



Let's Make Tracks is a hiking group for those strong, healthy, and fit enough to hike 8 – 10 km., with some elevation gain. Typically, about 3 – 4 hours. We believe in Safety – Support – Fun.

On March 23rd, *Let's Make Tracks* went back to where it all began by revisiting Glenbow Ranch Provincial Park, which is both an urban park and an active cattle ranch near Cochrane.

Our first outing as a newly-formed hiking group was here in August 2021 and although it was the same park today's hike was vastly different.

Glenbow Ranch is about 5 and a half square miles in size and this time we set out to the northwest to explore the Tiger Lily to Badger-Bowl and McPherson trails, a more rugged, rolling terrain. As the pebbled trail wound its way through the coulees everything still had that dead-March look, not yet awakened from winter.

Walking under the edge of the chinook arch, the snow-covered mountains to the west were showcased as the sun shone its spotlight on the horizon. This was in sharp contrast to the grassy brown slopes where we watched cattle grazing contentedly in a stubbled field or warily avoiding us as we ventured across their pasture.

As the trail circled through a small bluff of trees, we were soon picking our way amongst the cow-patties, evidence that this was an area of native fescue grass that greatly benefits from winter grazing. Had it been a few weeks later, we would have been treated to the playful antics of newborn calves although some pathways are closed during calving season.

Our gang was a cheerful group of 12 hikers, half of whom were newcomers. Although it's never planned (wink, wink), we always have an initiation of some sort to welcome our newbies. One time, it was traversing windfall that created endless obstacles on the trail. This time it was a shadowy snow-packed slope that had turned into ice. Soon we were all slip-sliding away! Some of us dug micro-spikes out of our packs and shared them as needed. Others gripped the small thorny bushes alongside the trail and wielded their way up.

Every outing can have unplanned adventures and today's hikers demonstrated that cheerful, supportive attitudes (along with a dose of humour) go a long way in overcoming unexpected obstacles.

The distance hiked was 10 k. with 270 m. elevation gain. For those who participated, this can serve as a guide to determine which hikes you would like to do in the future.

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Marilyn K.