



BOTH PROVINCIAL PARKS NOW OPEN!

On April 29th, Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park was re-opened to the public.

On June 30th, The Hon. Barry Penner, Provincial Minister of the Environment, announced the official re-opening of Okanagan Mountain Provincial Park. Also in attendance were MLA's Sindi Hawkins, Bill Barisoff and Al Horning, Mayor Walter Gray, and other invited guests, members of the public, and BC Parks staff.



Three F.O.S.S. directors and some of our members were on hand for the announcement which was made at the park's north parking lot on Lakeshore Rd. Afterwards, F.O.S.S. directors joined the Hon. Mr. Penner, his son, his assistant, and Mike Ladd (Area Supervisor/Parks) for a hike along the 'Boulder Trail'. Mr. Penner was invited to join F.O.S.S.



BC Parks caution sign at Luxmoore Rd. entrance to Myra-Bellevue Park

for a tour of Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park next time he is in the Okanagan.

The "closed" signs that we have been observing for the past 20 months have been replaced by "caution" signs in both parks. Please obey all posted signs and stay on open trails.

Funding Received From the Interior Savings Credit Union

On June 29, F.O.S.S. received the exciting and welcome news that the directors of the **Interior Savings Credit Union** approved a grant of \$50,500 to the Friends of the South Slopes Society. The **ISCU Community Development Fund (CDF)** was established after the devastating forest fires in 2003 which affected so many communities in the interior of our province. Funding comes from the ISCU, and its members and staff.

Thanks to the generosity of the ISCU, F.O.S.S. will continue with trail restoration & improvements in our two provincial parks. Three major projects are now being undertaken with this grant:

Erosion Control: A contractor has been hired to assess and report on the impact of post-fire run-off and trail erosion. Crews and machinery will be hired to help mitigate these problems. Projects will include culverts, water bars, drainage ditches, and hand-work on trails.

Bridges/Trails: F.O.S.S. hired a contractor to assess and remove danger trees on Fairlane Trail from the Galloping Trail east to the edge of the 'burn' area. When this trail is completed, it will traverse the north border of Myra-Bellevue Park, and provide a 'connecting' trail between Luxmoore/June Springs and the Stewart Rd. East parking lot. A bridge will be built over Priest Creek, and other smaller bridges or boardwalks will be constructed on other trails.

Mapping: F.O.S.S. will contract to produce an accurate trail map of Myra-Bellevue, and also purchase numerous 'you-are-here' type aluminum maps that will be located at junctions in the park.



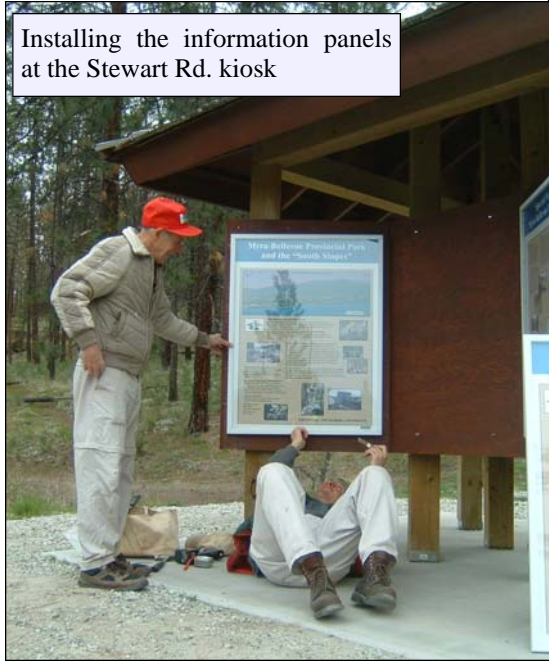
THANK YOU INTERIOR SAVINGS! For more information on Interior Savings and its Community Development Fund, visit its website at www.interiorsavings.com

RECOGNIZING OUR VOLUNTEERS

F.O.S.S. PROJECTS IN
MYRA-BELLEUE, SPRING/2005



Michael Haywood, Dale Truitt and Jake Van Holland replacing the power line gate near Harvard Rd. (gate had been vandalized)



