

Friends of the South Slopes

December 2018



Box 28011 RPO East Kelowna, Kelowna BC V1W 4A6

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Notice of the Annual General Meeting of the Friends of the South Slopes Society

Date: 7 p.m. Thursday, January 10, 2019

Location: EECO Centre, Mission Creek Regional Park
2363 Springfield Road, Kelowna, BC

Refreshments & Social
Membership table
AGM—7:30 pm

Guest Speakers:

Herb Blamire (Past President of FOSS)

“Natural Restoration of the Myra Wetlands”

Christian Morrissette (Senior Park Ranger, East Okanagan/BC Parks)

“Future Plans for Myra-Bellevue and Okanagan Mtn. Provincial Parks”

Access...Are We Losin' It? This was the topic at a FOSS-sponsored forum held at East Kelowna Hall on **June 20, 1998**. Guest speakers included Bill Vos (Regional District of Central Okanagan), Peter Alexander (City of Kelowna Parks' Department), City Councillor (& chair of RDCO) Robert Hobson, Peter Walters (BC Assets & Land Corp.) and FOSS board members. The forum was convened when FOSS and other local trail users became concerned that many of the access points to the South Slopes were being threatened by developments along the north interface with what was to become, in 2001, Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park. FOSS assembled the stakeholders—trail users and the land managers—to talk about this issue. East Kelowna Hall was filled to capacity and it was clear that there was considerable concern in our community about losing public access to trails.

So, fast-forward 20+ years! Although FOSS is primarily known for its support of trails, infrastructure and signage in Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park, it has also championed acquiring and retaining access to public lands on the South Slopes. Here is a synopsis of some of those successes:

1996—FOSS was founded specifically to intervene in an application filed by Arthon Construction to BC Lands & Assets. The applicant applied to establish an asphalt re-cycling plant on Crown Land adjacent to what is now the Stewart Rd. East Trailhead. The application was denied.

1997—FOSS struck a committee to secure public access in new developments along the interface with Crown Land and Parks on Kelowna's South Slopes.

1997—As subdivision applications were being submitted for development along Harvard Rd. & Balldock Rd., FOSS got involved with the City of Kelowna Planning Department to secure municipally owned links to the public lands along the escarpment. FOSS worked closely with the City's planners and the developers to retain public access to the South Slopes. Salamander ROW (between Harvard Rd. and Myra-Bellevue) and Priest Creek Linear Park were two access trails that were secured.

1998—the Province of BC marketed and sold a surveyed Crown Lot located between the end of Stewart Rd. East and Stewart Rd. West (both sides of the transmission line). The sale of this Crown Land and the loss of public access became an issue that FOSS addressed. FOSS asked the Minister of Environment for a moratorium and expressed that it was "opposing selling any further crown lands". At issue for FOSS were the surveyed Crown Lots stretching from Stewart Rd. East over to June Springs Rd. and FOSS' concern that the Province may sell those too. FOSS Director Isabel Pritchard took FOSS' (and the community's) concerns to the Okanagan Shuswap Land & Resource Management Plan and these lots were eventually included in Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park.

2000—A mining claim was filed to extract tufa rock from Angel Springs. This claim was filed shortly after the Okanagan Shuswap LRMP announced a tentative agreement to establish the Myra-Bellevue Protected Area. FOSS organized a letter writing campaign and started a petition to oppose the claim and to request that the Province include Angel Springs in MBPP. The petition was presented in the BC Legislature. This effort was successful! In February, 2001 the BC Cabinet directed that the tufa claims at Angel Springs be expropriated.

2006—When the privately owned in-holding in Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park (now known as the Myra Wetlands) changed ownership, FOSS spent the next 12 years lobbying the Province for its acquisition. After many years of trials & tribulations—and looking at various 'Plan B' options such as securing public access to the existing trails if the private property was developed, to asking the province to consider a land-swap. Finally in 2018 the Province announced that it had purchased the forty acre property and it will be transferred to Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park.

