



Friends of the South Slopes Society

Summer/Fall 2006

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Little White Mountain

This has been a challenging year for the staff of BC Parks! One of the primary reasons that Myra-Bellevue became a protected area in 2001 was to safeguard the Little White Mountain escarpment. Ongoing vandalism has been cause for concern, as alpine meadows and marshes have received significant damage from off-road vehicles. These areas are fragile and it could take decades for them to recover.

Last winter, vandals burned the old Ministry of Forests Lookout Tower which

was perched on the summit of Little White Mtn. Between August 18-20, F.O.S.S. volunteers Dan Hobson, Cathy Richards and Mark Coffey assisted BC Parks staff to clean up the site. They also erected park boundary signs and trail signs on a section of the Okanagan Highlands Trail.

In order to keep motorized traffic out of the Little White section of the Myra-Bellevue, BC parks staff de-built part of Little White Road south of the Myra Canyon By-Pass Trail and constructed a footpath to allow access for permitted uses. Similar work is being done on the Crawford Trail south of the Bellevue Trestle. BC Parks and Conservation Office staff issued non-compliance tickets to numerous off road vehicle (ORV) drivers over the summer, and this enforcement of BC Park's regulations will continue this fall.

In an effort to work collaboratively with ORV supporters to explore solutions to the ongoing problems of unauthorized motorized activity in our provincial parks and other issues, F.O.S.S. hosted an invitation-only meeting on June 27, 2006. Representatives from Outback ATV,



(L-R) BC Park Sr. Ranger, Mark Weston; Jr. Ranger, Erin Gunoff; F.O.S.S. Volunteers Mark Coffey and Dan Hobson. Photo taken by F.O.S.S. volunteer Cathy Richards.

F.O.S.S. Volunteer
Cathy Richards-
working at the top of
Little White Mtn.



Photo Credit: Mark Coffey/Freestone Spirit Photography

Okanagan Trail Riders, BC Parks & City Parks staff, ORV merchants, Crawford Residents' Association, and other interested parties joined with F.O.S.S. directors to share their concerns and ideas. F.O.S.S. director Herb Blamire organized and chaired the meeting. Attendees supported the proposed legislation for licensing of ORV and on July 19, 2006, F.O.S.S. directors sent a letter in support of this legislation to Premier Gordon Campbell with copies to MLA's Rick Thorpe, Sindi Hawkins and Al Horning. In early September, Ken Umbarger from the Okanagan Trail Riders Assoc. advised Herb that some progress on the proposed licensing and registration legislation is being made and it is currently being circulated to various government departments for their input.

Hunting in Provincial Parks

In mid-May, a hiker came across the carcass of a bear in the Luxmoore Trails area of Myra-Bellevue PP. The kill was reported to staff at the BC Conservation Office. Their response was that there is a spring bear hunt and that this was likely a legal kill although the carcass was improperly disposed of.

Most park users aren't aware that hunting is permitted in both Myra-Bellevue and Okanagan Mountain Provincial Parks. This includes the area of Myra-Bellevue known as the 'Crawford Trails'. **BE AWARE WHEN YOU ARE ON THE TRAILS!**

F.O.S.S. directors have asked BC Parks staff to post the dates for hunting seasons at the major public access points in Myra-Bellevue, so that hikers, cyclists and equestrians are aware that there could be hunters in the park. No motor vehicle access is permitted to hunters (or anyone else!).

The 2005/2006 Hunting & Trapping Regulations are available on the internet at the Ministry of Environment/Environmental Stewardship Division (Fish & Wildlife Branch) <http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/fw/wild/synopsis.htm> Printed copies are available at Government Agents, regional Ministry of Environment offices and retail outlets where hunting licenses are sold.

According to the current hunting regulations, Myra-Bellevue & Okanagan Mountain Provincial Parks are open to the discharge of firearms, bows and crossbows from Sept. 1 to Dec. 10 (different dates depending on 'class' and species) during the lawful game hunting season. The 2006 hunting season dates for bears are listed in the regulations as April 1—June 15 and Sept. 1—Nov. 30.

Many bird species are also on the list for fall/winter hunting.

