

[Chairman: Mr. Kowalski]

[10:42 a.m.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Good morning again, ladies and gentlemen. This is part two of this morning's meeting with the Hon. Peter Trynchy, Minister of Recreation and Parks, and those officials he has invited to attend with him.

In the annual report of the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund for 1984-85, there are three items which come under the jurisdictional responsibility of the Minister of Recreation and Parks. One, identified as Fish Creek Provincial Park, in the 1985 expenditure levels had reached a cumulative total of \$16,859,000. By March 31, 1985, Kananaskis Country recreation development had reached a cumulative total expenditure level of \$196,627,000, and the urban parks program cumulative total was \$62,464,000 on March 31, 1985. This morning we've had excellent presentations, I think, with respect to Kananaskis Country recreation development and the urban parks program.

Mr. Trynchy, I sincerely welcome you on behalf of all members of the committee. Perhaps at this point in time you might identify and introduce the individuals with you, and if you have an opening statement with respect to your portfolio responsibilities, please proceed with it. Following that, we'll revert to questions from committee members.

MR. TRYNCHY: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and members of the committee. Margaret Qually is on my right; Ed Marshall, Barry Mitchelson, Russell Carr, Cliff Lacey, and Sara-Jane Gruetzner on the far end.

Mr. Chairman, I think my comments will be brief, because we've spent considerable time on the presentations in the other room. So if you would entertain questions now, Mr. Chairman, we'd be very pleased to answer them.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We'll proceed to questions from Mr. Thompson, to be followed by Mr. Hyland, Mrs. Cripps, Mr. Moore, and Mr. Gogo.

MR. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, I hope we can encourage other ministers on occasion when they appear before the committee to use the format that the Minister of Recreation and Parks uses. I think it would be helpful for us to get a real feeling for what's going on in some of these projects.

Going back to these urban parks we looked at, my first question is: who is responsible for the maintenance and especially the security of these parks, for vandalism and that type of thing? Is it the department or the city?

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Chairman, the security and operations of every urban park, the five we've seen today, are the obligation or responsibility of the city council. We provide operating funds which are matched by theirs, and they do the total operations. We're not involved whatsoever.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you. Can we get back now to Kananaskis? Maybe you could just give us a feel for how the public has accepted this park. Are there any real figures on the number of vehicles that come in? Do you keep track of the number of visitors that come into your park? Maybe you could just tell us how the public has accepted Kananaskis park in general.

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Chairman, I'll make a few comments and turn it over to Ed Marshall, managing director. Yes, Kananaskis is very well received by the public. This year, 1985, we will reach close to 3 million visitors to Kananaskis, and we're already feeling, if I can use the word, the pinch of not having enough facilities for the number of people that are coming to visit and want to be there. A good example is our RV centre at Mount Kidd; we're turning people away. Our campsites are not nearly enough for the number of visitors we're getting. Of course, the golf course is booked to capacity, and we will exceed some 60,000 rounds of golf in 1985.

Ed, can you add anything?

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, I can't add much to that. I'm out there observing the scene both summer and winter, and there are times when I wonder how the country ever got along without it before it was there. You have to wonder what people did, the way it's being used today. It's a great satisfaction to all of us who are involved in it to see the level of use it receives.

We believe in the process. Even with that level of use we are able to preserve the integrity of the country and conserve the resources of it. It's important to us to see that

these things don't get overused to the point of causing physical damage to the country. We're on guard for that.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you. That's it.

MR. HYLAND: I had the pleasure this summer of spending a week in Kananaskis Country, first at the Mount Kidd RV Park and then further down in the provincial park itself. The first question I have relates to the highways. We had an outline in the audiovisual presentation of the major highways and what's happening to them. What about the highway that goes south of the Highwood Trail, Highway 940? There's a considerable amount of area south of there. I wouldn't necessarily expect a paved highway, but it would make another outlet for those coming from the south, coming up from Coleman, through some very beautiful country. I wonder if there are any plans even for upgrading of the roads along that area.

MR. TRYNCHY: Are you asking the question on Highwood Pass, the continuation of highway . . .

MR. HYLAND: South of Highwood Pass and to the south park boundary; it would be Highway 940.

MR. TRYNCHY: So far we have expended in our total budget on transportation up to the year in question some \$106 million, and there are still some other roads to be constructed. In regard to the opening of the Highwood Pass, there has been some question in regard to the cost of the snowplowing it would take to keep it open, and the wildlife people have also expressed concerns to us in regard to the management of wildlife, calving and their habitat grounds. We have the Minister of Public Lands and Wildlife looking at the situation again. I expect it will come back to our table in cabinet committee review of whether Highwood Pass, the continuation from the park boundary out to Highwood, can be kept open in the winter. We should arrive at some decision in the near future.

MR. HYLAND: Thank you.

My second question and comment is related to those highway signs. We stopped at a number of them when we went in and drove around the

park. We found them very useful, outlining what was happening and the history of the area. I keep thinking about a question out of that. We heard a lot on Mount Allan when it was decided to cut the slopes for the ski hill. We heard a lot from the so-called experts about the tremendous damage it was doing to wildlife. Yet I go further down the road from there and see a highway sign that relates to avalanches. If you read the sign, it says what a tremendous thing the avalanches do for the wildlife. It gives the grazers grass to eat, allows new trees to start over, and gives other animals a chance to eat things that aren't in the covered forest.

I wonder if there's any study or anything that would counteract these so-called experts that say it's such a bad thing to clear a hill for a ski hill, because certainly nobody is going to be skiing in the summertime and all those animals get the full use of that slope and all that grass that will be seeded on it in the summertime.