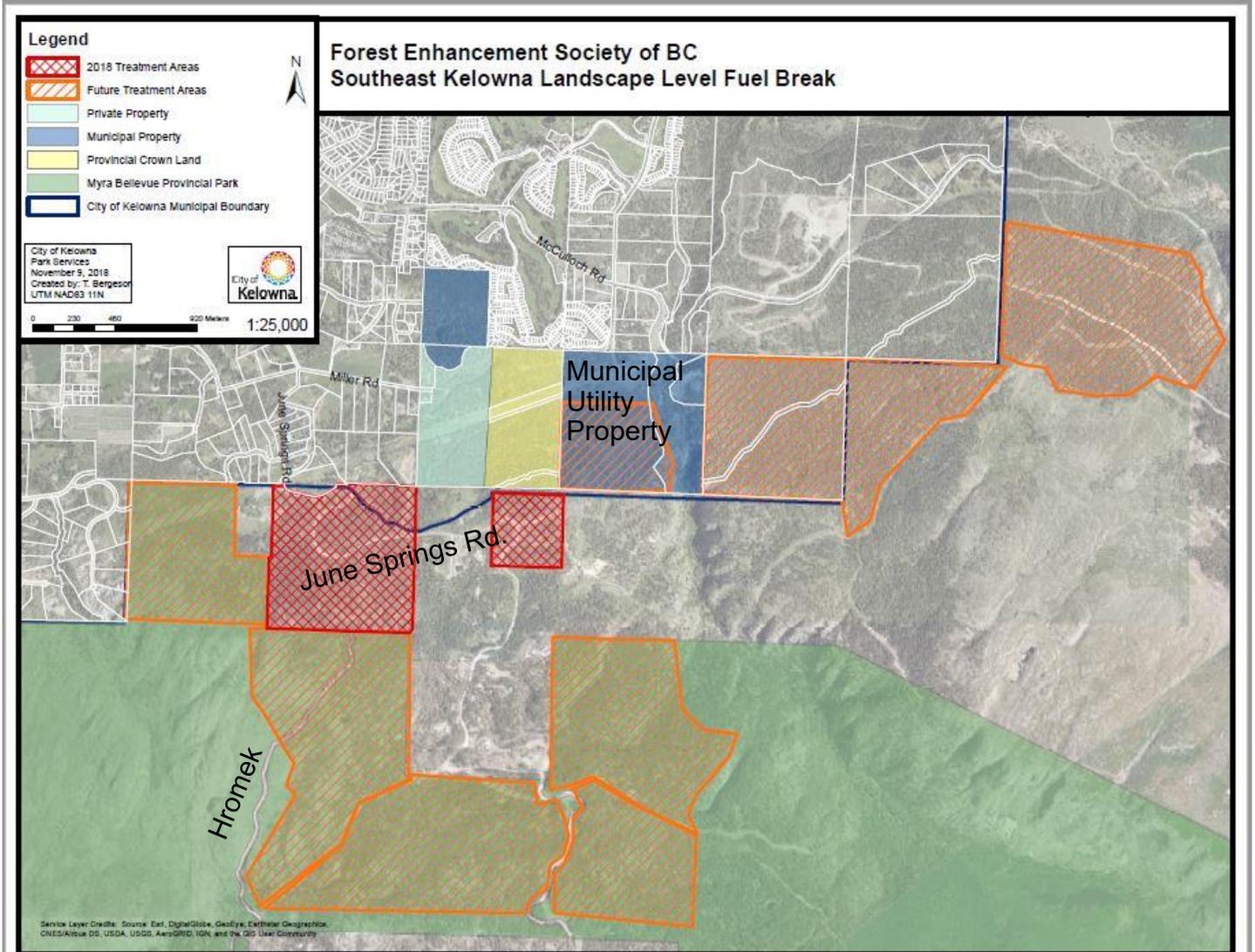
2015—FOSS signed a Trail Licensing Agreement with South East Kelowna Irrigation District (SEKID) to maintain the trails through this public utility property for public use. In 2018 this property transferred to the City of Kelowna and FOSS is working with the City to determine future plans for the area.

2018—FOSS' vision is to establish a connected trail network linking KLO Creek Regional Park, the trails on the former SEKID utility property, the two parcels of Crown land between the former SEKID property and June Springs Rd., and connectivity to Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park via Crown Land adjacent to Hromek Rd. FOSS is working with the City of Kelowna, RDCO, BC Parks and the Ministry of Forests, Lands & Natural Resources Operations (Recreation Sites & Trails) to achieve this goal.

Southeast Kelowna Landscape Level Fuel Break

As a follow up to FOSS' email to its membership in early December, here is a map that identifies the areas where wildfire mitigation work is currently underway ("2018 Treatment Area") as well as areas slated for future treatment. We have labelled the map so you can more easily identify the locations.

