfor has agreed to purchase a gate and post it on the Deadman's Road where it is closed to motorized activity. The road has traditionally had numerous complaints each fall with hunters and ATV's driving up it, when they should be hiking it. While Canfor's equipment is working in the area, they will ditch the year round closed trail that runs southeast through the creek towards Alberta. Teck Coal now owns the land within Alexander Creek AMA south of the Deadman's Road. CO Burley has communicated with Teck Coal regarding helpful management ideas for their new purchased Conservation Lands. Teck Coal also owns the Conservation Lands within Grave Prairie AMA, Alexander AMA and just outside of the Upper and East Flathead AMA in the Old Flathead Townsite. New signage and management plans will be made for the two AMA's. Thank you to Teck Coal for your support of the Electoral Area A AMA's.

The East Flathead was patrolled by CO Garay and CO Burley on September 27th and 28th. There had been reports that a number of ATV traffic had been abusing the AMA near the Kishinena FSR towards the Airport Road. The CO's checked 47 hunters during that time. CO Garay issued two loaded firearm tickets to two different hunters travelling within vehicles. CO Burley spoke to a number of hunting camps and educated them on the AMA's. She also posted new yellow AMA signs on closed roads in the AMA where there were visible signs of abuse.

The Outdoor Access Guide (OAG) has been a successful tool in helping educate and inform the public within the Crownest Pass and East Kootenays on Electoral Area "A" AMA Maps. CO Burley has been able to garnish \$4700 to go towards the 2014 edition of the Outdoor Access Guide from local Clubs and Stakeholder groups. The Elkford ATV Club, Fernie Trails Alliance, Fernie Rod and Gun Club, Sparwood Fish and Wildlife Association, Elkford Rod and Gun Club, Teck Coal and BC Recreation and Trails have contributed money towards the magazine. CO Deboon, CO Garay, CO Scott and CO Burley distributed the new OAG's to vendors and stakeholder groups in Elkford, Sparwood, Fernie, Elko, Grassmere, Jaffray and Cranbrook. They are also available online at: [www.env.gov.bc.ca/kootenay/eco/accessmaps.htm](http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/kootenay/eco/accessmaps.htm)

## Statistics

Access Management Area (AMA) Patrols	*Officer Presence			Officer Action			
	Patrols Conducted	Hours on Site	Contacts Made	**Persons Educated	Access Warnings	Access Charges	Other Violations
Alexander Creek MU 4-23	24	60	40	40	11	2	3
Barnes Lake MU 4-23	1	5	16	0	0	0	0
Chauncey Todhunter MU 4-23	13	31	22	22	1	0	0
Corbin MU 4-23	8	18.75	65	50	0	0	2
East Flathead MU 4-01	9	49.5	70	63	0	0	2
Galton Range MU 4-02	3	8	10	10	0	0	0
Grave Prairie MU 4-23	37	95	245	236	5	12	1
Upper Elk Valley MU 4-23	3	15	58	58	0	0	0
Upper Flathead MU 4-01	5	4.5	4	4	0	0	0
Upper Wigwam MU 4-02	4	9	11	9	0	0	0
Weigert Creek MU 4-23	1	2	2	2	0	0	0
Wigwam Flats MU 4-02	30	113.5	237	231	13	3	6
<b>Total:</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>411.25</b>	<b>780</b>	<b>725</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>14</b>

Figure 5: Current Summary of total time spent in the field up to October 24, 2014.

Statistics	Total	Filtered
Officer Time	576.75	91.75
Contacts	1362	240
Access Charge	18	1
Other Violation	14	3
Warnings	37	2
Educated	1262	224

Figure 6: Current Summary of statistics up to October 24, 2014. The filtered numbers are for the month of September.

