

Friends of the South Slopes

April 2019



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Fuel Mitigation/Forest Health Harvesting Project

This project is currently underway on Crown Land adjacent to June Springs Road on the South Slopes of Kelowna.

FOSS would like to thank Andrew Hunsberger, RPF (Urban Forestry Supervisor/City of Kelowna) for providing the following information:

"The objective of this project is to protect public safety from a severe wildfire that could impact the area for decades to come as it did from the 2003 Okanagan Mountain Provincial Park fire. Thinning the ponderosa pine/Douglas-fir forest will lessen the impact of a wildfire and help to retain the mature trees in the forest. The grasslands and open-forests of the Okanagan Valley traditionally frequently experienced low-intensity wildfires. These fires would keep fuel levels low and help to maintain a healthy forest. Fire suppression over the past hundred years has led to increased fuel loads in our forests. When these areas burn, the severity of the burn is much more intense and leads to heavy tree mortality and damage to the soils and the seedbed.

Please be advised that some trails may be disturbed but all attempts will be made to minimize damage."

Please refer to the map on **page 4** that identifies the area of fuel mitigation. Currently, the red hash-marked area is being harvested. Future treatment areas are identified in orange.



Photos to the right, taken April 25, 2019 of the harvested areas south of June Springs Rd., adjacent to the Hromek Rd. access to Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park.

OKANAGAN MOUNTAIN PROVINCIAL PARK WILD HORSE CANYON TRAIL 'BRUSHING' PROJECT

An 'action' plan that came out of the BC Parks' Volunteer Conference in March was that BC Parks would facilitate a series of trail maintenance days for Wild Horse Canyon Trail in Okanagan Mtn. Provincial Park. This is a 'team' effort involving many groups and organizations including Mountain Bikers of the Central Okanagan, Penticton Cycling Club, Okanagan Outfitters, Central Okanagan Search & Rescue, Central Okanagan Climbing Association, Orchard City Amateur Radio Club, P.A.C.E. Sport Fitness, Hoodoo Adventures, Back Country Horsemen of BC and FOSS.

The 'brushing sessions' have been scheduled by BC Parks (starting from the North Parking Lot):

Saturday, May 4

Saturday/Sunday May 11-12 (overnight)

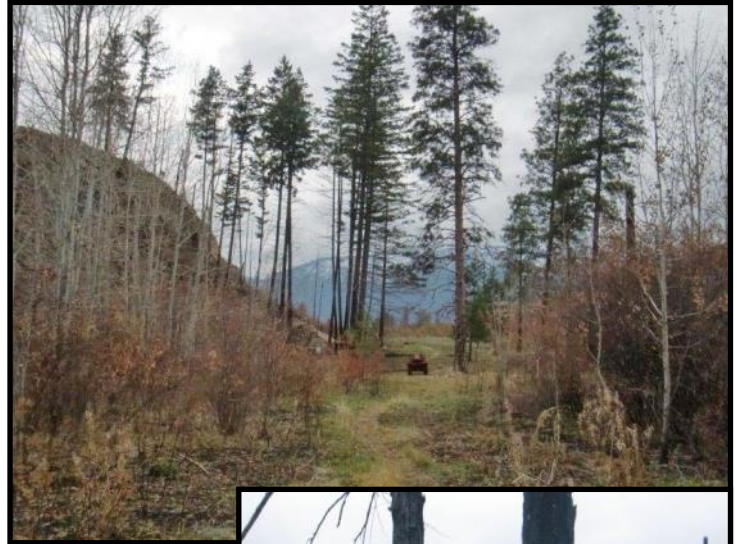
Saturday/Sunday May 18-19 (overnight)

FOSS has volunteered **our** UTV and brushing equipment and several of our members are involved in this project.