MR. TRYNCHY: You're quite correct in what you just said. It must be remembered that the habitat that will be grown on the ski slopes during the summer will be beneficial to the wildlife. In the wintertime, the wildlife population does not exist on the northeast slope where the ski hills are; they're on the other side, where there's habitat. That's been well researched by the Fish and Wildlife people. A number of studies have been completed, and we're satisfied that the slopes being constructed on Mount Allan will be beneficial to the wildlife in regard to their summer habitat.

MR. HYLAND: Lastly, a comment about the trails. You also outlined some of them in the audiovisual presentation. I should say that we used some of those trails. Even kids five years old and two and a half years old were able to walk some of the short trails, and they had a good time. I think those pamphlets and stuff like that that they give out at the beginning, where you can go along to the marker and read the story as things go on, are very beneficial, and I can see why the usage of Kananaskis would be up.

A question not related to that — and I guess I would just like it reinforced. I had a number of questions about Mount Allan, the jobs created, et cetera, and the benefits of that to the local economy. But I wonder if any of that has been

funded out of the trust fund, or is the amount of money going into that out of general revenue?

MR. TRYNCHY: None of the facilities for the Olympics are being funded from the heritage fund. They're all out of general revenue. I can't perceive anybody questioning that. It's been announced a number of times. Mount Allan and the development on Mount Allan is funded entirely through general revenue, the same as all Olympic facilities in Kananaskis Country.

MRS. CRIPPS: Mr. Chairman, as more and more people from the province of Alberta go to Kananaskis, they begin to appreciate the development of Kananaskis. I've certainly heard a lot of positive comments this summer from people who've been there.

Last year I asked a question about soundproofing at William Watson Lodge, and I wonder if that has been done. In regard to the handicapped, in Kananaskis we have William Watson Lodge, which is specifically designed for handicapped people. I had a discussion the other day with a fellow who is in a wheelchair, and he indicated to me that in general, when you go to a provincial park in Alberta, if someone in a wheelchair gets out of their vehicle, they're in the ditch. You know, they've got this little back-in place, and by the time they get out of a vehicle in a wheelchair, they are not on the prepared ground and they have a very difficult time.

This isn't directly related, and yet it is very, very important to those people who are using our parks. Whereas William Watson Lodge is designed specifically for handicapped, these people can't always go to Kananaskis and have to use the other facilities we provide. He said that if he could go to the group camping grounds, he'd have no problem, because they don't have the same kinds of pads. But he said that even if nobody is in them, they won't let him. I wonder if we could look at some flexibility to allow the handicapped to use our park facilities.

MR. TRYNCHY: Our provincial parks?

MRS. CRIPPS: Yes.

MR. TRYNCHY: It's a good question. I wasn't aware of that concern. Barry, do you want to

comment on it?

MR. MITCHELSON: Yes. Mrs. Cripps, as you know, the provincial park system evolved over a number of years. During the last three years we have in fact established redevelopment standards. One of the considerations in developing those standards was that there would be handicapped access strategies, whether we're talking parking pads, washrooms that are levelled rather than stairs, and those kinds of things. Anything that has been developed during the last three years has taken handicapped access strategies into consideration for all the amenities that are provided.

MRS. CRIPPS: I recognize that. Could we talk about using more flexibility in directing all of the parks, including Kananaskis, to allow some sort of personal flexibility in solving the problems these people face?

MR. TRYNCHY: We'll take that under consideration and make sure that wherever possible we will implement your suggestions.

MRS. CRIPPS: Last year we made a recommendation regarding the urban parks expansion to the smaller centres. I believe it was the towns and villages. I hope that the committee will propose that again and that the minister will be supportive of that position.

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Chairman, as our figures indicate, we are in our last year of funding for the urban parks. This year's budget was \$22 million, and the forecast expenditures for '86-87 are some \$2 million, so those five urban parks will be completed. It's always been my hope, the same as yours, that we would continue the program to other centres, and in time, if the funding and priorities are right, we should have the presence of a heritage fund park in every community in the province.

MR. R. MOORE: Mr. Minister, I'd like to get back to William Watson Lodge, which I believe is one of the major components of the park — the most important, in my estimation. I'd like to know the utilization of it and also the expansion plans for it, if you have any. Where are we going with that concept within the park? I know that my own constituents say

there's a booking period ahead and they have a hard time getting into it. I think this is because of utilization. I want to make sure it isn't that we have a problem in the facility itself. I'd also like to get out where we're going. If it is a utilization thing, if we have a bigger demand than the capacity, what is our future direction in this area?

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Chairman, when we developed Kananaskis Country, the concept provided for eight units of the William Watson Lodge concept. At the time of construction we scaled that down to four units to see how the public would accept it. In the number of years we've operated it, we've found it very acceptable for the handicapped and seniors, so this year we've asked for special funding of \$1.3 million to construct four more units. The four units will be developed somewhat differently to take into consideration the comments made by the Member for Drayton Valley in regard to soundproofing, better access for wheelchairs, and better access to groups and families with more than one handicapped or senior.

It's just so positive that, as you've mentioned, sir, bookings have been such that we just can't keep up. There are more requests for the accommodation at William Watson Lodge than we can fulfill now, so that's why the expansion is going.

I'll ask Ed to comment with regard to where we are in construction and how soon it will be completed, but it's on the way to being constructed this year.

MR. MARSHALL: Thank you, Mr. Minister, Mr. Chairman. The design has been completed, the drawings have all been signed, the clearing contract has been called, and within days there will be a call for the actual construction of the four new units. Substantial completion should occur prior to the end of March. There'll be some cleaning up to do in the next construction season with respect to landscaping and so on, things that simply can't be done in the wintertime. But for the most part it will all be done during the current year. There'll be some odds and ends, but I think we'll see the additional units in use by next April, anyway. I think you'll like them. They are somewhat different and very complementary to what's already there.