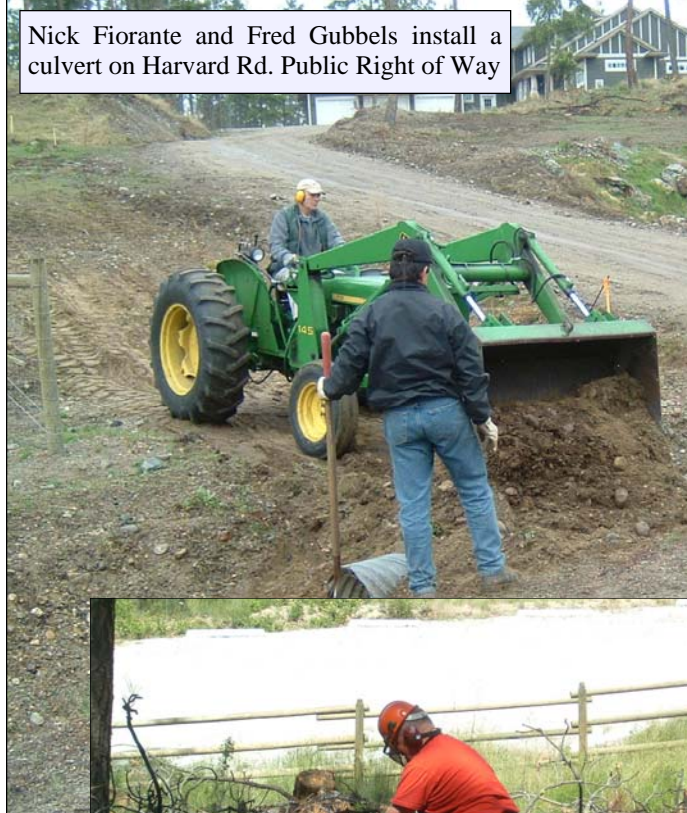
Installing the information panels at the Stewart Rd. kiosk



Lock post at intersection of Little White Forest Service Rd. and Angel Spring trail



Sign at Angel Spring (Dave Chatham)



Nick Fiorante and Fred Gubbels install a culvert on Harvard Rd. Public Right of Way



Isabel Pritchard flagging trails



Diana Pugsley painting trail sign posts



Jim Jacques bucking trees at SRE trailhead

NOXIOUS WEEDS ON THE SOUTH SLOPES AND IN OUR PARKS

What makes a plant a 'noxious weed'? It is a plant that is non-native, has aggressive growth and is highly invasive, destructive, competitive and difficult to control. It grows unchecked by natural predators and enemies such as insects or diseases.

Although the Okanagan is home to many varieties of noxious weeds, examples of some that are prevalent on the South Slopes include.... **Dalmatian Toad Flax, Diffuse Knapweed (and other species of knapweed), Hound's Tongue, Tansy Ragwort and Oxeye Daisy.**

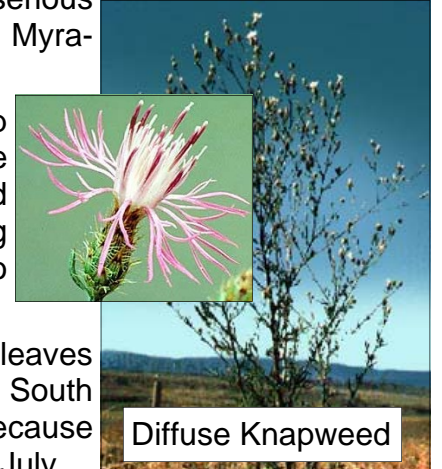


Dalmatian Toadflax

Dalmatian Toadflax was introduced as an ornamental from Europe and adapted very well to our arid valley, and spreads very rapidly. Don't be fooled by its pretty yellow snapdragon looking flowers—this is a **WEED!!**

Knapweed is a tough competitor on dry sites and rapidly invades and dominates disturbed areas. You can see a serious growth of knapweed along the power line in Myra-Bellevue, and around the trailhead.

