

Friends of the South Slopes

Winter 2015/2016



Box 28011 RPO East Kelowna, Kelowna BC V1W 4A6

<http://www.foss-kelowna.org>

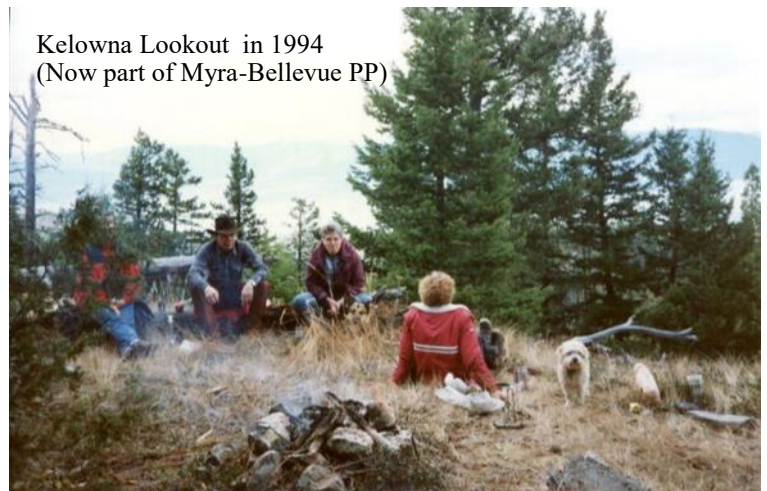
info@foss-kelowna.org

Twenty Years and Counting!

2016 is a landmark year as FOSS marks the 20th Anniversary of the founding of the Friends of the South Slopes Society. Incorporated in 1996, FOSS was formed to oppose an application to lease Crown land in the area of Stewart Rd. East and Stewart Rd. West, including the area where the Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park Trailhead is now located. The applicant proposed to operate a gravel pit and concrete/asphalt re-cycling plant. The application was denied by the province and FOSS became inactive for a period of time. Around this time, some Kelowna residents were meeting informally to discuss their ideas for trail management on the Crown lands on the South Slopes. They reactivated the Friends of the South Slopes Society and an Annual General Meeting was held in April 1998. FOSS' new focus was on the orderly management of public recreation on the South Slopes. FOSS

participated in the Central Okanagan Regional District's South Slopes Recreation Access Management Plan in 1998/99. In June, 2000, the 'Crawford Trails' became part of the newly established Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park when the recommendations of the Okanagan-Shuswap Land and Resource Management Plan (OSLRMP) were adopted by the Province of BC. FOSS Director Isabel Pritchard sat as a member of the LRMP, representing non-motorized recreation as a delegate from Back Country Horsemen of BC. For more information on the history of the Okanagan-Shuswap LRMP please see page 6.

Kelowna Lookout in 1994
(Now part of Myra-Bellevue PP)



Annual General Meeting January 14, 2016

We had a GREAT turnout for FOSS' AGM — 77 people came out to hear our guest speakers Gail & George Forshaw talk about their epic three month hike on the Pacific Crest Trail. They started at the Mexico/California border and left the trail at the Oregon/Washington border. This hardy pair will be completing the northern stretch of this ambitious trek this spring.

Members of the 2016 Board of Directors:

Jay Darbyshire, President Herb Blamire, Vice-President
Pete Spencer, Treasurer Penny Gubbels, Secretary

Board Members: Malcolm Robson,
Andrew McIntosh, Isabel Pritchard, Anne Smyth,
Marilyn Westlake, Ken Wiklund and Brad Wright

FOSS director Dan Hobson recently stepped down from the board. Dan's contributions to FOSS over the years are greatly appreciated, especially in 2015 when Dan guided FOSS through the Request for Proposal and Contract for our National Trails Coalition project. Happy hunting Dan!

Thank you to Marilyn Westlake for organizing the refreshments for the AGM and to the following merchants who so generously donated prizes for the free draw:

FortisBC, Save-On Foods (Orchard Plaza), Winn Rentals and Pete Spencer

Also, thank you to Kelowna Daily Courier columnist J.P. Squire, who regularly publishes articles about FOSS' activities in his 'Making Tracks' column.