MR. R. MOORE: A supplementary, Mr. Minister. There is an area where there seems to be misunderstanding, and that's privatization in the parks. I'd like to clarify this. There is a policy of privatization. We see it with the Mount Kidd RV Park. I would like to get a more clear understanding. What is entailed when we say we're privatizing services and so on within the park? I'm a very, very strong supporter of privatization of any government service we can. But a lot of people think that when we say privatization, it entails selling part of our parks — this sort of thing. I don't believe that's part of it, but I'd like to hear that clarified right now to my satisfaction.

MR. TRYNCHY: A very good question, Mr. Chairman, and I've had that question asked of me. What we mean by privatization is not the selling of any provincial assets in parks. What we mean is tendering out the work in provincial parks, getting the private sector involved in running them, with a percentage back to government, such as the golf course in Kananaskis or the RV centre. Throughout our provincial parks the grass maintenance, washroom cleaning, sewer disposal, garbage disposal, and all those things are tendered out to the private sector. Approximately 80 percent of the parks work in our provincial parks is now being done by the private sector through contracts. That's what we mean by privatization. But there's no way we are allowing the sale of a provincial park or anything like that.

Of course, you're well aware of our municipal rec areas program, where the municipality does it all through funding from us. We just step back and let them do it. I think it's so positive. It provides jobs to local people, be they contractors or whoever. I've been to a number of our provincial parks where this is going on — very positive. But we are not selling any of our provincial park assets

MR. R. MOORE: Another supplementary. In that regard I'd like to hear from you or some of your support staff. How does the level of service being provided now in those areas that have been privatized compare with when it was operated solely by the provincial administration?

MR. TRYNCHY: Any privatization we've done

or will be doing will not be at the expense of service. The service has to be as good as or better than what we provided with our own forces. In a number of cases we've seen that the private sector doesn't have the rules and regulations of so many hours of work. They seem to get around that by doing it themselves. We have a number of cases where a man and wife will take on the project and do it. Nobody keeps track of their hours, whereas if they were working for a department, there are certain rules they'd have to follow and, of course, they might not complete all that work. But no way and nowhere have we sacrificed service because of the private sector.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Nelson, to be followed by Mr. Zip, Mr. Gurnett, and two other members.

MR. GOGO: You missed me.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'm sorry, Mr. Gogo. I apologize profusely. There's no way in the world I could possibly miss Mr. Gogo. I had a check mark beside your name. I was so enthusiastic about your upcoming series of questions that I -- I really recant and would now like to formally introduce Mr. Gogo.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Chairman, your gracious apology for your oversight is graciously accepted.

First of all, Minister, I'd like to echo Mr. Thompson's comments. Mr. Mitchelson, Mr. Marshall, and your staff have made a superb presentation. I'm very impressed with the presentation this morning. I think it's grossly unfair that the golf course seems to always get all the press. It's only 5 percent of the package, based on the figures you quoted today. It has long been the policy of both you and the government of Alberta that Kananaskis Country is for Albertans and their visitors. That's enshrined in a very expensive bronze plaque signed by the Premier of Alberta, I think, on July 2 a couple of years ago. It's affixed to the building there.

My first question is: is it still the policy of this government that Kananaskis Country, Kananaskis park, is designed for the use of Albertans and their visitors? With all the recent hoopla about tourism being so important to this province, have we still as a matter of

policy not instituted a program of advertising in the U.S. to attract American visitors to Kananaskis?

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Chairman, we're not advertising Kananaskis per se through brochures in the United States, but the word is getting there from the number of visitors here. I guess I can say again that Kananaskis is for Albertans and visitors. It's quite difficult to turn away a visitor, wherever they come from. We have not advertised Kananaskis Country outside the province, but that's not stopping the people from getting the message.

I might give you an example. When I was at Kananaskis, I talked to some people on the golf course and asked a number of questions. They were from the States. They said, "We're coming back, and we're going to bring a number of friends because this is so great." That kind of advertising is going on through word of mouth. We'll have to meet the challenge, whether it's to develop it in a bigger way or develop more of these kinds of concepts. But certainly, tourism is a benefit to Alberta, and hopefully it will continue to come by word of mouth.

MR. GOGO: Certainly, Minister, Alberta welcomes everybody. It was a question of a policy of advertising through the U.S. trade journals and so on to attract them. I'm pleased to hear that's not being done.

On January 13, ACCESS television went provincewide with long hours of broadcasting in Alberta, getting priority over certain other channels such as the public network PBS. It seems to me that using ACCESS is a golden opportunity to get through to all Albertans the benefits of Kananaskis. I take it as a given that that's now being done. But if it isn't, perhaps Mr. Marshall could make a note of it. I don't really want an answer to the question, but I think it's important that it's being done, because they are public dollars going to the people of Alberta.

In the urban parks, I am and have been very impressed for several years with Mr. Lacey, the man responsible for implementing the program. What has struck me as being one of the very strong reasons for its success, outside of the funding, is the fact that local autonomy prevails so high that these five communities that have urban parks have, in the final analysis, as long as they operate within the

guidelines and the framework, total responsibility for operating those parks. I think that's an excellent example to other departments of this government.

My question, Minister: looking at Waskasoo in Red Deer and the other communities, does the urban parks policy allow, for example, Alberta Culture to work closely with these communities that have the parks so that areas of very significant historical interest in the various parts of Alberta . . . What I'm getting at, I guess, is that I think there may be limitations to municipal governments to access certain information historically in the naming of points of interest. Do you work with Mrs. LeMessurier or Culture in seeing that the municipal governments have access to Alberta Culture in terms of historical information for naming of points within their parks?

MR. TRYNCHY: Yes, Mr. Chairman. As a matter of fact, we are constantly asked by the municipal governments. A good example is Lethbridge, where they moved a museum into the urban park concept, and Grande Prairie. The municipal governments are asking us to include cultural aspects in our urban parks, and we certainly invite and encourage that. It's a matter of working together, and we do it wherever we can. That's been our policy from day one.