Hound's Tongue is a biennial weed growing up to 1.2 meters in height. It has reddish/purple flowers and its seeds are covered with hooked prickles which can attach to animals (hastening its spread) and it is potentially poisonous to grazing animals.



Diffuse Knapweed

Tansy Ragwort. This is a biennial to short-lived perennial with deeply cut leaves with irregular segments. It has yellow flowers. It is already present in South Mission and Chute Lake. Tansy Ragwort is best removed from the site, because once it is in bloom, it will still go to seed, even if pulled. It blooms from July through September and it is toxic to animals at every stage of growth.



Hound's Tongue

You can do your part to stop the spread of noxious weeds. Learn to recognize them - there is an information panel at the Stewart Rd. East Trailhead: "*Aliens of the Okanagan*". Stay on established trails and avoid areas that are heavily infested.

Remove seeds from clothing, boots, bikes, horses & dogs after encountering weeds

If the plants have not flowered and gone to seed, pull them out and leave them on site to compost. (**NOTE:** The exception is Tansy Ragwort which must be bagged and removed at all stages of growth).

The best time to pull these weeds by hand is in the springtime when the ground is still moist and the roots come easily out of the ground. Once they have flowered and gone to seed, don't pull them out unless you are going to 'bag and remove' them. Learn more about weeds



Tansy Ragwort

at: www.weedsbc.ca or www.agf.gov.bc.ca/cropprot/weedguid/weedguid



Oxeye Daisy →
(yet another noxious weed!)



"Weed Watch!" Rhoda Mueller is the Bylaw Enforcement Officer for noxious weeds in Kelowna, Peachland and Lake Country . She can help with on-site weed identification. She has

carbiners to hand out which identify five noxious weeds that she is watching for. In particular, Rhoda notes: "**We know Tansy Ragwort has hit the Kelowna boundary and are eager to learn of any new infestations to determine how to deal with it and if we can organize volunteers to help.**" An information sheet from Rhoda is included with this newsletter. You can contact Rhoda at 250-469-6218

THE FRIENDS OF THE SOUTH SLOPES SUPPORT TRAIL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT IN JOE RICH/McCULLOCH

On June 20, 21, and 28, three students from the Rutland Sr. Secondary Forestry Program worked on a project to improve some of the trails in Joe Rich between McCulloch Rd and Mission Creek. This project was undertaken by the Endurance Riders Association of BC (ERABC), who are holding a three day/155 mile ride on these trails (the “Gallagher Grit” multi-day event) from August 5—7. Most of the trails are on Crown Land and follow old logging roads. Dan Friesen did much of the original trail development work many years ago, and his maps are being used by the ERABC. The following is an excerpt from the report sent to F.O.S.S. by Wayne Price, RSS Forestry Instructor:

“Firstly, a thank you for the opportunity to clear and work on trails in such a healthy forested area. This has to be one of the best kept secrets in the Okanagan.

The first clearing day on Monday June 20 began by meeting Pat and Frank Russell at the “corrals on McCulloch road.” Myself and 3 students (Dylan Heltman, Andrew Patterson, and Brad Senger) began clearing at this point. We worked our way along the “Mission Impossible” trail maintaining a mostly single track trail that works its way toward the meeting of the “8 Mile” crossing and further on Grouse Creek exchange. We were quite successful in establishing a clear trail until just before the bottom near Mission Creek, where we lost the main trail. Frank and Pat and myself established where the lower portion of this trail is. However, for the purposes of horseback riding, an alternative route (top to bottom) needs to be reconnoitred. At this point we dead headed and returned back to the corrals.