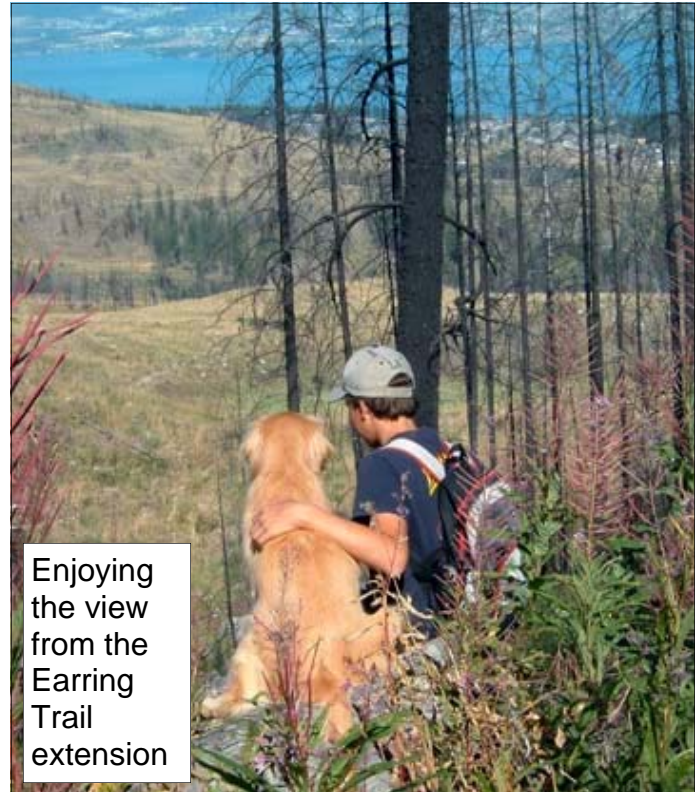


RSS Forestry Program students after completing improvements to Earring Trail MBPP

MORE TRAIL ETIQUETTE!

- T**reat other trail users with courtesy
- R**espect all signage and property
- A**void environmental damage
- I**nform yourself about allowed trail uses
- L**eave wildlife and plants alone
- S**tay on the trail

(Courtesy of Trails BC/SouthWest Region)



Enjoying the view from the Earring Trail extension

Crawford Trail Connection

The historic Crawford Trail begins at Crawford Falls off Canyon Court and extends almost 20 km. to the top of Little White Mtn., mostly through Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park. However, the section of the trail east of Crawford Falls crosses private property before it enters the park. F.O.S.S., in partnership with BC Parks, developed a connecting trail so that visitors may park at the Stewart Rd. E. Trailhead and connect to the Crawford Trail while staying in the park.

Earring Trail (off of Upper Bench Trail) has been extended to Race Classic, where it is just a short distance to the junction with Crawford Trail. Students from the Rutland Sr. Secondary School worked on the Earring Trail extension in May and work was completed by volunteers from F.O.S.S. in early September. Trail signs will be erected later this fall.



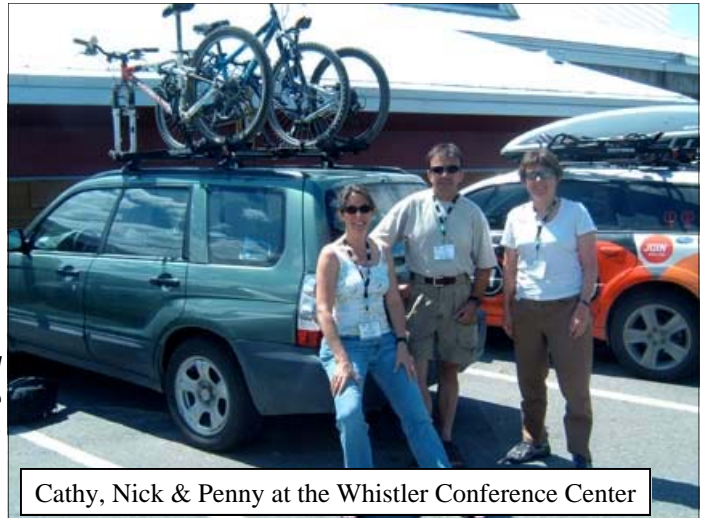
←←←←“You Are Here” Maps in Myra-Bellevue

In 2005, F.O.S.S. undertook the Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park trail mapping project and trail maps have been for sale at local merchants since last December. As part of that project (funded by the Interior Savings Community Development Fund), F.O.S.S. has now developed, purchased and installed map signs at key junctions in the park.