MR. GOGO: A final question, Minister, and it's a perennial one with me. All Albertans are paying for these urban parks. It's long been my view that Albertans be reminded that the heritage fund indeed funds these things. Are you satisfied with the signing that's going on now in these parks, both under construction and completed, as to where these dollars are coming from?

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to answer it this way: I am satisfied as long as the MLAs for those cities advise me that they are satisfied. Yes, we make a very strong point of making sure that the heritage fund logo is displayed as often as possible and wherever possible, to let the people of Alberta know that it is their funds, not the government's, that are going to this project. I'm waiting for you, sir, and anybody else that thinks the signage isn't adequate; we'll look into it.

MR. GOGO: Thanks, Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Mr. Gogo. I've always been impressed by your ability to have everything come right back to you in the end. Mr. Nelson to be followed by Mr. Zip, Mr. Gurnett, Mr. Hyland, and two other members.

MR. NELSON: Chairman, I have a question to either the minister or Mr. Marshall. It's regarding an item I brought forward last year, the old Powderface Trail in Kananaskis Country. Considering the large number of people who have traversed Kananaskis this year — it's been suggested there are 3 million people and people possibly being turned away from campsites, Mount Kidd, and what have you — I'm just wondering if there's been any consideration of asking for additional moneys to further develop the Powderface Trail and enable additional development of campsites along this area of Kananaskis Country.

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Chairman, last year we talked about the program just about coming to completion. I talked about the project of \$196 million, plus this year's budget. There are a number of things that will have to be looked into if we want to accommodate the number of visitors that are coming. Even though we have a completion budget here, I see no difficulty in saying that we've got to do more. I see no difficulty in coming back next year or the year after with a budget for roads, more campsites, and more development, because it's an expansion. So I think that with the committee's encouragement you should press on in your final report to the minister of the day that more expansion is needed, and I'm sure it will be carried forward. But whether it will happen this year or next, I can't be that definite on it.

MR. NELSON: I guess I should ask: is it felt that additional expansion, be it expansion of campsites additional to those presently there or expansion of existing campsites, is needed at this time? Also, I guess we have to consider the constraints on the present roadways and what have you into the current sites when considering development of additional sites, in particular along the Powderface Trail, where there is a considerable amount of room that looks like it's fairly developable.

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Chairman, it's difficult to answer in the affirmative. Sure, it's nice to say we're going to do more. But there are the rest of Albertans who say, "Well, if you're going to expand, why not develop a second regional park closer to us?" or things like that. It's offset by what you can do with regard to a total province picture. Your comments are accepted. Certainly, I've travelled that trail, and I know the area. I know the whole Kananaskis Country can use a lot more development and has room for it. It's just a matter of priorities: where do you do it and when?

MR. NELSON: Mr. Minister, whilst I concur in the view that there may be an examination of a second type of park similar to Kananaskis elsewhere in the province, this morning we've just discussed that there has been a considerable amount of increase in use of Kananaskis by people probably from outside Alberta. That being the case, not only are we having to look at the possibility of overflow situations by Albertans, which may necessitate the development of another park, but also we may end up with an additional overflow situation not only in Kananaskis but also in another park of a similar nature because of the word-of-mouth expansion. Your words were that word of mouth by visitors from outside Alberta is going to bring other visitors, and therefore you're going to have an additional overflow problem at some of these campsites in these parks. So whether there's a second park developed or an expansion of this one, you are probably still going to get full usage of both.

Notwithstanding some of the words, I'm just wondering about the future expansion of campsites, in particular, I guess, along the Powderface Trail, where there's certainly additional internal usage available. To further that question, could we not consider putting some type of priority on this based on the fact that there will be all these visitors coming in? It's going to take a long time to consider developing another park to the same extent as Kananaskis, so we have to use the resources we presently have in place, especially with the infrastructure that's there.

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Chairman, he's made a very good presentation, and we'll take it under advisement.

MR. ZIP: Mr. Chairman, in the perspective of my time in Alberta I've noticed that greater progress has been made in the last eight years with regard to the development of recreational facilities and amenities out of the total 33 years I've been in this province. I am especially enthusiastic about Kananaskis Country and the urban parks programs of your department.

A further comment: I wish to support the excellent idea of our hon. Member for Drayton Valley. She's got a good head on her, and I just want to reflect upon and urge this proposal of hers to extend the urban parks program to smaller centres — cities, towns, and villages — particularly where the potential use and the natural amenities warrant it.

I have had quite a number of representations made to me, Mr. Minister, for support of an application for such a development at Chestermere Lake. From the standpoint of proximity to Calgary and its current heavy use, in my opinion this would be an excellent place to start. I would like the hon. minister to comment on this concept.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Perhaps before the minister comments, Mr. Zip, every member of this committee would probably have one or two or three or four or five or six projects within their own constituency that they would like to petition to the minister as well. So perhaps with that clarification the minister might proceed.

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Chairman, the question was: would we consider Chestermere Lake? I can say this. I've met with the Chestermere Lake council in my office. We discussed the concept of a municipal rec area and a number of other things. They're to do a number of things — I'm sure they'll be doing it — and hopefully they'll get back to us some time in the future. I can't make any commitment as to what's going to happen and when, except that we've talked. We've agreed that a number of things have to be done, and they're in the process of doing those things.

MR. ZIP: I have a further question. What about Nose Creek? You know, it comes into Calgary and looks like a bit of a wasteland at the present time. Certainly, there's a lot of potential there as well.

