

Friends of the South Slopes

December 2013



Boulder Trail
Okanagan Mtn. Provincial Park

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

Mark Thursday January 9th on your calendar! That's the date of FOSS' AGM. Come hear about what was accomplished in 2013 and the plans for 2014.

The guest speaker is BC Parks' Area Supervisor Ryan Elphick. Ryan will talk about BC Parks' management strategies and the decision making process on facility and trail development and the issue with non-sanctioned trail work and development.

We invite everyone interested in recreation on the South Slopes to attend. There will be a 'meet and greet' at 7 pm where you'll have an opportunity to socialize, enjoy refreshments, pay your FOSS membership, purchase a Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park trail map and browse the displays. Everyone attending will receive free tickets for the coveted 'choose your own prize' draw. This is always a highly anticipated feature of FOSS' AGM.



Angel Springs Trail
Photo Credit: Norm Akins

Please Renew your FOSS Membership

For new members & renewals, visit the FOSS website www.foss-kelowna.org where you can:

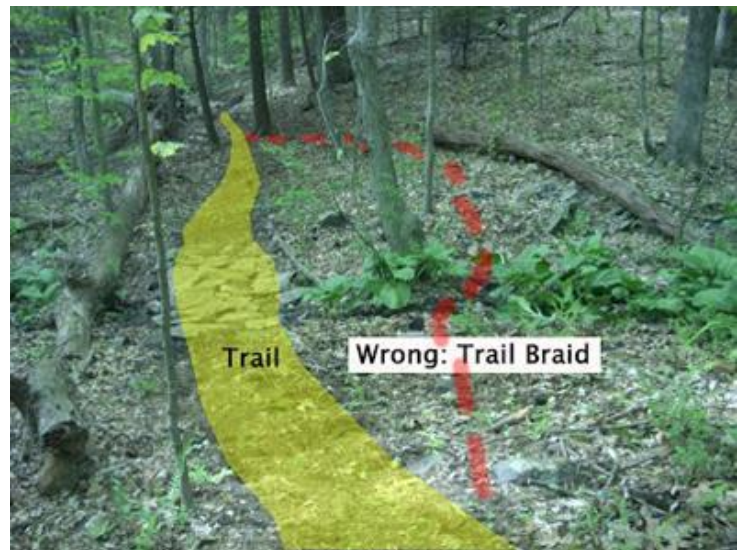
- renew your membership on-line using your credit card or PayPal account
- or, download and print a mail-in membership form
- Donate on-line

"Like" FOSS on
Facebook



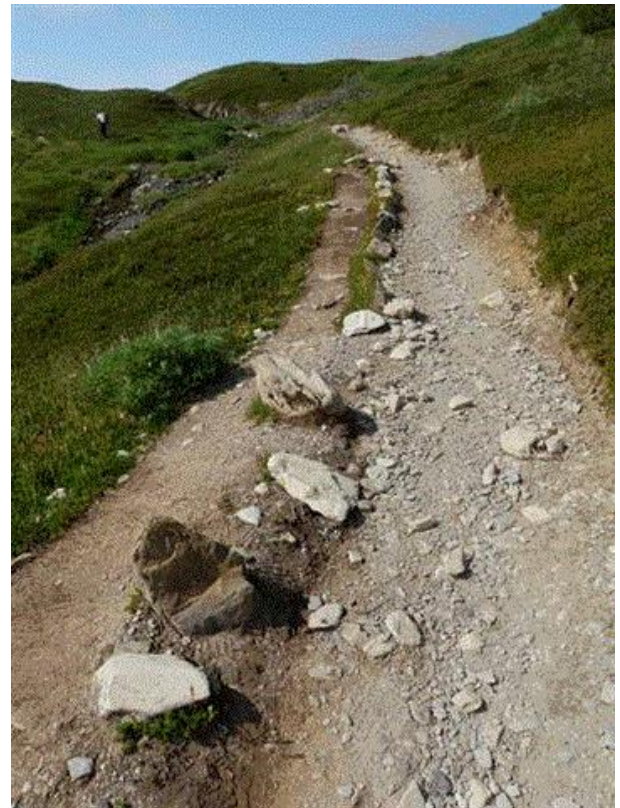
Trail Braiding

What is “braiding” you may ask? One mountain biking site describes it as “like braiding hair only with soil”. Braiding of trails results in increased erosion and the trails often follow ‘the fall line’ causing water to run down. Soon we see areas of well used trails with three or more tracks off the original trail. They are usually unsightly and if left unchecked the tracks get wider and actually start to merge, thus destroying the plants and shrubs, leaving patches devoid of cover and contributing to further damage. Trail braiding and fall line trails increase the erosion problem by two or three fold and make repairs difficult.