Haven't renewed your 2016 FOSS Membership? Please do! You can download a paper/mail-in membership form from our website or pay online by following the link on the website.

www.foss-kelowna.org



Annual Closure of Stewart Rd. East Trailhead

Please be mindful that when the frost starts coming out of the ground and the surface of the parking lot softens, BC Parks will authorize the closing of the parking lot during spring break-up.



FOSS' Winter Trails Committee groomed some of the double track trails in Myra-Bellevue twice this winter. Volunteer Dale Letkeman used his snowmobile to pack the trails, benefitting the winter hikers, trail runners, equestrians and the fat bike riders.



"Fat Bikes" and hikers on Lost Lake Trail.



Dale Letkeman out on a trail grooming excursion.



Where can you buy one of FOSS' Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park Trail Maps??

Kelowna Cycle
Wild Mountain/North Face
Cyclepath Bike & Snow
Fresh Air Experience
Fresh Air Concepts

Outbound Cycle
Diamond H Tack
Tourism Kelowna
Mosaic Books
Harvest Grocery (South Kelowna)
Chainline Cycle
Sovereign Cycle
Lake Country Cycle
Save-On Foods Orchard Plaza

Here are some photos taken after the wicked wind storm in late November...thank you to all the volunteers who got out and cleared the trails in both Myra-Bellevue & Okanagan Mtn. parks.



FOSS Directors Anne Smyth & Ken Wiklund clearing the east end of Connector Trail, MBPP

This is what Angel Springs Trail looked like before Brad Gretzinger, Norm Geisheimer & their crew of volunteers cleared it.



⇐ Dec. 23, 2015—FOSS volunteer Andrew Stevenson clearing trails in Okanagan Mountain Park

Looking Back at 2015

Here are some of FOSS' statistics for last year:

2015 Revenue (memberships, map sales, donations, grants, Adopt a Trail Sponsorship) \$47,023.40

2015 Expenses (Contractor/NTC Project, volunteer training, insurance, signs, equipment rental, other expenses) \$55,685.85

Volunteer Hours Recorded:

Adopt a Trail Sponsors	624
Adopt a Trail-regular program	445
Trail repairs & maintenance	
Outside of the AAT program	273
National Trails Coalition Project	
(project development, planning, proposals, oversight)	242
Volunteer Training	23
Map Sales	29

When the time our volunteers spent at board meetings, preparing reports and applications, correspondence, banking, newsletters, meetings with land managers etc. is included, *it totals 2,145 volunteer hours*



Former FOSS President Passes Away

Bill Redston passed away on Nov. 15, 2015. Bill was a FOSS director from 1998—2003 and he held the position of President in 2002 & 2003. Bill got involved in FOSS because he was an avid mountain biker and he wanted to help with the establishment and care of the trail system that was then known as 'Crawford Trails'. He was a FOSS director when that trail network transitioned from Crown land into Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park in 2000. Bill was at FOSS' helm during and immediately after the 2003 Okanagan Mountain Provincial Park forest fire and he was on the committee that worked with BC Parks to develop the Stewart Rd. East trailhead in Myra-Bellevue.

Oct. 2003 - Teddy Bear Junction, Lost Lake Trail In Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park. BC Park Ranger 'Alistair' (2nd from left) took FOSS directors Peter Thompson, Dan Wood, Nick Fiorante, **Bill Redston** (on the right) and Penny Gubbels (taking the photo!) on a tour of the park after the wildfire.



Bill Redston

The Okanagan-Shuswap Land and Resource Management Plan (OSLRMP) — Fifteen Years Later