Day Two - *We wound our way down Browne Lake Forest Service Road and began clearing Grouse Creek main. We cleared and walked down the “S+S Trail” To the junction of “Mission Impossible”. Here we established “Mission Impossible” for about 100 m. We then began our afternoon ascent up “Grouse Creek” trail, passing by “Lung Expander” (bottom) and returning to our starting destination. These trails are well established and double tracked, with room for quads and horses. This was a long day, the boys worked very hard and were thoroughly beat at the end of the day. We felt that we had accomplished a great deal and were pleased with our efforts.*

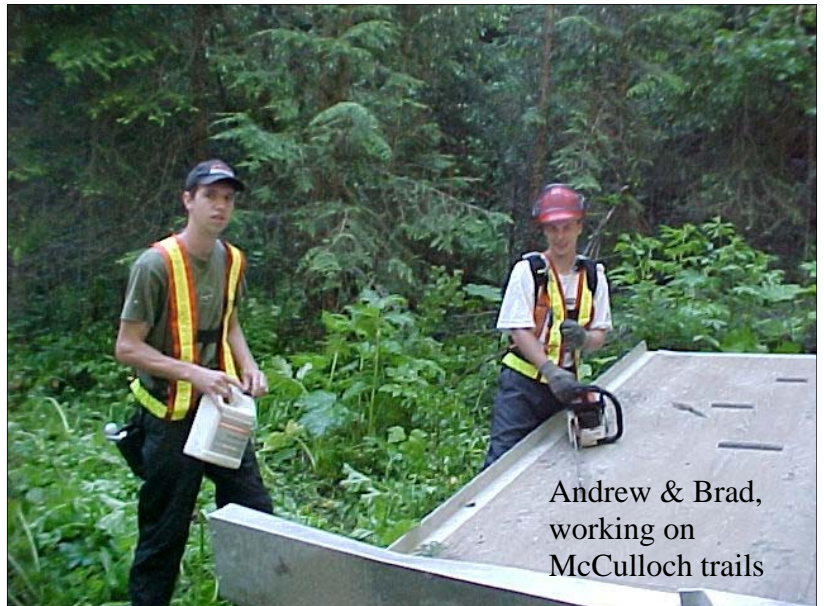
Day Three – *Finally we had the use of two quads, and my co-worker Al Kolkind was able to join us on this day. We entered the trails at the “P+R” trail and were able to clear this trail, down the “Lung Expander” and to “Mission Impossible”. Here at “Mission Impossible” I worked my way up to Pat and Frank whom were at “Black Bear Alley”. Mr. Kolkind and the boys cleared “Mission Impossible”, but had some difficulty at the ascent up the steep hill. As aforementioned this part of the trail needs to be re-established, making it passable and safe. The slide at Dry Gulch still needs a little work to be widened. Pat and Frank and myself cleared through the cut block of “Lung Expander” (top trail). In all a pretty good day with lots of cutting and clearing by the boys along “Mission Impossible”.*

In all we are quite pleased with what has been accomplished. There are numerous teaching opportunities along these trails, duly noted by Mr. Kolkind and myself. “

Chicki Jacques (ERABC and F.O.S.S. member) adds that there is still more trail restoration work planned by ERABC for the Joe Rich/McCulloch Trails, most notably two loops—the “Redwood Trail” and completion of the “Lung Expander”.

F.O.S.S. is pleased to have been able to contribute to this worthwhile project by covering the transportation and maintenance expenses and giving a small honorarium to the students. We hope to partner with the Rutland Senior Secondary Forestry class on other projects on the South Slopes.

You can learn more about the Endurance Riders of BC by visiting their website at www.erabc.com



Andrew & Brad,
working on
McCulloch trails



Bench Trail Erosion Project

In May, F.O.S.S. contracted with Apex Sand & Gravel (Mark Turton) to repair the erosion damage on the “Bench” trail adjacent to the parking lot in Myra-Bellevue Park. In addition to the ditching, swales and leveling—a culvert (donated by South East Kelowna Irrigation District) was installed at the junction of Lost Lake Trail and Bench Trail. Within days of the completion of this project, it was tested by a heavy downpour. Everything worked according to the plan and the project was a complete success.

Gravel was also spread in the area of the kiosk and picnic table. F.O.S.S. volunteers were on site throughout the 2 day project to monitor traffic and ask park users to avoid the worksite.

This was another project funded by the Kelowna & Area Okanagan Mountain Fire Recovery Fund.

