



Message from the President

The “work” season is underway in Myra Bellevue and Okanagan Mountain Provincial Parks. Recently, FOSS directors guided Mark Weston (B.C. Parks senior ranger) in Myra Bellevue where the major north/south trails (leading to the KVR) were identified so that hazard trees can be removed in the areas that burned. FOSS volunteers completed the final clearing of the Boulder Trail and the CN Trail in Okanagan Mtn. Park. Other volunteers have designed a longer “walking” trail east of the Myra Bellevue trailhead at Stewart Rd. East (Fairlane Trail).

We’ve had some good news — Myra Bellevue was recently declared a “Class A” Provincial Park in the B.C. Legislature. Previously, the ‘Protected Area’ was established by Order-In-Council and was not under the full protection of the Park Act. Now, the Park Act would need to be changed to alter anything in M-BPP. The park is preserved forever in its natural state for the enjoyment of future generations.

Some of your FOSS directors recently met with professional foresters from **Gorman Brothers Lumber Ltd.** and **Riverside Forest Products** who donated their time and expertise to do an assessment of the potential for natural re-growth in Myra Bellevue. Of particular interest to FOSS are the major North/South trails leading up to the KVR where the OMPP forest fire burned ‘hot’. Our purpose was to explore whether some limited form of tree planting along the badly burned trails makes sense. It was encouraging to meet with Ray Van Ingen (Gorman Bros.) and Kevin Hanson (Riverside) and learn about what we might expect our parks to look like in 5, 10, 20 years and beyond. After the feedback of Ray and Kevin, FOSS directors decided that re-planting is unnecessary and we’ll let Mother Nature take her course. However, this fall we hope to sow grass seed on the decommissioned trails.

If you’ve travelled along Harvard Road recently, you will have noticed the new post & rail fencing. FOSS contracted to have this area fenced to clearly define the park boundary, and to help discourage unauthorized motorized access to the park. **Bob Runnalls, BC Land Surveyor**, provided the surveying as an “in kind” donation to F.O.S.S.

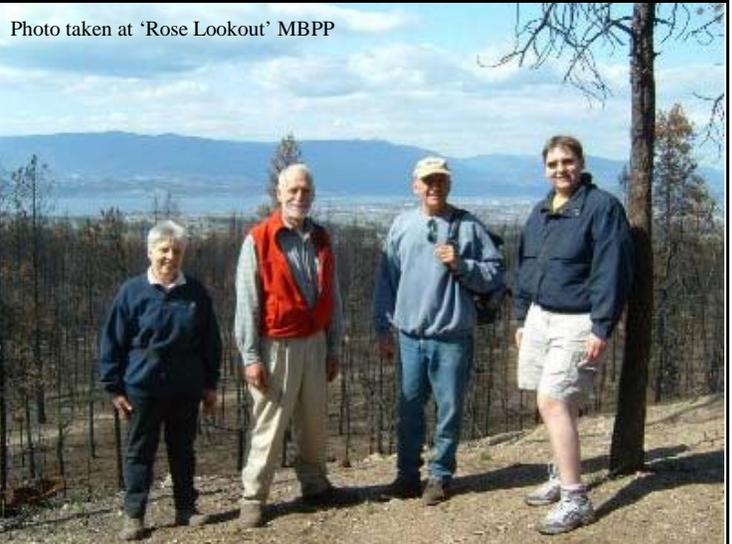
Thanks Bob!!

FOSS plans further fencing projects in Myra-Bellevue either this year or next.

Peter Thompson, FOSS President

Visit From Federal Minister of the Environment

April 4th, 2004, F.O.S.S. Director Isabel Pritchard (L), escorted David Anderson, M.P. (2nd from left) on a hike in Myra-Bellevue Park. Mr. Anderson toured the “burn” areas as well as some of the “green” areas of the park.



\$85,000 in Funding Received

The Friends of the South Slopes Society received an \$85,000 grant from the **Kelowna & Area Okanagan Mountain Fire Recovery Fund**. These funds are being spent on repair and rehabilitation projects in Myra-Bellevue and Okanagan Mountain Provincial Parks. Projects include:

- * additional trail restoration projects
- * fencing areas of the park boundary (Harvard Rd. completed)
- * repairing and improving the Stewart Rd. E. parking lot
- * developing lower elevation walking trails in Myra-Bellevue
- * improvements to the Salamander Trail Public Right of Way (connecting Harvard Rd. and Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park)
- * providing WCB chain saw certification for F.O.S.S. volunteers.



