

Friends of the South Slopes

Winter 2014/2015



The lookout on Connector Trail , MBPP
Photo Credit: Andrew McIntosh

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FOSS Honoured as BC Parks Volunteer Group of the Year

On February 4, 2015 FOSS was presented with the 2014 BC Parks *Volunteer Group of the Year* award at an awards banquet held in Victoria.

The award is given annually to a group that has contributed significantly to the province's parks and protected areas system. FOSS was nominated for the award by Ryan Elphick, BC Parks' Area Supervisor/Okanagan East.

FOSS was recognized for the time and energy its volunteers invest into maintaining the trails in Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park and Okanagan Mtn.

Provincial Park and also for its Adopt-a-Trail and Trail Sponsorship program.

The Volunteer Group of the Year award was one of five external awards presented at the banquet. Other awards were: Volunteer of the Year (Ken Matheson from Clearwater), Volunteer Legacy Award (Ross Keller from Campbell River for his efforts in renewing interest in the Yorke Island Battery), Community Partner of the Year (BC Marine Parks Forever Society) and Park Facility Operator of the Year (Rick Terrell/Desolation Sound Marine Park).



Jim Standen, Assistant Deputy Minister of BC Parks & Conservation Officer Services, presenting the 2014 Volunteer Group of the Year Award to FOSS Directors Isabel Pritchard & Penny Gubbels. Ryan Elphick (BC Parks Area Supervisor/East Okanagan) is standing between Mr. Standen & Isabel.

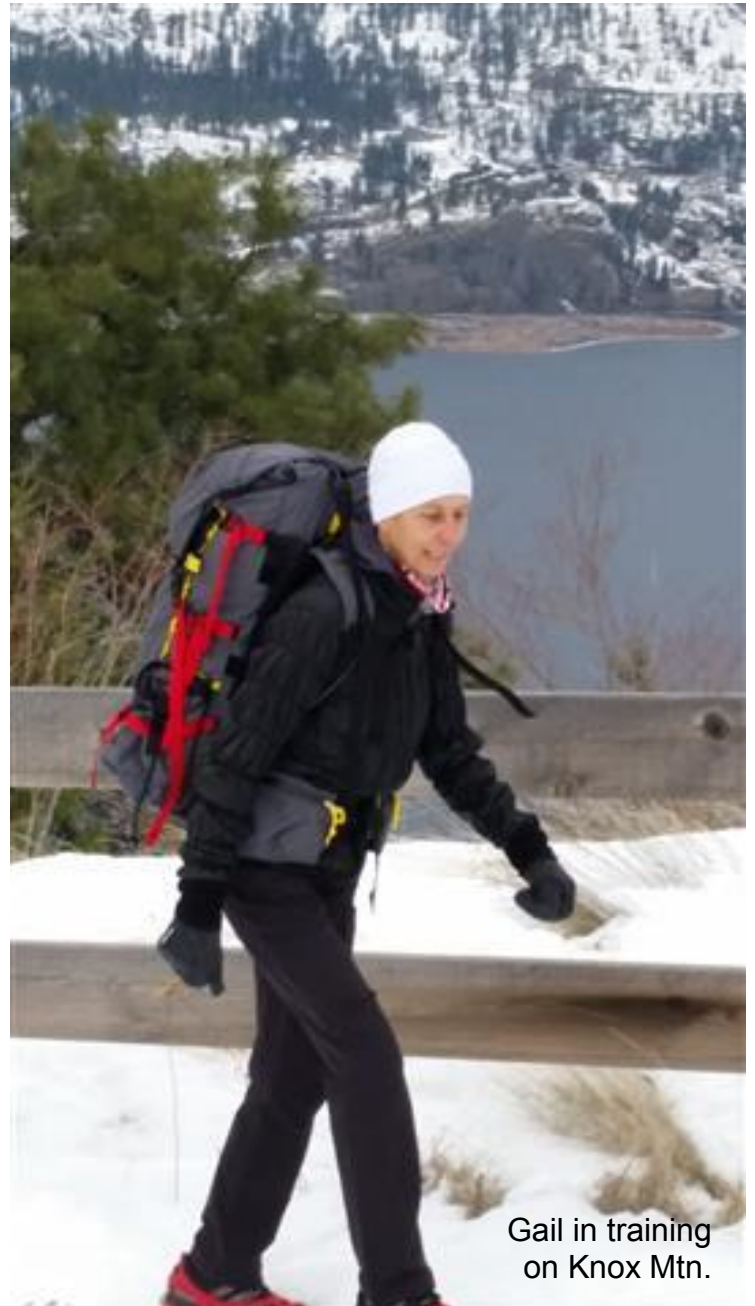
Preparing to hike the Pacific Crest Trail

