

Friends of the South Slopes

Fall 2009



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Looking Good! Lost Lake, Fireweed and Captain Nemo Facelift

Erosion mitigation work on Lost Lake Trail, east of Spring By-Pass, and on Fireweed and lower sections of Captain Nemo have been underway since the summer.

In August Terry Burke, operating the Okanagan Trail Riders Association's (OTRA) trail-building dozer, leveled, ditched, moved rocks, and constructed low water crossings to make the trails more user and weather friendly.



Terry Burke, on OTRA's dozer, leveling out the trail

Work on the trails continued in early October with the seeding of the exposed earth by FOSS volunteer, Gerry Gubbels. Several other volunteers helped carry the seed into the areas and enjoyed the glorious sunshine and beautiful fall colours along the way. And to add to the experience, a very vocal moose made its presence heard but not seen.



Gerry Gubbels seeding a drainage channel on Lost Lake Trail

Creating a Minimal Risk Corridor

The 2003 Okanagan Mtn. Provincial Park forest fire resulted in many burned and unstable trees in Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park. These trees continue to fall on the trails. FOSS proposes to hire a qualified contractor to fell trees along the Lost Lake Trail corridor. This will provide the public with a "**minimal risk corridor**" during wind events so that they can exit the park with less risk. It will also reduce the inconvenience of windfalls when accessing the trail system for improvement projects, sanctioned events and for the trail users in general. Phase 1: Lost Lake Trail from Stewart Rd. East Parking Lot to Pink Hwy (Teddy Bear Junction) Phase 2: Lost Lake Trail from Teddy Bear Junction to south end of Lost Lake Loop This project is based on non-mechanical harvesting. Standing burned trees that may fall on trails or

create a hazard on the trail will be felled. Living/green trees will be removed only if they are assessed as danger trees that may fall on the trail. If, through assessment, it is determined that a tree will not fall towards the trail (eg. leaning away) it is to be left to fall naturally. Solid stumps of "old giants" will be left as tall as possible to act as wildlife trees. If trees are felled over a trail they will be bucked to BC Parks standards – 2' wide of the edge of the trail and all debris will be removed from the trail surface. The contractor will erect signage at trail junctions on each side of the worksite so trail users have the option of alternate routes. The work area will be closed to the public during the daily work period only. The project is scheduled for completion by March 31, 2010.



Pooley Bridge Repaired

Senior Park Ranger, Erin Gunnoff, completed repairs to the Pooley Creek Bridge on the Myra By-Pass Trail in mid August with the able assistance of two FOSS volunteers.



Photo Credits: Doug Black

Photos from the June 7th Back Country Horsemen ride to Lost Lake.



Vision and Mission Statement Adopted

FOSS Vision and Mission Statement (as adopted at the board meeting of Sept. 10, 2009)

Vision:

The South Slopes contributes to the environmental, spiritual, physical and economic health of our community.

Mission:

F.O.S.S. works with partners in an environmentally responsible manner to create a legacy of sustainable and accessible trails on the South Slopes for the benefit of our community.

Our Mission is:

- To create a legacy of sustainable trails on the South Slopes
- To partner cooperatively with all levels of government, clubs and organizations and community stakeholders to protect and enhance trail systems on Kelowna's South Slopes
- To work with government agencies to acquire useable access routes to public lands when private property is rezoned or developed
- To retain trails that have been historically used by the public
- To promote and encourage responsible recreation practices and a respect for the ecology – finding the balance between recreation and conservation
- To advocate for hiking, walking, trail running, cross country skiing, snowshoeing, horseback riding, cycling and other non motorized recreation and to encourage respect between the various trail users
- To respect the rights of all trail users, non-motorized and motorized, to recreate responsibly in areas of the South Slopes where their use is permitted
- To promote the benefit of trails to our community: economic, social, healthy lifestyle, spiritual
- To encourage the philosophy of 'tread lightly' and 'low impact' recreation: stay on existing trails, respect trail closures, avoid trails that are eroded or wet, practice trail etiquette, respect the wildlife-this is their home