Thanks to this funding, as well as a grant from the **Central Okanagan Foundation Fire Relief Fund** and many other generous donations, F.O.S.S. is able to undertake reconstruction and rehabilitation projects this year.

← *Natural Regeneration!* Near Lost Lake, M-B PP (Photo: May, 2004)

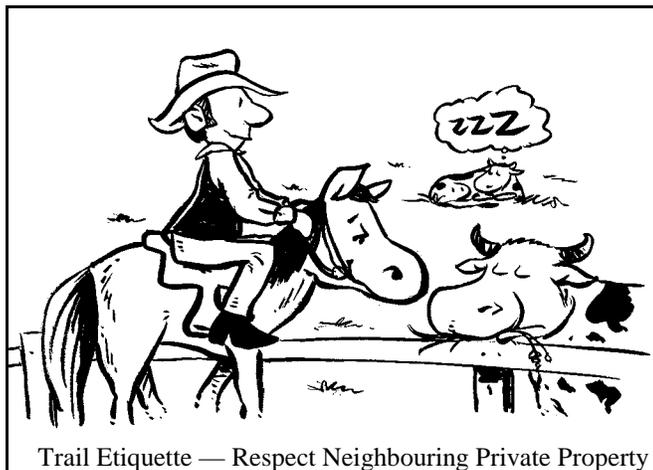
Power Saw Certification Training

In early April, seven 'volunteers' completed a Power Saw Certification Training course facilitated by Neil Campbell of *Wildfire Consulting Ltd.*, Penticton. Their training included modules on personal protective equipment, chainsaw maintenance and handling, emergency procedures, and bucking and limbing. Dale Truitt, Fred Gubbels, Charlie Himmelman, Michael Haywood, Jim Jacques, Dan Wood and Ryan Wood all completed the course. They will be clearing trails in both provincial parks. The course was paid for by F.O.S.S. through a grant from the Kelowna & Area Okanagan Mtn. Fire Recovery Fund.



Above: May 27, 2004 - Ray Van Ingen (L), Silviculturist Supervisor at Gorman Bros. Lumber and Peter Thompson/FOSS - observing pine seedlings (insert) emerging along 'Pink Highway' trail, MBPP

VOLUNTEER HOURS: FOSS logged over 500 hours of volunteer time between January and June, 2004.



KATIM/FOSS/BC PARKS Proposed Job Creation Program - Within the next week, FOSS hopes to announce that our joint application to HRSDC has been successful. If approved, the JCP will see 10 participants undertaking reclamation projects in both Myra-Bellevue and Okanagan Mtn. Provincial parks from July to December 2004. Participants will work under the supervision of Katim Enterprises with FOSS providing direction on the projects. Employees will receive training and learn skills that will enhance their future employment options.

ANGEL SPRINGS UPDATE We have had many inquiries about what happened to Angel Springs during last summer's firestorm. We were unable to reach Angel Springs last fall to assess damage because the original trail was widened and used as a fire guard, and it was subsequently de-commissioned, making it impassable.

Volunteers were finally able to reach Angel Springs in May, and are very happy to report that it did not receive any damage, and is completely intact. About 1/3 of the trail (nearest to the Springs) still exists. Our volunteers spent many hours finding an alternate route which they cleared of windfalls and re-aligned the trail to Angel Springs. Once completed, FOSS will proceed with the "Angel Springs Interpretive Trail Project", delayed from 2003.

Hachey Creek Culvert Project:

With the assistance of the Ministry of Forests, a culvert was recently installed on Lost Lake Trail at the Hachey Creek Crossing. (MBPP). F.O.S.S. shared costs with BC Parks. This culvert ensures that materials and equipment can be readily transported into the park.



Provincial Parks Remain Closed to the Public

MBPP and OMPP remain closed to the public by BC Parks because of public safety concerns as a result of the last summer's forest fire. Hazard Tree Assessors hired by BC Parks have identified danger trees in 'burn' areas (trees are marked with a "D") and these trees will be removed once Provincial Emergency Funding is approved. Until this mitigation work is completed and safety concerns are met, the parks will not be fully re-opened to the public.

However, since early May FOSS has been lobbying BC Parks to allow public re-entry to areas of Myra-Bellevue Park that were not impacted by the fire (eg. east of Little White Forest Service Road, including Angel Springs and some trails west of LWFSR). To date, this limited public access has not been approved.

BC Parks has hired a Senior Ranger and two 'roving rangers' who are regularly on-site in Myra-Bellevue and Ok. Mountain Provincial Parks.