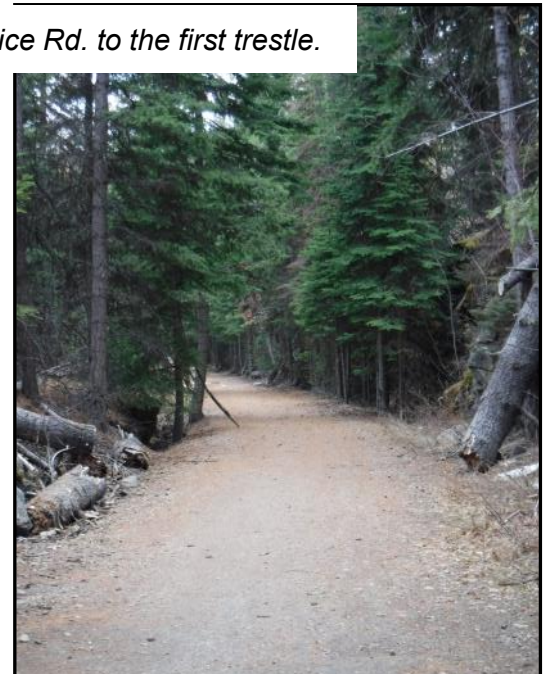
The target **is** to brush the Wild Horse Canyon Trail as far as possible, hopefully 10 to 15 km.

Brad Wright, President, FOSS

2018—Wild Horse Canyon Trail
(Photos taken by FOSS Adopt a
Trail Volunteer Andrew Stevenson)



April 24, 2019—A walk along the KVR from Little White Forest Service Rd. to the first trestle.



In FOSS' March newsletter, we introduced you to FOSS President Brad Wright and Secretary Isabel Pritchard, now we'll introduce you to Vice-President, Daphne Richard:

How long have you been involved in FOSS?

Since the beginning! I took some time away from the Board while I chaired a national committee, but returned to the Board as soon as I was able to do so. It has been my passion to ensure that our community retains access to and recreational use of our envied South Slopes.



What are the biggest challenges facing the Society today?

Currently we have many balls in the air – each requiring our full attention: spring trail maintenance, including a major, joint effort on the Wild Horse Canyon trail in May; re-establishing trails in Crown Lands undergoing fuel mitigation; clean-up of the Myra Wetlands and re-routing trails in that area; identifying City and Crown lands in the KLO Myra Recreation Area and preparing proposals for their inclusion in the overall trail network on the South Slopes, ETC.!!

What are the biggest challenges facing the South Slopes today?

Perhaps the biggest challenge is the heavy use of the lower slopes, closer to urban development, especially above the Stewart Road East Trailhead area. It is hoped, that with other adjacent trail networks now being further developed (ie. Gillard), this will alleviate some of the problems. Mother Nature dictates much of what happens on the South Slopes too, having significant impact on the environment, trails and bridges – fingers crossed that this year we can be spared from both flood and fire.

What is your ultimate vision for the South Slopes?

My big 'dream' is for a continuous 'green belt' - a vast trail system that reaches from Lake Country to Naramata! FOSS has been involved in the community for over two decades, working diligently with our various NGO and government partners to highlight and champion the South Slopes – and I see *this* 'dream' as our next challenging challenge! To make this a reality, FOSS' vision is to partner with the City of Kelowna, the Regional District of the Central Okanagan (RDCO) and the BC Provincial Government, to establish what we refer to as a 'Get Back Trail' through the KLO Myra Recreation Area (KMRA) which will provide the current 'missing' link:

Imagine:

- The Okanagan Rail Trail - connected to the
- Mission Creek Greenway - which is connected to
- Scenic Canyon Regional Park - which is connected to
- KLO Creek Regional Park - connected to
- Crown Land that takes you to Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park (including the KVR and Little White) - connected to
- The John's Family Nature Conservancy Regional Park - connected to
- Okanagan Mountain Provincial Park.

What is your favourite spot/trail on the South Slopes?

This is hard – there are so many wonderful, wondrous places, but I LOVE Lost Lake – have visited it in every season, every year since 1975 - with my family members, with my friends - on horseback, on foot, on snowshoes. My happy place....