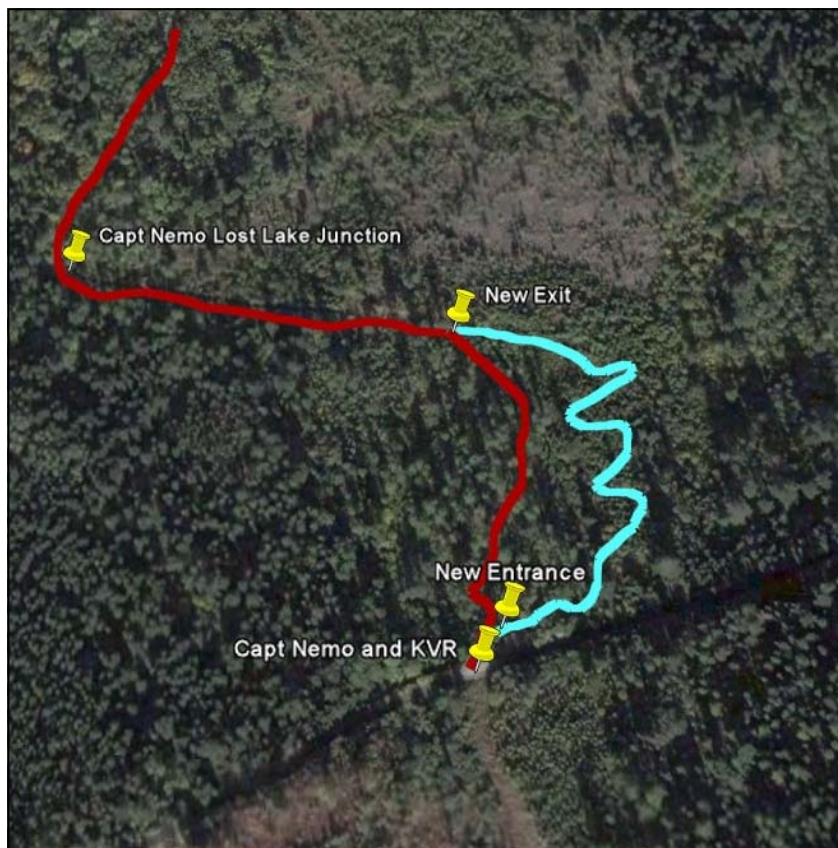


Crawford Lake along the Okanagan Highlands Trail, Little White Mountain

Rerouting Captain Nemo (Update)

FOSS Directors Brad Wright and Doug MacDonald identified a location for the rerouting of Captain Nemo trail from the KVR to the bottom of the steep section of the old trail.

Using a clinometer (an instrument for measuring angles of slope or tilt, elevation or inclination of an object with respect to gravity), they were able to keep this section at a maximum 15% grade. With assistance from the Mountain Bikers of the Central Okanagan, they will plan out the turns and platforms on the new switchback. Volunteers will start preliminary work in October, depending on the weather. This will be hard, physical, pick & shovel work. If you wish to volunteer, please contact Brad Wright at (250) 869-4951 or cell (250) 215-2518.



Mapping & GPS data by Grant Rice



Anyone know what kind of mushroom this is?

Photo Submissions

Flora, fauna and everything in between! Send photos to tbrinton@shaw.ca Include date taken, location in park, your name and any comments you might like to help set the scene. Photos used in the newsletter will be deemed "winners" and you will receive a free trail map. If we generate enough submissions there may be a few prizes awarded at the AGM. We are always looking for photos to add to the AGM video!



The rocky trail to Little White!

Trails BC AGM

(FOSS is a group member of Trails BC)

FOSS director Penny Gubbels attended the morning session of the Trails BC AGM held in Maillardville on Sept. 12, 2009. Guest speakers included Tim Hoskin, Sr. Staff Member of the **Trans Canada Trails Society (TCT)** and Jeremy McCall, Executive Director of the **Outdoor Recreation Council of BC (ORC)**. The goal of the TCT Society is to complete the Trans Canada Trail by 2017 - the 150th year of Canada's Confederation. They are currently undertaking strategic planning and preparing a five year business plan. One of their goals is to have clear guidance for trail building, and to develop a plan to reduce trail user conflicts.

