

# Friends of the South Slopes

January 2019



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## ***Myra-Wetlands Acquisition — What's Next?***

At FOSS' January 10, 2019 AGM, Herb Blamire presented an amazing PowerPoint slide show on the future of the Myra Wetlands property. He reviewed the long process it took to get where we are today and gave us an overview of the location and history of the property culminating in the Province's 2018 purchase of the land. Herb spoke about the types of wetlands and their ecological values. He reiterated that the Province purchased this land **because** of its value as a wetland and that its **RESTORATION** is their priority.

To achieve BC Parks' goal, FOSS will co-operate with them to:

**Phase One (A)** Cleanup of old farm site, including the well and removal of junk. This is planned over the next couple of months, when the frozen ground will mitigate the environmental impact.

**Phase One (B)** BC Parks will close the trails through the wetlands by installing fencing & signage. Please use other open trails.

There is no timeline on how long the Myra wetlands will be closed — Mother Nature will set the timeline. Park users are asked to respect this closure to allow the damaged wetlands to recover.

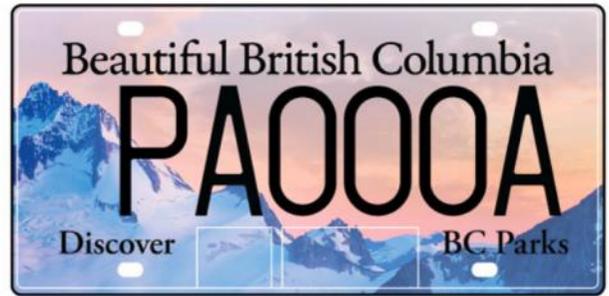
**Phase Two:** Construction of sustainable trail/ trails including viewing areas around wetlands.

**Phase Three:** Interpretive signage including support of local experts.

In summary, Herb noted that it has taken 20 years to get to this point: "so another few years to get it right is only right".

**A GOOD THING!!**

BC Parks has raised over \$2 million through the sale of 100,000 specialty license plates! A partnership between the Province and ICBC, the plates cost \$50 with annual renewals at \$40 and all proceeds go directly to BC Parks programs and projects through the Park Enhancement Fund. Consider getting yours today!



**THANK YOU AGAIN TO THE KELOWNA BUSINESSES and INDIVIDUALS WHO GENEROUSLY DONATED TO OUR AGM DOOR PRIZES:**

- ★ FortisBC
  - ★ Anthony's Subaru
  - ★ Fresh Air Concept/Experience
  - ★ Cyclepath
  - ★ Kelowna Cycle
  - ★ Perc's Place Coffee (Orchard Plaza)
  - ★ Kelowna Physiotherapy (Greg Smith)
  - ★ Jane Blamire & Teresa MacKenzie
  - ★ Save-On Foods (Orchard Plaza)
  - ★ The View Winery & Vineyard
  - ★ ChainLine Cycle
  - ★ Diamond H Tack
  - ★ Pete Spencer
- And also, thanks to Marilyn Westlake for organizing the AGM refreshments.*

**2019 AGM Report**

Thank you to all of you who attended our annual general meeting and to those of you who continue to support FOSS through memberships, donations and your volunteer efforts; we are most appreciative. As those of you at the AGM heard, there are a number of major projects in the works for 2019! More information will be provided in the months ahead but highlights include:

- Initiation of the restoration process for the newly-acquired Myra Wetlands;
- Trail and bridge upgrades as required/approved by Parks, including Okanagan Mountain, Priest Creek bridge at Fairlane, Bellevue Access Trail at Priest Creek.
- Working with the different levels of government to create a continuous 'greenbelt', connecting all trail systems, preserved areas and Parks: the Okanagan Rail Trail to the Mission Creek Greenway, from the Greenway to KLO Creek Regional Park, from there to the Crown Lands, and then westward to Myra Bellevue and Okanagan Mountain Parks.

**Some Stats from FOSS' 2018 Adopt a Trail Program:**

Volunteer Hours: Sponsorship Program: 317.5

Regular Program: 430.5

Program Management: 18

Total # volunteer hours for FOSS' 2018 Adopt a Trail Program: 766.00

Total # volunteer hours from 2013 to 2018: 5,120.

**Thank you to Christian Morrissette**, Senior Park Ranger, East Okanagan/Boundary, for his candor and enthusiasm relating to our mutual endeavors in Myra-Bellevue and Okanagan Mountain Provincial Parks. Highlights of his AGM presentation on BC Parks plans for 2019 and beyond are:

**Myra-Bellevue 2019:**

- Explore improvements to Stewart Rd. East parking lot; possible trash can
- Begin assessment of redundant/unmaintainable trails within Crawford network
- Myra Wetlands – planning as outlined in FOSS’ AGM presentation by Herb Blamire
- Improvements at Myra Station/KVR parking area
- Begin impact assessment on potential rustic camping area at Canyon Lakes
- Robust enforcement of motorized activity in Little White Mountain environs
- Capital project assessing trestle boardwalk repair/retrofitting.
- Ongoing assessment of fuel reduction requirements at private interfaces.



**Okanagan Mountain 2019:**

- Reroute and improve Boulder Trail to sustainable location (west of Deeper Creek)
- Deactivate east leg of Golden Mile triangle and re-sign junction of Wildhorse Canyon/Golden Mile with appropriate destinations.
- Brush and clear Wildhorse Canyon
- Finish clearing Mountain Goat Trail
- Refurbish South Access Campsite
- Deter illegal activity at beach/Lakeshore Rd. parking lot
- Snake den survey and trail rerouting if required

**In both parks:**

- Pursue multi-organizational work plan to eliminate redundancy or missed opportunities with respect to trail work and construction.
- Metrics on trail use

Christian spoke about the lack of data for red-listed species in South Slopes / OK Mtn area north to Kalamalka Lake. He encouraged the public to report to him the location of sightings of red-listed species such as Western rattlesnake, Gopher Snake, Western Skink and Nutall’s Cottontail. Contact him at: [Christian.Morrissette@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Christian.Morrissette@gov.bc.ca)



*Winter magic in Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park*  
(Photo Credit: Daphne Richard)