The Wildfire Fuel Break project, to minimize wildfire risk, is supported by the City of Kelowna and implemented by the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resources Operations and Rural Development (MFLNRORD) and is funded through the Forest Enhancement Society of BC.



'Walkies' Anyone?

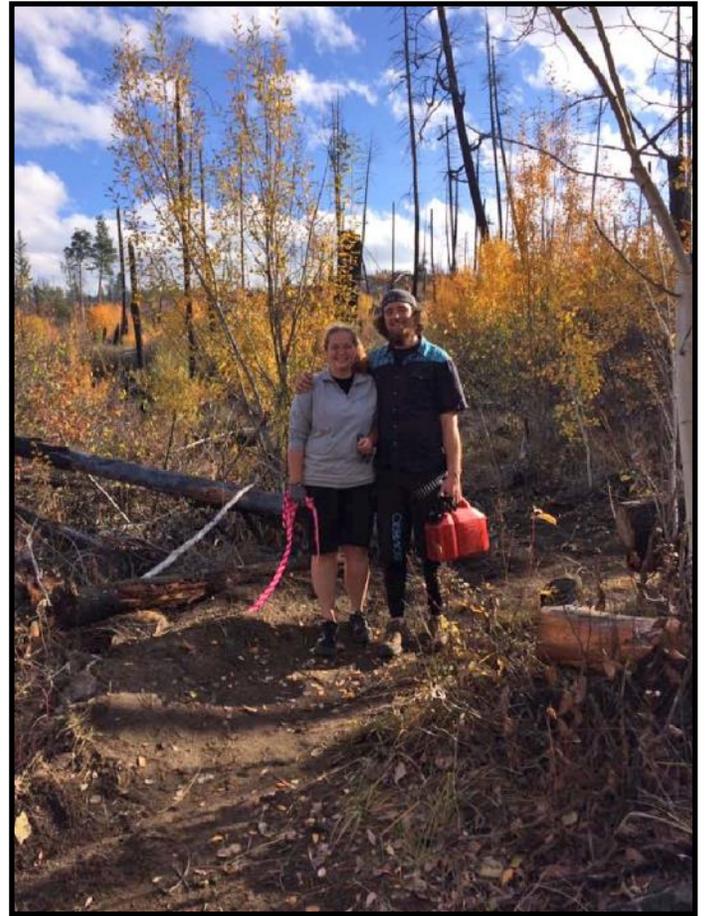
These two buddies love taking their owner for walks in Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park. They are posing on a boulder on Fairlane Trail, near the Luxmoore Trail.

Photo Credit: Anne Mackay



↑ Adopt a Trail volunteer Andrew Stevenson clearing Wild Horse Canyon Trail in Okanagan Mtn. Provincial Park.

Adopt a Trail Sponsor Cabin Forestry Ltd. clearing Boris Trail in Myra-Bellevue →



Moose in the neighbourhood

FOSS' 2019 Board of Directors will be elected at the January 10th, 2019 Annual General Meeting.

New Board Members Welcome!

Notice of Closure: Gate at Stewart Rd. East Parking Lot (Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park)

Effective December 7, 2018:

BC Parks' posted this notice on the Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park Website:

There will be upgrades to city infrastructure near the Stewart Rd East access. This access gate will be closed until the end of January. As well, there will be temporary closures of the western components of the Crawford and Lower Bench trails. Please be mindful of the construction warnings.

Please renew your FOSS membership for 2019!

Thank you to our many members who did 'early renewal' at FOSS' Myra Wetlands Open House in September and also to those of you who have already mailed in your 2019 membership or renewed it online.

....**See you at the AGM!**

Friends of the South Slopes Society
2019 Membership

Annual Membership (\$20.00) _____

*Donation: _____

*You will be issued a tax receipt for donations of \$10 or greater

Please make your cheque payable to:

Friends of the South Slopes Society

And mail to FOSS at: Box 28011 RPO East Kelowna, Kelowna, BC V1W 4A6

Pay on-line at: www.foss-kelowna.org — under 'membership' tab.

Membership Information:

Name(s): _____

Mailing Address: _____

Postal Code: _____ Telephone: _____

e-mail: _____ (Please leave blank if you do not wish to receive information electronically)

I wish to receive my FOSS newsletter electronically in pdf format: Yes ____ No ____

Affiliation: Club/Organization (if applicable) _____