IMBA Summit

The World Mountain Biking Summit hosted by IMBA (International Mountain Bike Association) was held in Whistler from June 20-23. There were 400+ delegates representing 17 countries. Delegates included land managers (staff from BC Parks and City of Kelowna Parks' Department were in attendance), trail advocates (groups

such as F.O.S.S.!), resort managers, recreation planners and others with a keen interest in the sport of mountain biking. The conference theme was “promoting sustainability and enhancing communication”. F.O.S.S. sent 3 delegates—Cathy Richards, Nick Fiorante, and Penny Gubbels who attended sessions on *Designing and Building Sustainable Trails*, *Managing Trails in Sensitive Ecosystems*, *Risk Management & Liability* and other topics relevant to F.O.S.S. They prepared a 7 page report on the conference for F.O.S.S. directors.



Cathy, Nick & Penny at the Whistler Conference Center

Photos courtesy of the Kelowna Running Club



Scorched Sole June 3, 2006

Dan Crockett of the Kelowna Running Club reports that 41 runners signed up for the 25/50k ultras, 26 for the 25k and 15 for the 50k. All participants completed the event and comments post-race were positive, with runners commenting on the trails and the scenery. KRC is considering using a different



route every year to showcase the diversity and expanse of the trail network on the South Slopes.



Joe Rich/Mission Creek Trails

Thanks to the hard work of the students and staff of the Rutland Senior Secondary Forest Resource Program, Joe Rich residents and F.O.S.S. members Frank and Pat Russell, about 20 miles of trail were cleared in the Joe Rich area in June. These trails are located south of Hwy 33 and connect to the cross country ski trails in the McCulloch area.

This summer, Frank and Pat took at least five groups (including some on horseback) in to work on the trails. Dale Truitt has GPS'ed one loop and will hopefully GPS the 2nd loop as well, so we are well on our way to having a map of these trails.

Frank and Pat are currently working through the Regional District to establish a trail head at the end of the Joe Rich valley. This would make the trails accessible from Hwy 33. The next step will be to name the trails and make and erect signage. Anyone with a router who is interested in helping make signs please contact F.O.S.S. director Anne Mackay at 764-6396.

This fall, the Joe Rich/Mission Creek Trails Committee hopes to continue work on the Mission Creek Trails nearer Kelowna. The old Mission Impossible Trail has been identified and will hopefully be cleared before the snow flies. The RSS crew has prepared signage—so we just have to get the trail ready. Anyone interested in helping with the project please call Anne.

Fairlane Trail Boardwalk Completed

In July, F.O.S.S. volunteers Isabel Pritchard, Lon Brinton, Grant Rice and Penny Gubbels assisted Glenn Ross of Katim Enterprises to construct a boardwalk on Fairlane Trail east of Priest Creek.



Annual General Meeting Of The Friends of the South Slopes Society

The Annual General Meeting of the Friends of the South Slopes Society will be held Jan. 11, 2007. Further information and 2007 membership forms will be sent to our members later this year.

Proposed Fixed Roof Accommodation in Myra-Bellevue Prov. Park

In July 2006, the government of BC announced that Myra-Bellevue is one of 12 provincial parks where it is actively seeking proposals for fixed-roof accommodations. In the **Fixed-Roof Accommodation Policy (FRAP)**, 'accommodation' is described as **"Lodges, cabins, huts, yurts and shelters"**. A Request for Proposal (**RFP**) for MBPP was issued on August 31st, 2006 and the deadline for proposals is November 27, 2006. The selected proponent will prepare a BC parks Level 2, Detailed Screen Impact Assessment Report which will be reviewed by the Ministry and *"The Ministry may set the public consultation requirements for this phase"*. For more information on this policy, you can visit the website: <http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/> Follow the links to "Fixed Roof Accommodation Policy"