Many people are out on the trails. There were 44,352 visits counted at the Stewart Rd. East parking lot this year. Imagine the damage that would be caused if each of us decided to make our own short cuts. FOSS is committed to improving and maintaining the trails in Myra- Bellevue to the trail standards recognized by BC Parks and the Municipality of Whistler. If you see places where braiding is occurring please do not follow the new path and do not remove or destroy barriers if they are in place.

Park visitors leave the main trail for many reasons... speed seekers, hikers think it's too far to walk around a switchback, to avoid puddles or because the authorized trail has become eroded or rough. Please don't ride, hike or cycle on braided or fall line social trails! It may seem to be more trouble to follow the established contour/ switchback but there is a good reason for doing so. Remember that volunteers put a lot of time, thought and effort into maintaining trails for the enjoyment of everyone. Some trails are designed to prevent erosion or to slow traffic where there is heavy use. Please be considerate of our



volunteers and show your appreciation and support by staying on the sanctioned trails.

In Myra-Bellevue, Fairlane Trail offers an example of a trail where braiding and fall line social trails have developed. Near the BC Park Boundary sign west of the Peterson Brook Bridge, the trail is badly braided. As you follow the trail west, downhill towards the power line, there are a number of fall line trails developing between the switchbacks. The switchbacks are there to lessen erosion. A number of fall line routes are being used in spite of the efforts of volunteers to block off these social trails.



“The trail is the thing—not the end of the trail—travel too fast, and you miss all that you are traveling for!”
(Trailside sign on the Pinnacles Trail in Jackson Hole, Wyoming)

Recognizing FOSS' Long Time Members

Since 2000, FOSS has maintained a membership database. The Board of Directors would like to give a shout out to the following people who have been members since 2000.

Norma Bakstad
Gillian Barany
Herb & Jane Blamire
Leon Blumer
The Ellis Family
Penny & Fred Gubbels

Gail Hill
Cynthia Lambrecht
Charles & Mary Lund
Joyce Mervyn
Dorothy Mills
Isabel Pritchard

Eric & Min Rayson
Daphne Richard
Cathy Richards
Judi Robson
Milt & Jane Stevenson
Peter & Laurie Thompson

Thanks to all of you for your tremendous support !

About the Friends of the South Slopes SocietyFOSS was incorporated on Feb. 29, 1996 and the first AGM was held on March 1st, 1996. Bill Redston was elected as its first President.

FOSS was initially established with two objectives: to apply for a park and to intervene in an application to operate a gravel pit/concrete/asphalt re-cycling plant on Crown Land near Stewart Road East. This application was denied and FOSS was inactive until November 1997 when a few people interested in the orderly management of the Crown Lands of the “South Slopes” met at Mike and Judy Whitaker’s home to develop a plan for recreational use and environmental preservation of the South Slopes. It was agreed at this initial meeting to contact the various groups that use the South Slopes and the concept of an “umbrella” organization was developed. It was decided to revive the “Friends of the South Slopes Society” and continue the new mandate under that name. An AGM was held on April 15, 1998 and officers elected were: Mike Whitaker, President; Daphne Richard, VP; Peter Thompson, Treasurer and Penny Gubbels, Secretary.

Updates to FOSS Website

FOSS Director Teresa MacKenzie volunteered to keep the website up to date. FOSS' web host, Navigator Multimedia, provided instruction to Teresa. She uploaded pdf files for all the FOSS newsletters since the spring of 2003 and she also updated the membership form and added the new Adopt a Trail sponsors. Notices (like the AGM) will be posted on FOSS' home page as well as on Facebook.