The Outdoor Recreation Council is an umbrella group with core members representing motorized and non-motorized outdoor groups. You can learn more about them on their website <http://www.orcbc.ca/>

Jeremy McCall referred to the ORC as a strong voice for outdoor recreation, conservation and education, and he spoke of the need for a strong and balanced membership. The ORC is a keen proponent of the BC Recreation Trails Strategy which was initiated by the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts. The plan was developed by a Trails Strategy Committee comprised of stakeholders and government representatives. FOSS director Isabel Pritchard sat on this committee as a representative of the Horse Council of BC. Consensus was reached and the document was circulated for inter agency review. Unfortunately, to date it has not been adopted into legislation by the government of BC. More information on the Trails Strategy is at <http://www.sitesandtrailsbc.ca/about/provincial-trail-strategy.aspx>

Another issue under discussion at the Trails BC AGM was the proposed legislation

to register and license 'Off Highway Vehicles'. In 2002, a coalition of recreation and conservation groups met to propose the registration and licensing of all off road vehicles in BC. This legislation is widely supported. Licensing will benefit all the off-road motorized sports as there is currently no way to identify any machines if they are stolen, and to identify the irresponsible riders who are damaging the environment or riding in areas that are designated 'non-motorized'. Although these riders are in the minority, they bring negative publicity to the sport. It has been three years since this document was submitted to the government, but to date they haven't taken any action. Jeremy McCall hoped to meet with Minister of Tourism, Culture and the Arts Kevin Krueger in late September to discuss the issue.

The Trails BC AGM morning session wrapped up with an open forum on the direction Trails BC should take. Trails BC is in a transitional year. In the spring, it withdrew from the Canadian Trails Federation over concerns that the CTF does not represent the interests of non-motorized trail users in its dealings with the National Trails Coalition. (The National Trails Coalition is made up of Summer Motorized, Snowmobile, and Non-Motorized groups). Trails BC is looking to take on the roll of advocating for the non-motorized trail groups. It is very concerned about the pressure on the Trans Canada Trail Society for 'shared use' trails. Trails BC is also considering broadening its mandate to support of non-motorized trails throughout BC. As a member of Trails BC, FOSS was asked to complete a questionnaire regarding the future direction of Trails BC. This document was submitted to them in mid September.

Crawford Trail to Little White Mountain

Submitted by Penny Gubbels

On a perfect late August day, four intrepid ladies hiked the upper Crawford Trail to the summit of Little White. This route had not been possible (without a lot of bushwhacking) until mid August because of the numerous windfalls on the Crawford Trail. BC Parks' staff completed the clearing of the trail in mid August, and we were anxious and excited about finally being able to go on one of the epic hikes on the South Slopes.

We accessed the trail by driving up Little White FSR, and west along the KVR to Bellevue Creek Trestle. We cheated a bit by driving up the forestry road south east of the trestle, and parking where this road is decommissioned. As this route is outside of Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park, motorized vehicles are a permitted use. Be aware that the road is not maintained, and a 4x4 vehicle is recommended.

After parking, we followed the road on foot until it intersected Crawford Trail. We turned left and started hiking uphill through the forest. It took us about 1 1/2 hours of leisurely hiking to reach the junction of the Crawford Trail and Little White Trail. There is currently no signage here. We turned right (heading south) and followed the trail to the top of Little White Mtn. It took us 1 1/2 hrs. to hike from this junction to the top, but we spent a lot of time enjoying the 'wow' factor along the way. As the trail starts to climb more steeply, we walked over a very rocky section, as you can see in the picture on page 4. Once we reached the top, we enjoyed the spectacular view as we ate our lunch. Looking west, you can see Crawford Lake on the Okanagan Highlands Trail. This makes a great side

trip if you do this hike. Again, there aren't any signs indicating the trail to the lake, except for one small "Okanagan Highlands Trail" sign leaning against a stump. The Central Okanagan Naturalists



Club recently received a federal grant to improve the Okanagan Highlands Trail between Mission Creek and Chute Lake. Better signage and mapping will make the trail easier to find. Crawford Lake is a beautiful, tranquil spot to relax and enjoy the solitude. With our side trips, rests, snack and lunch stops, our hike took us about seven hours....time well spent!



Sharon Adams phoning home from the summit of Little White Mtn.