

Friends of the South Slopes

Spring 2015



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Federal Funding Announcement to Enhance Trails

On April 14, Kelowna-Lake Country MP Ron Cannan met with FOSS' board members to announce that FOSS will receive a \$21,000 grant from the National Trail Coalition (NTC).

This federal government funding is through Canada's Economic Action Plan program.

MP Ron Cannan said "These parks are very popular destinations for all types of trail sports and improving the trails will create a long-term recreational asset for the entire Central Okanagan".

On hand for the announcement were BC Parks' Area Supervisor Ryan Elphick and representatives of the Central Okanagan Land Trust, Myra Canyon Trestle Restoration Society, Central Okanagan Naturalists and other members of FOSS.

FOSS' President Jay Darby said "The funding will help with the ongoing recovery from the 2003 Okanagan Mountain Park fire that severely damaged both parks and we are grateful for the funding". Various projects are planned that will see volunteers working alongside a contractor to leverage the maximum value for the funds received. As part of the funding agreement, FOSS must contribute \$21,000 towards the project. FOSS Director Isabel Pritchard said "any donations from the public to help offset the \$21,000 are much appreciated". If you wish to donate, please check it out on the FOSS website: www.foss-kelowna.org/membership

FOSS is also exploring other grant opportunities to fund this project. More information about the grant and the project is on page 4 of this newsletter.



April 14 funding announcement at the Stewart Rd. East Trailhead. Left to Right: FOSS directors Isabel Pritchard, Dan Hobson, MP Ron Cannan and FOSS President Jay Darby & director Anne Smyth.

BC Parks Sr. Ranger Starts New Position.

BC Parks' Senior Ranger Erin Gunoff recently accepted a position with the Ministry of Lands Forests and Natural Resources. FOSS has worked with Erin since 2005 when she was first employed as a BC Parks' ranger (summer student). For the past ten years Erin has moved through various positions with BC Parks and most recently she was the Senior Ranger for the East Okanagan region. During those ten years she has been involved in numerous projects with FOSS volunteers....from clearing windfalls to installing sign posts and everything in between. We send Erin best wishes in her new position.

Erin sent us this message

"I was hired full time year-round as the new Recreation Technician for Ministry of Forests Recreation Sites and Trails. I am based out of the Vernon office and manage the Recreation Sites and Trails from Enderby south to the border. It's a similar job to BC Parks so I am sure it will be a smooth transition.....Thanks for 10 wonderful years in



Erin clearing Crawford Trail in 2008

BC Parks. You folks in FOSS taught me a lot and I will miss working with you guys! Couldn't have asked for a better group of volunteers to work with."

(See page 7 for a bio on Wendy Pope who was recently appointed to replace Erin as Senior Ranger/Okanagan East)

New Registration Requirements for Off-Road Vehicles (ORV)

The following information is taken from the BC Government website www.for.gov.bc.ca/mof/orv/

More information and details on how to register your ORV can be found at this address.

Currently owners in BC have the option to register and plate their off-road vehicle (dirt bikes, ATV's). However, as of June 2015 it will be mandatory to register and plate your off-road vehicle if you will be operating the unit on crown land including Forest Service Roads. If operating only on crown land and forest service roads basic \$200,000 liability is required. If you operate your off-road-vehicle only on your own property it is your choice on whether or not to register it.

Off-Road Vehicles that will be used on-highway will be required to be registered, plated, and have basic insurance coverage (\$200,000 liability) through ICBC.

Update May 21st: The BC Gov't announced today that the ORV registration date has been extended to Nov. 1, 2015

OBERVE-RECORD-REPORT

ORV recreation is a popular pastime for many people and some areas of the South Slopes (like old Forest Service Roads located on Crown land) are perfectly suited for dirt bikers and ATV operators to enjoy this activity. The majority of riders are respectful and ride in areas where they are allowed and they are courteous to non-motorized users like cyclists, equestrians and hikers. Non-motorized recreationalists need to respect the rights of motorized recreationalists to ride in areas where their use is permitted.