by Gail Forshaw

The Pacific Crest Trail (PCT) is a long distance hiking trail that runs from Mexico to Canada through California, Oregon and Washington. It is a total of 4,265 km. In past years we have run, hiked and backpacked several sections of the PCT. This year my husband George and I have decided to attempt a thru-hike. We will hike northbound starting in Campo, California and ending at Monument 78 near Manning Park, Canada. Preparation and planning for our hike started in September 2014. We purchased several guidebooks and maps and have been studying them. We also ordered and picked up our custom made backpacks. We have compiled a list of gear and clothing we think we will need. This list changes regularly as we re-think and weigh various items in an attempt to lighten our loads. We hope to carry less than 13kg each, including food and water. Our requirements will change as we travel north from the deserts of California to the snowy passes in the Sierra and Cascade mountains. Re-supplying along the route will be accomplished in two ways: buying food as we go and mailing pre-packaged meals from home. I have dehydrated and vacuum sealed 60 meals. These meals along with other items of gear and clothing will be mailed as re-supply boxes. Together George and I have reviewed the guidebooks and picked out the locations of our re-supply. These boxes must be prepared before we leave. They will be labelled and include instructions for my sister in Kelowna as to when and where to mail them. We also must have our home affairs in order before we go. This includes setting up automatic payments for our regular monthly bills. We have applied for the necessary permits and have contacted Border Services for re-entry into Canada via the PCT. Physical and mental preparation is also a factor. Daily hikes are a part of our weekly routine. We plan on hiking an average of 30 km

a day. Our starting date will be April 22, 2015. If all goes as planned we will arrive at the Canadian border by late September. Thru-hiking the PCT has been on our bucket list for many years. We both turned 65 last year and we decided this year was our year to do it. Happy Trails !

(Gail Forshaw was on FOSS' 2014 Board of Directors)



Gail in training on Knox Mtn.

***Haven't renewed your FOSS membership?
Please renew by visiting our website
www.foss-kelowna.org where you can
either download a mail-in membership form
or renew your membership online by
following the link.***

FOSS' Annual General Meeting was held on January 15, 2015.

Sixty one people attended.

We'd like to express our thanks to Monty Tuck and Duncan Lee who presented a slide show and talk about their summit of Mt. Kilimanjaro.

Ryan Elphick, Area Supervisor/BC Parks East Okanagan, expressed his appreciation to the Board of Directors and to all the FOSS volunteers who work in Myra-Bellevue and Okanagan Mtn. Provincial Parks.

Two 2014 board members did not stand for election for 2015. Gail Forshaw stepped down as she is hiking the Pacific Crest Trail this year. Jessica Hobden is expecting a baby in May and anticipates that she will to be very busy!!!

2015 Board of Directors—elected to the board

Returning board members:

Jay Darbyshire	Brad Wright
Isabel Pritchard	Ken Wiklund
Malcolm Robson	Herb Blamire
Pete Spencer	Penny Gubbels
Marilyn Westlake	

New Board Members:

Andrew McIntosh, Dan Hobson,
Anne Smyth



Officers of the Board, elected at the January 15th meeting of the Board:

President: Jay Darbyshire
Treasurer: Pete Spencer

Vice President: Herb Blamire
Secretary: Penny Gubbels

Many thanks to the following businesses that so generously donated prizes for the free draw at the AGM

save on foods
BC's very own



...and thank you to Pete Spencer who donated Okanagan Mtn. Honey and to Penny Gubbels for the FOSS calendar