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Chairman, we have a . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: For clarification, this is a meeting of the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund. There are three projects that you have ministerial responsibility for. Perhaps, with all due respect, Mr. Zip, we might try to attach it to the projects the minister is responsible for. I know that you're very enthusiastic about the projects you want to advance, but I think there has to be a caveat in terms of the discussion this morning.

MR. TRYNCHY: Unless the member is asking an extension of the urban parks policy from Fish Creek east. I think he's well aware that we have some land from Daon on Fish Creek east that will be developed in a number of phases over the next number of years. I can't comment on the rest of the creeks and valleys you have in Calgary.

MR. ZIP: We don't have any. We don't have any lakes either.

MR. TRYNCHY: Maybe some of those questions could be directed to the city council of that particular city.

MR. ZIP: Thank you, Mr. Minister. I think that was very adequate.

MR. GURNETT: Mr. Chairman, after the quality of presentations we saw this morning and the way we were led to admire again the natural beauties of the province and what has been done so far, it's hard not to think a little about the future. Rather than talk about some of the scenic areas in my part of the world specifically that I'd like to ask about, in a more general way I would like to ask about an overall strategy. It seems to me that the success, for example, of the urban parks and the presentation we saw this morning dealing with them certainly reflect the fact that there's an ongoing process of looking towards the future.

I wonder, Mr. Minister, rather than commenting on specific locations, if we could get a more complete picture of where you see the program going, what proposals might be considered, and what the future of that parks program might be, obviously recognizing that decisions aren't being made, but what's envisioned at least.

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Chairman, I think I mentioned to the Member for Drayton Valley at the outset what my thoughts are or were or will be. As we develop these urban parks, they are so positive in the six cities we're working in now; it has just proven that. It is my hope, and I'm sure it's the hope of everybody else, that if there are funds available, we should continue with the urban park heritage fund visibility in every community in the province. I don't know if that can happen. It all relates to a timetable, priorities, and funding. That is my hope, and that's the goal I'm working towards.

MR. GURNETT: With connection to the urban parks program I'd like to know a little bit more about the role of the municipalities in those parks. Obviously, the ongoing responsibility is theirs. How much involvement do the different municipalities have as far as a funding participation in the development of the parks, in addition to what comes from the heritage fund through this program? On that side of things, what role do the municipalities play?

MR. TRYNCHY: The municipalities play a very major role in regard to urban parks. We do an assessment with the local government. Mr. Lacey has done a tremendous job, as mentioned before. We assess what we feel would be the number of dollars to develop a park in a centre, and then we provide those funds to the city on a grant basis. They are in charge of the full development, with assistance from Mr. Lacey and our department. We then provide them with operating funds over a number of years, and of course they're in full control. It's their full jurisdiction to help develop it — well, mostly develop it as their own prerogative, and we provide assistance in the operating fund. So it is a major role that the local municipalities play in regard to the development of an urban park.

MR. GURNETT: Just to clarify a bit on that. The funding that's involved comes directly from the program. In any of these cases we've seen this morning, has there been more money spent than the amount that has come from the heritage fund?

MR. TRYNCHY: I'll let Mr. Lacey answer the latter part. We provide X number of dollars to a city for an urban park. That's all we

provide. If we arrive at a figure of \$5 million for a community, that's all we provide. If they want to add their own funds in addition to the \$5 million, they're free to do so. But they do not come back to us and say, "We need more dollars." It's clear-cut; it's pretty straightforward. Our funding ends. Whatever commitments we've made in 1982 or 1981, whatever the dollars were, we fulfill our commitment, and then they can add to it if they wish.

We have not provided additional funds anywhere in the urban parks program, and we will not be providing additional funds unless there is something in addition they want to do that we would accept. So far, that's the way it has worked. Cliff?

MR. LACEY: Mr. Chairman, Mr. Gurnett, in several instances the cities have made use of other funding programs which would require them to also participate financially in the facilities that were developed. As an example, earlier we showed you in our presentation pictures of the museum in Lethbridge which was developed. It was explained that some of the exhibits, an orientation display, and external facilities and services that were provided were funded from the urban parks program. In addition to that, funds were made available from the old MCR program, which is a General Revenue Fund grant program. The city was required to contribute a share equivalent to the MCR money provided by the province.

We've also seen joint ventures, if you like, in terms of the Devonian trails that were provided in the Piper Creek and Waskasoo Creek area in Red Deer. Also, Alberta Environment has contributed some funds which require a matching component by the city in reclaiming some areas that are industrially scarred; for example, in gravel pits and in some potential slumping landslide areas along river valleys. Environment and the city have participated financially in those as well.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Chairman, my question is related to the golf course and the expansion that is going on there. I would like either the minister or Mr. Marshall to make some comments about the usage of the golf course compared to the projected usage, and about the expansion in the pro shop that's being done and how that's being funded.

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Chairman, as I mentioned at the outset, in excess of 60,000 rounds of golf will be played this year, so the usage is extremely high. The weather has been reasonably suitable for golfing. I think the golf course, if I'm not mistaken, on a good year could accommodate up to about 80,000 golfers. So it's geared for that.

We've made a contract with the operator of the golf course to expand the pro shop and that on their own. It's something the private sector is doing. There is no funding provided from us in regard to that. I think it's just a very good business deal between the operators and ourselves. The public, the people of Alberta, will benefit. There is no funding from anywhere in government in regard to the expansion of the pro shop.

MR. HYLAND: Are there any numbers on the income we get off the golf course on the sharing with the private operator?

MR. TRYNCHY: Yes. As a matter of fact, I believe it's in Hansard. I reported that last year in my estimates. I believe the figure is about \$150,000 or \$118,000 or \$120,000. I can't give it to you exactly, but a percentage of the total take comes to us yearly. Anything over \$2 million we start to share in 1 percent, 2 percent, or 3 percent. It goes up as high as 5 percent. The more they make, the more the province or the people of Alberta take into their general revenue.