However, ORV use is *not* permitted in either Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park or Okanagan Mountain Provincial Park. The exception to this regulation is for ORVs that are in the two parks doing projects authorised by BC Parks. Any contractor or volunteer who is authorised to be in the parks on an ATV, UTV or dirt bike will be clearly identified as 'authorised'. FOSS' UTV is marked as an 'authorised vehicle' and volunteers using their personal ATV or dirt bikes while doing permitted work will have identification. FOSS recently registered and licensed its ORV. Information on the documents you'll need to register your ORV can be found at: <http://www.icbc.com/vehicle-registration/specialty-vehicles/Pages/Off-road-vehicles.aspx> From time to time unauthorised ORV's are encountered in the parks. This is a BC Parks' non-compliance issue and should be reported to Ryan Elphick, BC Parks Area Supervisor/ Okanagan East. By phone: (250) 490-8250 (Penticton) or by e-mail: Ryan.Elphick@gov.bc.ca

MTBco Hold a Successful Trail Maintenance Day In Myra-Bellevue

On Sunday April 26, twelve volunteers from Mountain Bikers of the Central Okanagan contributed a total of sixty hours of trail restoration work!



...More trail work done by FOSS' Adopt a Trail volunteers

April 12—Adopt a Trail Sponsor *Cyclepath Bike Store* had twenty-two volunteers working on a trail day on lower Vapour Trail

On Saturday May 2- Ten volunteers from the *Central Okanagan Naturalists Club* brushed and cleared Heckle, Jeckle & Hyde Trails in MBPP.



CONC is a long time supporter of FOSS' Adopt a Trail Program, with trails adopted in both Myra-Bellevue & Okanagan Mtn. PP



Two new Adopt a Trail

Sponsors FOSS welcomes two new trail sponsors who signed on this year. Cabin Forestry adopted Boris Trail in Myra-Bellevue and Namaste Spa will soon choose their trail.



REMEMBER THE HORSES! (by FOSS Director Marilyn Westlake)

When riding the trails recently we've noticed that some well-meaning person/s is filling in areas where we need to ride to avoid climbing or sliding down solid rock or wet areas. This filling consists of branches and sticks or large rocks put on the trail.



Our horses are shod with iron shoes which easily slip on hard rock and wet areas in the park so we need these small "step arounds" as a bypass at these places.

Please leave them open for our safety and to minimize the need to make yet another trail beside the existing one!

The area circled in white in this picture is where we would normally ride our horses to avoid scrambling and slipping on the solid rock to the left. However, rocks and sticks have been put on the trail to stop us and we must remove them or else go around on the left making yet another side bypass! Hikers and bikers probably walk on the middle trail but that doesn't work for horses with shoes and wet ground in the spring.



Trail Improvements-Myra-Bellevue & Okanagan Mtn Provincial Parks—National Trails Coalition Grant (NTC)

In early May, FOSS selected **Katim Enterprises** as the successful bidder for a \$42,000 contract (includes labour & materials) that will see two Katim employees working in the parks commencing June 1st. FOSS Director Isabel Pritchard is FOSS' project manager and her committee is developing a work plan for the contractor. Trail improvements will include brushing and clearing trails, erosion repair, trail tread & drainage, bridge and sign repairs and working with FOSS volunteers on trail upgrading projects.

Gellatly Nut Farm Regional Park wins Award

On May 8th, the Gellatly Nut Farm Regional Park on the westside of Okanagan Lake won the BC Parks and Recreation Association 2015 Parks and Open Spaces award at the BCPRA annual symposium in Victoria. The award recognizes the park's successful focus on delivering cultural & recreational benefits to residents across the Central Okanagan and also the importance of volunteer and citizen involvement through the Gellatly Nut Farm Society. Congratulations to the Society and to the Central Okanagan Regional District.

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Early Spring....Trail Damage in Okanagan Mountain Provincial Park

An unseasonable warm spell in early February caused a sudden thaw and flash flooding, wreaking havoc on some trails in Okanagan Mountain Provincial Park and on the Golden Mile Trail (a MoT corridor that connects from near the end Lakeshore Rd. to Okanagan Mtn. Park).