This new government proposal supports the development of privately run accommodation in 12 selected Provincial Parks. It is receiving mixed reviews from organized groups and the general public. Western Canada Wilderness Committee, Valhalla Wilderness Society, the West Kootenay Eco Society, the Okanagan Similkameen Parks Society, Burke Mountain Naturalists, Association of Whistler Area Residents for the Environment (AWARE), Sierra Club – BC Chapter, Wildsight, Comox District Mountaineering Club, and the Vancouver Natural History Society are some of the organizations that are speaking out in opposition to this policy. Your F.O.S.S. directors have serious concerns about the proposal for Myra-Bellevue. We believe that the integrity of Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park should be maintained and we do not support the construction of privately operated resort-type structures in our public park. There is ample opportunity for this type of venture on private property adjacent to MBPP or on nearby crown land. The Request for Proposals for Myra Bellevue Provincial Park is posted on the government's **Bid BC** website. It describes a 10-15 room eco-lodge type facility accommodating 40-60 people, and refers to "potential for associated commercial enterprises such as concession, bike rental, etc. servicing Myra Canyon day users". The proposed site is just within the Park boundary, north of the Myra Canyon Trailhead Parking Lot and the KVR/Trans Canada Trail.

We are not clear what involvement, if any, F.O.S.S. will have in the Fixed Roof Accommodation process for MBPP. Directors believe we are a relevant stakeholder in the Park and on August 30th we sent an e-mail to Dave Richmond, Recreation Section Head/Okanagan Region, Environmental Stewardship Division (Ministry of the Environment) requesting that a F.O.S.S. representative attend the RFP 'viewing'. Mr. Richmond responded that he would check into whether we can attend. According to the Request for Proposal for Myra-Bellevue on **Bid BC** "A Proponents' meeting will be held. Details on date, time and location of the meeting will be provided to those who submit a Receipt Confirmation form by 4:00 PM PST on September 22, 2006". If more information becomes available, we will forward it to our members with e-mail. If you have any comments regarding this issue that you would like your F.O.S.S. directors to consider please contact them by mail or e-mail.

'Allen's Bridge' ***Allen Pritchard 1939-2006***

This fall F.O.S.S. will erect a sign in memory of Allen Pritchard at the Hachey Creek Bridge on Fairlane Trail. At the family's request, donations made to F.O.S.S. in Allen's name will be placed in a structural maintenance fund for Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park.



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

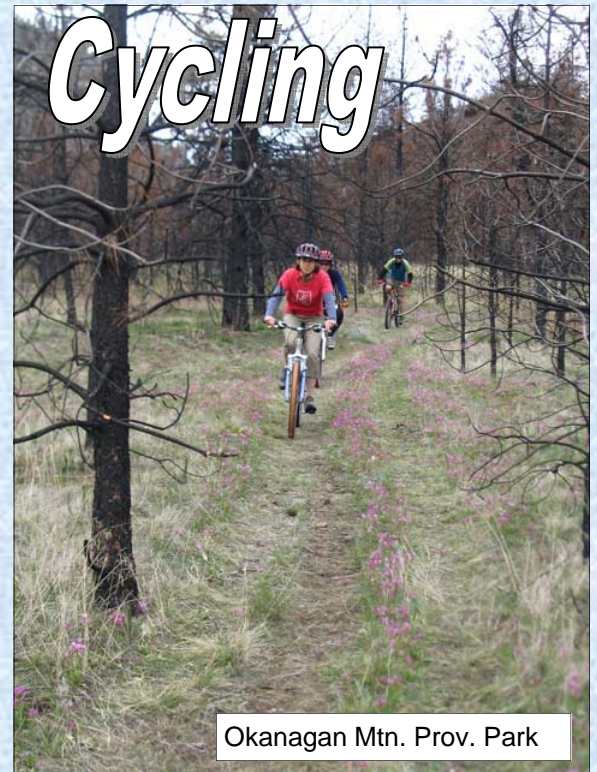
Mailing Address: Box 28011 RPO East Kelowna, Kelowna BC, V1W 4A6
e-mail: info@foss-kelowna.org **Website:** foss-kelowna.org



South Slopes - Summer Of 2006



Salamander Trail, MBPP



Okanagan Mtn. Prov. Park



Crawford Lake, MBPP

Hiking



Hikers enjoying the view over Buchan Bay, Ok. Mtn. Provincial Park

Summer Of 2006 FOSS Volunteers at Work