Local Fitness Trainer Donates to FOSS

Personal and group fitness trainer Dawn Balic recently donated \$950.00 to FOSS. The money was raised through Dawn's outdoor boot camp/yoga programs. If you want to learn more about what classes and programs Dawn offers, visit her website: <http://www.bbb-fit.com/#>

44,352 That's the statistic from BC Parks on the number of visitors to the Stewart Rd. East Trailhead in 2013. That is up from 35,000 in 2012. This statistic comes from a vehicle counter placed at the entrance to the Stewart Rd. East parking lot.

There were 67,894 visitors recorded at the Myra Canyon counter.

No statistics are available for the number of people who enter Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park through the many other access points —Stewart Rd. West, Harvard Rd., Salamander Trail, Priest Creek Trail, Ball Court, Luxmoore Rd., Angel Springs parking lot or the trails off June Springs Rd/ Little White FSR and the KVR.

This data validates that Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park is a highly used recreation area and that it is a huge asset to our community.

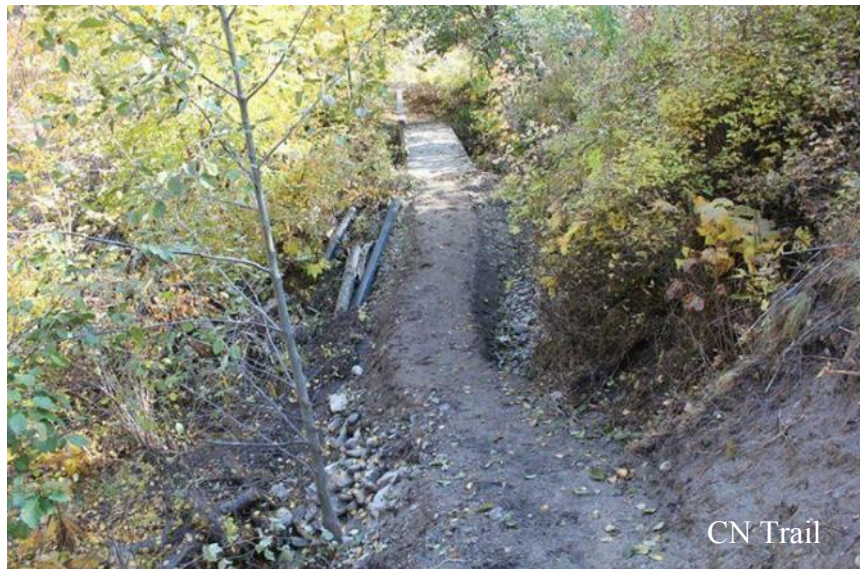
Boulder Trail Update

In September FOSS hired Okanagan Trail Riders for an erosion mitigation project in Okanagan Mtn. Provincial Park.

OTRA employees removed the log jam above the CN Trail Bridge and they used the rock to make a bench cut trail out of the gully. They rerouted Boulder Trail away from the washout. Because the site was inaccessible with machinery, the work had to be done by hand using only a gas powered wheel barrow, chain saws, weed eaters and trail building tools.

The project took six hours more than what was in the contract but OTRA staff gave their time as an 'in kind' donation and they also did not charge FOSS for their travel time.

Total cost of the project was \$5,040.00. Funding was shared by BC Parks, Okanagan Similkameen Parks Society and FOSS. We wish to thank OTRA for a job well done and the Okanagan Similkameen Parks Society for supporting this project.



The Back Page....Our Adopt a Trail Sponsors

FOSS welcomes two new
Adopt a Trail Sponsors



Adopt a Trail sponsor Kelowna Cycle is making a \$205 donation to FOSS. This money was raised during KC's Kamikaze Downhill mountain biking event which is held annually in Myra-Bellevue.



FOSS recently received confirmation of FortisBC's corporate sponsorship of the Adopt a Trail program for 2014. Their adopted trail is lower Myra Bailout Trail.

Fortis BC Community and Aboriginal Liaison Officer Judit Horvath wrote, "We thank you (FOSS) for all your hard work and dedication to this great community project".



Volunteers brush Grassy Trail
(adopted by Orchard Ford)



Grassy Trail, MBPP