Outreach & Non-AMA Specific Activities	# of Events	Time spent (hrs)	Contacts Made	**Persons Educated	Access Warnings	Access Charges	Other Violations
General Patrol	10	20	23	23	4	0	0
Attend Complaint	8	28	6	5	3	1	0
School Talk	3	6	270	260	0	0	0
Municipality Talk	4	7.75	79	79	0	0	0
Community Clubs	7	21.25	102	102	0	0	0
Committee Groups	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Outreach	23	82.5	102	68	0	0	0
<b>Total:</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>165.5</b>	<b>582</b>	<b>537</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>

Figure 7: Current Summary of total outreach provided to the public up to October 24, 2014.

It should be noted that Officer Presence is calculated as the time Officer(s) were physically present in an AMA, it does not account for travel.

People that are educated are defined as COS discussing specific AMA facts and requirements for which the person in question was previously unaware. It should be noted that the Access Guardian Program and general AMA facts are discussed with more than 80% of contacts.

## Summary

During the month of September the Elk Valley CO's checked 180 hunters, 7 anglers, 7 4X4 recreationists and 55 others. A total of 230 people were educated on AMA's while in the field. CO Burley also responds to emails, phone calls and personal visits at the office from the public with questions regarding the AMA's during the hunting season. The word is spreading throughout the Province that CO Burley is the Access Guardian and is being utilized to help educate people before they start their hunts within the AMA's.

The CO's in the Fernie office have spent more time in the field patrolling as they can utilize their remote rugged lap tops to complete computer work while still being within an AMA. When the CO's are in high visible areas, the public has been stopping to chat with them. Numerous wildlife complaints have come to the CO's attention this way. RAPP calls continue to be reported to CO Burley and the other CO's. CO Burley is more confident with where the problem

AMA abuse areas are during certain times of the year and time of day. These efforts have resulted in more people being issued violation and warning tickets.

CO Burley's time was also spent following up with Human Wildlife Occurrence Reports (HWOR) when other CO's were not available. Officer time is taken up in the office to deal with any HWORs, tickets, project reports or non-compliance investigations (photocopying, scanning ect). CO Burley has been adding her time to the 2014 Excel spreadsheet when working on AMA investigations, the Outdoor Access Guide and working on the AMA Reports.

The 2011-2014 monthly AMCEP reports and yearly summaries are now available online for the public to read. They can be viewed at the following website:

<http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/kootenay/eco/accessmaps.htm>

The people in the East Kootenay's have such a great opportunity to explore the beauty of the Rockies which provides a variety of recreational experiences. CO Burley is enjoying making contact with all these user groups and will continue to build a better understanding to the public of the laws and regulations that are built around them.

If you have any questions or concerns about the August AMA Report or questions for CO Burley, she can be contacted at:

RAPP 1-877-952-7277

Desk 250-423-4264

Cell 250-423-1888

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The Conservation Officer Service is a public safety provider focussed on natural resource law enforcement and human wildlife conflicts prevention and response. Our Vision: To be a progressive and respected leader in environmental compliance and enforcement, shared stewardship and public safety. The Conservation Officer Service Motto is: Integrity, Service and Protection

Please see the attached Excel 2014 Stats for more detail of the Access Guardian's patrols and outreach efforts from January to October 24, 2014.

## Maps

To reduce document size, AMA maps have not been included in this report. If required maps of individual AMAs are available from two sources, the Ministry of Environment website ([www.env.gov.bc.ca/kootenay/eco/accessmaps.htm](http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/kootenay/eco/accessmaps.htm)) and the Hunting Regulations Synopsis. The hunting synopsis is available in print and online ([www.env.gov.bc.ca/fw/wildlife/hunting/regulations/](http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/fw/wildlife/hunting/regulations/)). The maps available from the MOE website are in colour and contain much greater detail.

An i-phone Application is available for the public called PDF Maps which can be used with the Access Management Maps from the BC Government online site. The smart phone application is free and is user friendly. CO Burley uses the application whenever she is in an AMA. A blue indicator shows if you are within the AMA, no cell service is needed. Open and closed roads, along with the different AMA boundaries are all incorporated into the program. All CO's in the East Kootenay's have these maps on their i-phones. The public can find instructions on how to download the maps at: <http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/kootenay/eco/access.htm>