Parks Alive! Centennial Legacy Concerts on the South Slopes

In commemoration of Kelowna’s 100th birthday, the City of Kelowna’s Parks Alive! is presenting a new, multi-week concert series entitled the “Centennial Legacy Concert Series”. This series will be held every Thursday evening in July and August in one of eight community parks throughout Kelowna. Each location has been selected for its historical significance to the community. Cultural activities will be presented at each location from 6:00 to 9:00 pm, and where possible, will thematically link the location and Kelowna’s history.

Two of these concerts will be taking place in South Slopes neighbourhoods:

July 28 - Folklore @ Main Street Park, Kettle Valley 411 Providence Ave.. Special guest host is Bob Hayes.

Aug. 25 - Past & Present @ Redridge Park, Crawford Estates 4805 Westridge Drive. Special guest host is Councillor Sharon Shepherd.



June 2005, Wildflowers along the Earring Trail (MBPP)

Myra-Bellevue Mapping Project Underway

Field work is underway to map the trails of Myra-Bellevue Park. Trails have been flagged by volunteers, and are now being GPS’d. Bridges, access points, ponds, creeks, elevations and other features will be on the map. F.O.S.S. expects to have it available to the public this fall. The *Interior Savings Credit Union Community Development Fund* is funding the mapping project.

Observe-Record-Report Information

Myra-Bellevue & Okanagan Mountain are PROVINCIAL PARKS and are therefore regulated under the BC Parks’ Act. F.O.S.S. does NOT have an “enforcement” role in the parks—that is solely the responsibility of BC Parks’ staff. If you have any questions or concerns regarding park regulations, or you wish to report an infraction, please report directly to:

Mike Ladd, Area Supervisor/BC Parks
Or e-mail: michael.ladd@gems5.gov.bc.ca

Phone: (250) 490-8200 (during regular office hours)





Cougar Sightings

In late April, there were 2 separate reports of a cougar in Myra-Bellevue Park (Upper Pink Hwy trail)

If you meet a cougar...

Never approach a cougar. Although cougars will normally avoid a confrontation, all cougars are unpredictable.

Always give a cougar an avenue to escape.

Do not run. Try to back away from the cougar slowly. Sudden movement or flight may trigger an instinctive attack.

Do not turn your back on the cougar. Face the cougar and remain upright.

Do all you can to enlarge your image. Don't crouch down or try to hide. Pick up sticks or branches and wave them around.

(This information is taken from the Water, Land and Air Protection website)

THIS IS THEIR HOME—PLEASE RESPECT THEM AND ALL OTHER WILDLIFE.

GARBAGE DETAIL!

You can 'volunteer' without joining in with an organized project.

If you walk, cycle or ride in Myra-Bellevue or Okanagan Mtn. parks, you can help! Simply take along a bag and pick up any litter you encounter as you enjoy the trails in the parks, and take it home with you. This also applies to the Stewart Rd. East Trailhead.

In a perfect world, no one would throw away bottles, cans, food wrappers, or any other garbage. And no one would use our parks to dispose of their household garbage or construction waste. Everyone would pack out their garbage, and even take out more than they took in. However, the reality is that there are a small number of people in the park who are not respectful, and they leave their litter behind.

Picking up litter is a small but significant contribution to the care of our parks.



Thanks!

We gratefully acknowledge the ongoing support of local businesses, and we want to make sure they get the recognition they deserve.

In the last few months, F.O.S.S. has received the following "in kind" donations:

Acres Enterprises Ltd.—donated and delivered the large barrier rocks at the entrance to the City of Kelowna's right-of-way on Harvard Rd.

South East Kelowna Irrigation District—donated the pipe for the culvert on Lost Lake Trail adjacent to the Stewart Rd. East Trailhead

Kelowna Steel Fabricators—modified the lock-post at the entrance to the Angel Spring trail



City of Kelowna Right-of-Way to MBPP
(Location: near corner of Harvard Rd. & Gaspardone Rd.)

How to Contact your F.O.S.S. Directors:

Mailing Address: Box 28011 RPO East Kelowna, Kelowna BC, V1W 4A6

e-mail: info@foss-kelowna.org

Website: foss-kelowna.org