We are receiving funds. March 31, 1985, figures are not in yet, but they will be shortly. That was our first year of operation. Mind you, the golf course was not completed, so we would anticipate considerably more flowing back to the people of Alberta.

MR. HYLAND: Then it's not costing the people of Alberta any beyond the capital construction. The operation is totally paying for itself and making some profit.

MR. TRYNCHY: Yes, correct. There might be some capital things in the golf course that we'd have to rectify, such as waterworks; you know, it's under our contract. But definitely the returns to the people of Alberta surpass the original cost. There is no operating cost borne by the government.

MR. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, I'm sure the minister would be disappointed if somebody didn't allude to white sand in the traps. It has always been an up-front topic whenever anybody talks about Kananaskis. I'd like to ask the minister: if we had to do it over again, would we still put white sand in the traps?

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Chairman, the reason people have been talking about the sand is that it's white. We should set aside the colour of the sand and talk about the quality of the sand. Would we do that again? Yes, very much so. As I mentioned last year, the tender for the sand coming from B.C. was \$260,000, whereas the sand coming from Edmonton, a different colour, would have been \$256,000. You can see that the difference in the cost was very, very minor.

I think the quality of the sand, in regard to being dust-free, uniform in size, being sand that does not pack under heavy use and heavy rain and does not blow away with the winds, is very positive. I'm going to ask Ed to supplement this. My information is that the sand we have there now, that we received from the contractors in Lethbridge through B.C., would last us a number of years more than if we'd used the sand that they use around other golf courses, because of the three things: wind, weather, and amount of use. Ed, have I missed anything?

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Chairman, Mr. Minister, if I had to participate again in the decision to select a sand for the Kananaskis Country golf course, the decision would be exactly the same as the last one. It was the right decision at the time. As far as I'm concerned, it would be the right decision today. Compared to the problems you would face if you went for other sand, in the long run we would be paying more for other kinds of sand than we are paying for the sand we've got.

I don't think it's appreciated that our tees and greens are also made out of sand. Sand is about 99 percent of the material in tees and greens. Nearly all of that sand came from the Edmonton area. We were fortunate, I think, in that we had a straight line haul from Golden to the Kananaskis Country golf course for the sand for the traps, the cost of which, FOB the golf course, was about \$42 a metric ton. The cost for sand from Edmonton laid down on the golf

course for tees and greens was on average over \$39 a metric ton. These two figures, when they are put side by side, really aren't very far apart. You need a very special kind of sand for tees and greens. What we used on the traps wouldn't have been satisfactory for tees and greens at all or vice versa. We did what we did for good cause, and if it were up to me, I'd do it again.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you. I'd like to go back to the three million visitors we have in the park. When this concept was being debated in the Legislature and in the papers, the opposition accused the government of building a country club for the elite of Alberta. Is there any way you can monitor the type of people who are coming into Kananaskis park? Is it a cross section of Alberta? I feel it is, but I would like to find out if there is any corroboration on that perception. Have you any way of doing this?

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Chairman, we're all aware — if not, we should be — that all our day use area is free, so all Albertans, be they well-to-do or not, are free to use it at no cost. The overnight camping is reasonable, the same as our provincial parks across the province. Our golfing is reasonable. It's controlled by us in that they can't charge any more than a certain fee. It's cheaper than Banff or Jasper.

Just to give you an idea of the kinds of people or where they come from. Last year 65 percent of the people came to the golf course from the Calgary region; this year, about 60 percent. Last year 15 percent of the people golfing came from the Edmonton region; this year that increased to 17 percent. From other Alberta points, it increased by 2 percent over last year. From outside Alberta, it was 5 percent in 1984; it increased to 7 percent in 1985. The people are coming from all parts of the province. It's opening more and more to where Albertans outside the Calgary region are utilizing the golf course more than in the past. I can't give you the figures for tourists, because I don't know if we keep that. Maybe Ed can supplement that answer.

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Chairman, Mr. Minister, we really don't have a fine breakdown for all our campers or day use visitors that we have for the golf course, because we don't know the source of the calls. When they book for the golf

course, of course, we know whether they're phoning from Foremost or Edmonton or Calgary and so on. That's the basis upon which those figures the minister gave you are made up.

We do some surveying to find out whether they're from this or that part of Alberta or from outside of Alberta. Bit by bit we will have better information as to the source of our visitors. The simplest way right now is to look at licence plates. By far the greatest number are from Alberta, whether it's in the golf course parking lot, a campground, or wherever. There's no doubt about it; there are lots of out-of-province plates in Kananaskis Country, and they come from all over North America. But in a numerical sense they don't amount to much compared to the Alberta plates.

MR. TRYNCHY: There's one more figure that I think is very important and that I should give to you. That's in regard to walk-on traffic for the golf course. A lot of people in the past — I haven't had that complaint this year — suggested they couldn't get on. I want to give you an example. On a daily basis we had about 80 to 100 walk-on golfers accommodated, and on the fourth Friday of July we accommodated 130 walk-on golfers. There are not very many people who can't get to golf on a moment's notice just by walking on. So I think that's important.

MR. THOMPSON: My third question has to do with golf shoes. I've had some people in my constituency who use spikeless golf shoes, and I understand they are not allowed on the course. Is that true, Ed?

MR. TRYNCHY: Go ahead, Ed; I don't know.

MR. MARSHALL: No, sir, that is not true. I cannot believe that anyone with a pair of genuine spikeless golf shoes has ever been turned away. There are some people, and I say it in all due respect, who have different ideas about what amounts to spikeless golf shoes. One of the kinds that are not acceptable are shoes that are used on artificial turf in a football game. Those may be deemed by the owner to be spikeless golf shoes, but they are not and they are not permitted on the golf course. But anything that is a spikeless golf shoe is indeed permitted. Such shoes are rented by the golf course itself to people who want to

use them. By and large, more people are wearing spikeless golf shoes nowadays than shoes with spikes in them. They're welcome. They're also a lot easier on the floors, carpets, stairs, and so on around the buildings. It's quite the opposite, sir, if I may say so. Spikeless golf shoes are not discouraged. They're encouraged, but not everything qualifies.