After FOSS received a number of reports from trail users and FOSS volunteers, the board of directors contacted BC Parks and MoT and we were given the go-ahead to make repairs so that the public could once again access and use the trails.



Early February washout-Golden Mile Trail



Herb Blamire operates the excavator—repairing the washout on Golden Mile Trail



Mud slide & debris on Wild Horse Canyon Trail



....More repairs



Thank you to our volunteers who scouted out the damage and made some emergency repairs (Andrew McIntosh, Andrew Stevenson, Herb Blamire, Brad Wright) and to Herb, Brad, Isabel Pritchard and Anne Smyth who dedicated a total of 54 hours to major trail repairs on Golden Mile and Wild Horse Canyon Trail. Herb operated the excavator. As well as repairing the trails, the volunteers replaced one culvert and cleaned out another one. Winn Rentals donated the cost of 1.5 days of excavator rental time....Winn Rentals is a locally owned business that is a big-time supporter of trails groups in Kelowna.

Springtime on the South Slopes



Photo Credit: C.O.N.C.



Photo Credit: Marilyn Westlake



Photo Credit: Anne Smyth



View from Rose Lookout, Lost Lake Trail

A Note to Dog Owners

Ryan Elphick, Area Supervisor for BC Parks would like to remind Park visitors that the opportunity to enjoy off leash areas requires owners to be responsible for their pets. These responsibilities include:

- Insuring your pet is under control at all times. This means your pet is within arm's reach of you and will return when called in all circumstances.
- Picking up after your pet. At the very least "stick and flick" your pets waste off the trail.
- Not allowing your pets to harass wildlife. It is an offence under the *Wildlife Act* to allow your pet to chase and or harass wildlife.
- Not allowing your pet to harass other Park visitors. The Park is used by many user groups and if your pet is not well behaved around horses, cyclists, people or other dogs you should not allow your dog to be off leash in the Park.

Please help to ensure the Park continues to allow off leash recreating with our four legged friends by being a responsible pet owner.



Help Celebrate 100 Years of the Kettle Valley Railway

2015 marks the one hundredth anniversary of the Kettle Valley Railway. As part of the celebrations the Myra Canyon Trestle Restoration Society is proud to present **"The Kettle Valley Brakeman"** live in concert at 7 pm on June 27, 2015 in the Okanagan College Theatre (Student Services Building) 1000 KLO Rd.

Tickets are \$10 for adults, \$5 for children and \$25 for a family.

Tickets are available at the door or on the Myra Canyon Trestle Restoration Society's website: <http://www.myra-trestles.com>

For more information, please contact the MCTRS at: info@myra-trestles.com

The Kettle Valley Brakemen are heritage entertainers and what they do is unique. A Brakemen show is a series of brief stories and original songs about B.C.'s colourful steam rail history. Since 2015 is the 100th anniversary of the Kettle Valley Railway, The Brakemen have put together a show completely about the KVR. Head Brakeman Jack Godwin says, "This year our audiences will get a full picture of Kettle Valley Railway history from construction camp songs, triumph and disaster songs plus our usual mix of humour and historical oddities. With tributes to the official railway doctor on the KVR and beloved characters like conductor Perley McPherson, our audiences will get KVR history set to a toe-tappin' folk/bluegrass beat. Naturally, we'll have a couple of sing-along numbers at the end so we hope everyone will get involved."



The Kettle Valley Brakemen playing at the re-opening of the Myra Canyon Trestles on June 22, 2008

Wendy Pope-Senior Park Ranger, BC Parks



(Submitted by Ryan Elphick/BC Parks' Area Supervisor/East Okanagan)

The East Okanagan Area welcomes Wendy Pope as the new Senior Park Ranger. This will be Wendy's fifth season with BC Parks. She started her career with BC Parks in the North Okanagan Area where she spent 2 seasons as a Park Ranger. She then moved to the South Okanagan Area where she has spent the past 2 seasons acting as the Senior Park Ranger. Wendy's good sense of humour and passion for our Parks system has made her a valuable member of the Okanagan team.