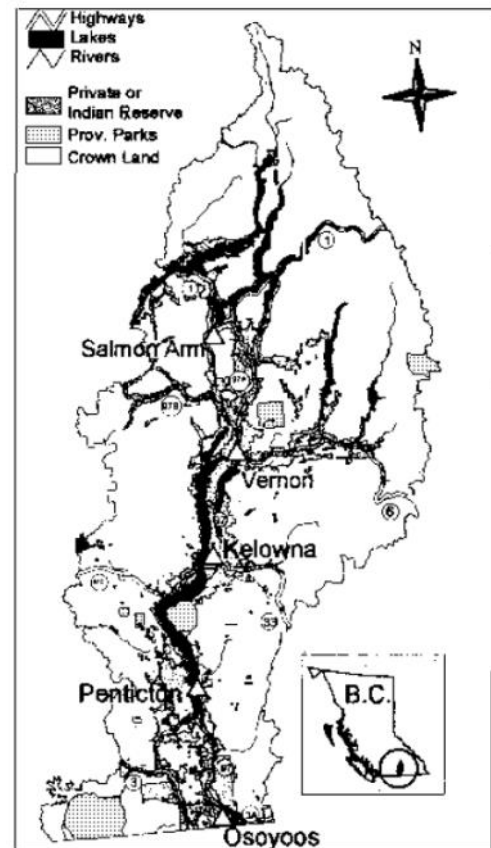
Ever wonder how Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park was established? In the early 1990's the government of the day decided that BC should meet the recommendations of environmental planning and set aside 12% of the land base as protected areas. LRMP's were developed for regions throughout BC. The Okanagan Shuswap was one of the first areas in the province to commence work because it was apparent that much of the important land base types in this region were quickly being taken up by the pressures of a growing population and many red and blue listed species of flora and fauna would soon disappear. There was a considerable lack of valley bottom land and grasslands belonging to the Crown.

A wide ranging Crown land management plan was initiated in July of 1995 and completed in September of 2000. It was considered a high level plan and had to go to the BC Cabinet for approval. This was granted in January of 2001. The document became the policy direction for all Crown land and resource decisions within the area.

The Okanagan-Shuswap Land Management Plan was developed with input from over 30 public and government participants representing a wide range of interests such as water, timber, wildlife, fisheries, mining, recreation, tourism, conservation and agriculture. First Nations expressed an interest in the process but chose not to participate. However, they were kept informed about the process on an ongoing basis. The first meeting of the OSLRMP took place in February 1996. During the first year each government ministry presented the issues which needed to be resolved to meet the mission of the LRMP process, as well as the parameters within legislation such as Forest, Environment and Species at Risk Acts. Long-time FOSS Director Isabel

Pritchard, one of the LRMP representatives for recreation (non-motorized) said that these sessions were very valuable in bringing the groups up to speed on criteria for all existing interests on the land base from mining, forestry and wildlife habitat to recreation and tourism.

Land Area in the OSLRMP



Community Members at the LRMP table came from a wide range of interests. Representatives from organizations such as tourism, Chambers of Commerce, ranchers, logging companies, Regional Districts, Cities, conservation groups, hunting and trapping, mining, water and recreation (both motorized and non-motorized). All attended quarterly meetings for the next four years. An excellent Provincial Government team provided research and support to this group and always emphasized that the purpose of the process was to achieve consensus. Participants were required to sign off on a plan before it could be sent to Cabinet. This led to some long days and sometimes extra

meetings of various factions and always a need to compromise when stalemates arose.

The result was a comprehensive plan which provided direction for the management of all Crown lands and resources within the Okanagan Shuswap Land Management area. Some 49 new protected areas were established and a number of them were granted park status. The protected area in the plan amounts to 10% of the overall land base. Some protected areas remain under protected area status, examples are a number of

very important small areas in the South Okanagan grasslands which are now under consideration as part of a National Park. The most notable achievements for the Central Okanagan were the creation of Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park, Graystokes, Shorts Creek and Monashee Provincial Park as well as a sizeable addition to Kalamalka Provincial Park.

If you want to learn more about the Okanagan-Shuswap LRMP, you can read the 826 page document: <https://www.for.gov.bc.ca/tasb/slrp/lrmp/kamloops/okanagan/plan/files/oslrmpfull.pdf>

Cyclepath Bike Store's Trail day Nov. 8, 2015
Volunteers working on their 'adopted' trail, lower Vapour



Late Winter/Early Spring Trail Conditions

During spring break-up we appeal to equestrians and cyclists to stay off trails that are not yet firm and mostly dry. For your own safety and especially to mitigate trail damage at this time of year (from tire ruts and deep hoof prints) we ask for your consideration.

Showing a little restraint now by not riding on soft, wet areas will go a long way to help maintain the condition of the trails.

Share the Trail!