MR. THOMPSON: Thanks for spiking the rumour.

MR. MUSGREAVE: First of all, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to compliment Mr. Marshall in particular. I've had occasion a few times — not to play golf, because I wouldn't dare play golf there, mainly because I'd lose all my golf balls. I want to say that I've always found the restaurant and the food excellent. On Mother's Day, for example, they gave out flowers to all the ladies, which I thought was a good touch. To me it shows good management. A couple of weeks ago, I was there on a bicycle trail and had occasion to use the toilets. I want you to tell your staff that they were in excellent shape, very clean. I want to pass on that compliment.

I do have a concern, though it's not a major one. I must confess I don't know what bicycle trail I was on, but I was on the one that starts at a large interpretive centre and ends up near the general store and that lake. You know the trail I'm talking about. I thought you might consider two things. One, along that trail there are some beautiful views of the valley to the west, and I think it would be an excellent idea if you could have a few benches there. People of my generation — and we had a picnic lunch with us — were looking for a place to stop, and we would rather have stopped there than at the lake. There are some places where a bench would be a tremendous asset.

The other thing — and again maybe it's because of my lack of navigational abilities. I found that whenever the bicycle trail crossed a highway, we got lost. We ended up going the wrong way because the signage doesn't get you across the major road somehow. If one of you would get on a bicycle and take a look, you might see what I'm driving at. Maybe you haven't had this concern before; I don't know.

The other question I have, Mr. Chairman, is that I notice the lake in Fish Creek park was deemed unfit for swimming. I know this is an

old problem in Alberta's lakes. I guess this wouldn't be your concern; I imagine it would be the concern of the cities. I wonder if there has been any consideration of doing any research with Alberta Environment or the Alberta Research Council to see if we can't resolve this problem. These lakes are very popular, and if there are problems with their use, I think we should be addressing them.

MR. MITCHELSON: Mr. Chairman, I think the comments are quite legitimate. In many of the lakes of Alberta, whether they're man-made or natural, the complaint you will get initially from campers or people utilizing the lake is that they do in fact get the itch. It's a consequence of the water being of such a quality, through pollutants or whatever. There are only a number of things that can be done as a result of that, and it's a consequence of agricultural development and a number of other things in close proximity to those lakes.

Speaking specifically to Sikome, we have two water sources that we use with that lake. One is well water, and the second one is taken from the river through filtration. What occurs in Sikome is primarily as a consequence of the usage that that lake is receiving. The warning that went out this summer was as a result of the testing that had gone on. Unfortunately, you get high usage and some of the bacterial counts were man-produced. So it's not only nature, but it's also a consequence of the number of people that are in the water and what the people are doing while they're in the water. We're trying to control that as best we can. We're improving our filtration system there. But I think it will be an ongoing problem just because of the high usage we have in the lake.

MR. R. MOORE: Mr. Minister, we're well aware that we on this committee have a responsibility to look at all the benefits to the citizens of Alberta from the moneys spent from the fund. We know the tremendous recreational benefits we get from Kananaskis Country. I wonder if there are any statistics that show or you have any numbers or dollar values to put on the spin-off benefits of Kananaskis Country in relationship to the unemployment we have here: the employment opportunities it provides and those sorts of things that don't really relate to recreation but certainly relate to the

citizens of Alberta.

MR. TRYNCHY: Certainly, Mr. Chairman, the number of jobs that have been provided is a high figure because of the capital construction and also the ongoing operating of Kananaskis Country. It's hard to put a dollar figure to it, but you have 200-and-some people working in Kananaskis Country. That's generating quite a bit of income. You had construction crews. All these funds were spent in Alberta, were paid out to contractors small and large, all being workers from Alberta. Those are there. The urban parks in every city are done by local people, small contractors. Jobs thereafter are all provided locally, all done for Albertans.

So it's hard to put a dollar figure on it except that they provide jobs, in many cases a lot of jobs and in some cases maybe not quite so many. I can't answer it any better than that except to say that it's a tremendous benefit. The capital dollars we spend across the province, building projects wherever they are, provide jobs, and that's what it's all about.

MRS. CRIPPS: My question actually is kind of a follow-up to Mr. Thompson's. I talked to some people from the construction industry who had had a major golf tournament among themselves at Kananaskis and were very impressed with the quality and the competitive possibilities of the course. One of the gentlemen said to me that the Bob Hope golf tournament, I believe, generates about \$10 million for the area that it takes place in. He said, "You know, if you had a couple of major golf tournaments like that in Alberta on Kananaskis, you'd draw competitors from all over the world, and it would be a real class tournament." Has there been any consideration given to that kind of tournament taking place on Kananaskis, or is that outside the scope and realm of the development incentives of Kananaskis?

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Chairman, I'm informed that Par 27 will be asking us to hold a Par 27 at Kananaskis. I understand from the operators of Kananaskis Country that they are looking at some major tournaments. Nothing has come to me yet that indicates that something will happen, but I suppose we would be wrong if we did not look at the submissions as they arrive on our table. I'd be willing to look at it. I think it's a great idea to promote something like

that. You take a look at what the 1988 Olympics will do for Alberta and the number of dollars that will flow into the Calgary region. It's very beneficial. Unless there's a hue and cry that we shouldn't do it, we might consider allowing the operators to host a tournament or two to see just what does happen.