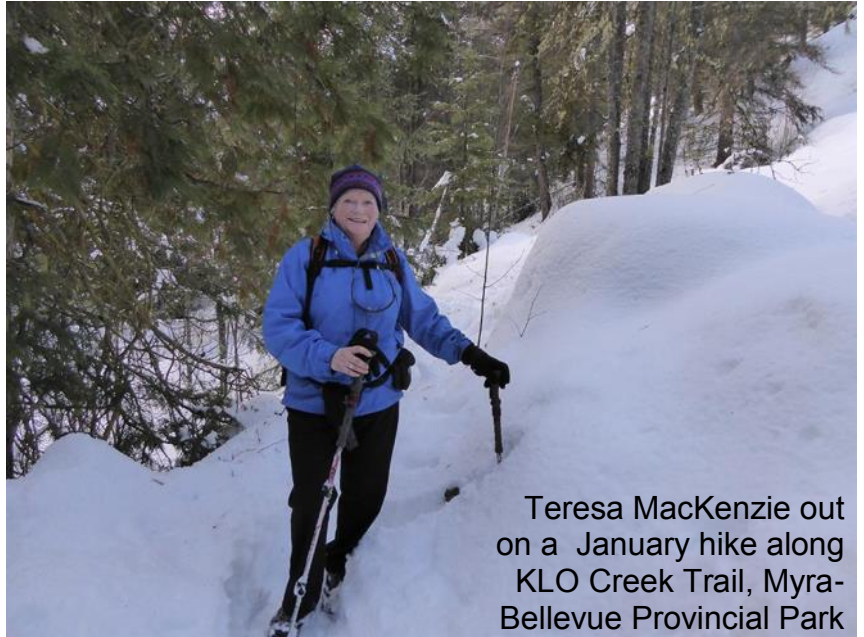
FOSS' Myra-Bellevue/Okanagan Mountain Provincial Park Legacy Fund

Following the 2003 Okanagan Mountain Provincial Park forest fire, FOSS was the recipient of some major funding initiatives to help restore the trails in areas that burned or were impacted by the fire.

FOSS' primary initiative was a partnership with Katim Enterprises who secured a Human Resource Development Canada grant for a *Job Creation Partnership*. Katim hired ten people and the project spanned a nine month period.

The project, "**Reclamation of Fire Affected Recreation Areas**", was highly successful. The Katim crew re-opened trails, built bridges, installed culverts, gates and bollards, did major erosion mitigation and restoration work, built water bars, re-routed trails that had been utilized as fire-guards, decommissioned some trails, did hazard tree mitigation, installed the majority of the sign posts and trail signs and undertook many other park improvement projects.

FOSS volunteers contributed hundreds of hours working with the Katim crew and raising funds for materials such as lumber, signs, posts. Public support was incredible—major donors included the Kelowna & Area Fire Recovery Fund, Central Okanagan Foundation and Interior Savings Credit Union.



Teresa MacKenzie out on a January hike along KLO Creek Trail, Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park

In 2006, FOSS established a \$15,000 perpetual endowment with the Central Okanagan Foundation (COF). **The Myra-Bellevue/Okanagan Mtn. Provincial Park Legacy Fund** provides an annual "gift" to FOSS based on how well the COF's investments have done in the year. FOSS's annual benefit from this fund has ranged from zero in 2008/2009 (bad years for anyone with investments!) to \$1,582 in 2014. The 2014 funds will be applied to a major trail improvement project FOSS is planning for 2015 — details will be announced very soon.

An Evening of Appreciation

Wayne Wilson, Executive Director of the Central Okanagan Land Trust, asked FOSS to let our membership know about an upcoming celebration dinner to recognize Walter Gray, Andre Blanleil and Robert Hobson for their service to the community.

Date: Saturday, April 25, 2015 at the Delta Grand Okanagan Resort.

The evening, which will honour these individuals who have contributed so greatly to the shaping of our city, will include a reception, three-course dinner, video montage looking back over more than 20 years, and the opportunity to share stories with Kelowna colleagues and peers. Guests of the event will have the opportunity to share a personal message in memory books for each of the honourees.



All inclusive tickets are \$100. Tables of 8 can be purchased for \$800. Priority seating will be given to table bookings based on the order in which tables were purchased. To order tickets, including tables, book online at <https://appreciationdinnerkelowna.eventbrite.com>

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