...And our amazing Treasurer, Pete Spencer

FOSS' trusted Treasurer did not wish to be 'interviewed' but the Board of Directors knows, by the many hours (and years!) spent both on our financial records and on the trails, that he shares our passion for the South Slopes! Pete has been a member of the Board since 2007 and has been Treasurer for the past ten years. Thank you, Pete!!

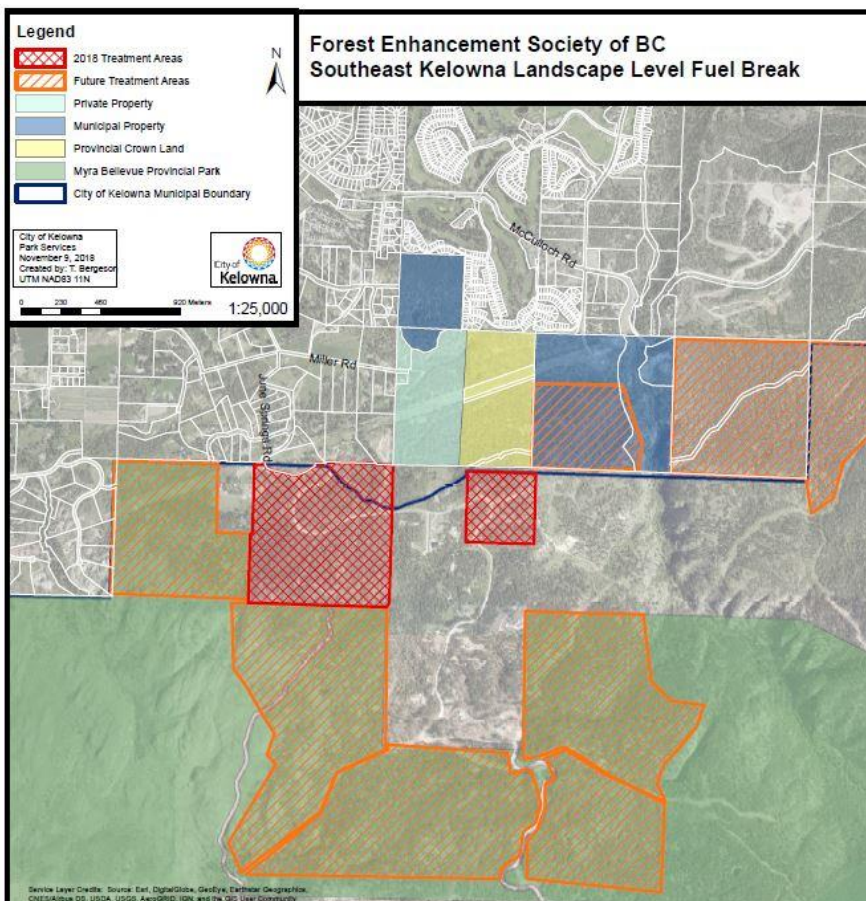


Farewell and Thank You to Christian Morrisette

FOSS would like to express our best wishes to Christian as he moves on to other things but we do want him to know that, while he was the Senior Ranger of the East Okanagan BC Provincial Parks, we were so appreciative of his sincere interest, commitment and enthusiasm. He knew the Parks intimately and assisted the various stake-holders in planning, administering and undertaking some very significant projects. Thank you very much, Christian! We do hope to see you on the trails.



Fuel Mitigation Harvesting (continued from Page 1)



What events are scheduled on the South Slopes in 2019?

Mountain bike races, trail running races ... sometimes we are out on a trail and suddenly we find ourselves in the midst of a race we didn't know about! Perhaps if we'd known about the event we would have chosen a different area to hike, or ride our horse or bike. Thank you to those event organizers who do post MBPP race information at the Stewart Rd. East kiosk and/or at the many entrances to the Park.

If FOSS is notified of a race/event, we will post it on the **Google Calendar of Events** on the FOSS website:

www.foss-kelowna.org (scroll down the home page to find the calendar) ...and we'll post your event on FOSS' Facebook page.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