I guess the other side is: would you displace a number of Albertans that would be unhappy for the two or three days? I'm not sure. It's something I wouldn't mind looking at, but I've had no requests come officially to my desk.

MRS. CRIPPS: Would you explain what you mean by Par 27?

MR. TRYNCHY: It's a TV show. They do Par 27.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It's a program on CBC.

MR. GURNETT: I'd like to ask just one more question, thinking about the future. I noted that for whatever reasons I didn't get very specific information about what the future of urban parks might be, but I know that a few years ago there was some information made public that indicated that there is at least some more specific study that has gone on about the possibility of another Eastern Slopes kind of major park. It came up briefly earlier today and in our discussions as well. I wonder if you could share anything about what investigations might be ongoing, specifically about another major one, a Kananaskis type of Eastern Slopes park to serve people further away from Kananaskis Country — whether there are environmental investigations, locations, or any of these other things like job possibilities that are entering into the study that's going on.

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Chairman, I wasn't aware of anything a few years ago, that the hon. member mentioned, in regard to something positive. Two or three years ago when asked in the House what my thoughts were on a second Kananaskis, I said then and I can say again that it is my hope that we could develop one or two more regional parks in the northern part of the province and take care of the northern population. That's still my hope. My department people are always looking ahead and forward. They're very progressive, and I'm sure they're looking at something in regard to

regions and discussing things with other people. But there's nothing I could say today that would encourage anybody here to go home and say that we're going to have a second regional park in any region.

MR. GURNETT: I guess that was my question, as with the urban parks: whether your dreams or in a general sense your desires for the province could have any kind of specifics about the scale and the locations that we could maybe expect, knowing that until a proposal was very specific, obviously there couldn't be any firm answer, but whether it's anything more than just "Well, I hope some day it's a possibility." It would be interesting to know.

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Chairman, if I said any more than that, they'd go home thinking something is going to happen.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Would there be additional questions forthcoming from committee members? If not, there is one that I have to raise on behalf of my colleague Mr. Gogo. He's asked me to raise it on his behalf.

Before I do that, there are some ladies and gentlemen in the gallery who are visitors here this morning. Perhaps I could just welcome you and explain briefly what this is all about. This is the floor of the Legislative Assembly. The men and women on my right are all elected people, and the individuals on my left, which is directly in front of you, are led by the Hon. Peter Trynchy, Minister of Recreation and Parks. This is one of the regular series of meetings of the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund, and what we are discussing this morning are capital expenditures that are under the responsibility of Mr. Trynchy. Specifically today we've dealt with two major matters: Kananaskis Country recreational development in the province of Alberta, and the other one is an overview of urban parks we have in a number of cities in our province. It's basically a watchdog committee, and the members' responsibility is to question the minister and his officials as intently as they possibly can about the expenditure of public funds. It's the responsibility of the minister and his officials to defend their actions in the past.

My question is on behalf of Mr. Gogo, who somehow did not want to raise it himself. He indicated that the minister has reported that

60,000 games of golf are played at Kananaskis Country per year. Mr. Gogo has obviously phrased his question on the basis of his ability to play golf. He loses four golf balls per game, so he's calculated that, in essence, 240,000 golf balls are lost per season in Kananaskis Country. He wants to know who gets the proceeds from the sale of lost golf balls, because the golf course he plays on charges \$1.25 for the resale of each lost golf ball through the pro shop.

MR. TRYNCHY: There's an answer to that. Ed? I think the managing director gets most of it, but I'm not sure.

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, we do sell experienced golf balls in the pro shop. It's interesting how most of them get carried down in the current of the Kananaskis River. They assemble in pools and they're literally harvested in pools. The staff know where to find them, and they sell them back to the pro shop. They get what they can for them, depending upon their condition, and then they're resold as secondhand golf balls. It's a good business.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We have another example of a newfound primary industry in our province: the harvesting of golf balls.

MR. MARSHALL: I just wish they were fish, because we need them in the rivers too.

MR. TRYNCHY: I might add that in general the proceeds and profits from anything that sells through the pro shop get their way back to the provincial coffers, so it's another way of having John Gogo contribute a little each time he loses a golf ball.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Trynchy, thank you very much again. As usual, your presentation before this committee is one of the highlights each year. I know that a year ago members of this committee had an opportunity to visit Kananaskis Country and were very warmly received by Mr. Marshall and his staff. It was an excellent overview. We were very much impressed by the progress to date on that, and I suspect that there would be a interest factor among committee members perhaps to undertake another review. I'm not sure we'll be

able to do that this fall, but if and when it is deemed important by committee members to do it, we'll be in touch with you and ask for assistance in the arrangement of such.

I do want to thank you very much for the excellent progress in the past year, and we'll look forward to more emphatic, enthusiastic progress in the future.

Thank you.

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Chairman, if I may in closing, I wish to thank the support staff with me here today. They did a tremendous job. I thank the members, my colleagues, for their questions, and I hope I've been able to answer them.

I'd like to say one more thing. I hope that through you, Mr. Chairman, and maybe me, if we could find a date, we could encourage members to take a trip and view an urban park, whether it be Red Deer, Medicine Hat, or wherever, one of the five that we're building, to give you an on-site view of what's taking place. I'm so impressed with what's going on, how the local governments are involved, and the kind of reception we're getting from local people. It's just tremendous. I think we should share it amongst ourselves and not let me be the beneficiary of all this glory.

Thank you very kindly, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Trynchy. Just one last point. Thank you again for the hospitality you showed to members of the Heritage Savings Trust Fund committee when they attended the opening of the Paddle River dam last Friday.

Ladies and gentlemen, we'll now adjourn and reconvene this afternoon at 2 o'clock, when we have as a witness before us the Hon. LeRoy Fjordbotten, Minister of Agriculture.

[The committee adjourned at 11:57 a.m.]