

# Friends of the South Slopes

February 2020



Photo Credit: Julia Neuhof

Box 28011 RPO East Kelowna, Kelowna BC V1W 4A6 <http://www.foss-kelowna.org> [info@foss-kelowna.org](mailto:info@foss-kelowna.org)

## FOSS Welcomes Jonathan Finlay, the new BC Parks' Area Supervisor/East Okanagan

Jonathan sent FOSS this bio:

"Here's a quick snapshot how I've been lucky enough to land in BC Parks. After completing an undergrad in Business and Ecotourism from Mount Royal University, I started a career in Public Relations with the City of Penticton, targeted toward community consultation for the construction of the South Okanagan Event Centre. I then ventured beyond the municipal public service, working with the BC Wildfire Service in the Penticton Fire Zone, where I've since spent 14 years as a Crew Leader, Technician, and Wildfire Officer. While with BCWS, I was fortunate enough to work all across the country coordinating operations and supervising crews. During my time as a Seasonal Auxiliary I also spent my winters working as the Marketing and Sales Manager for Apex Mountain Resort, largely coordinating group sales, wholesalers, and tradeshows throughout the Pacific Northwest. Now, I live in Penticton with my partner Jana, spending our days taking advantage of all things sport and recreation here in the valley! I am excited to be joining the BC Parks Team here in the Okanagan Kootenay Region and look forward to the challenges ahead in my new role! I can already see that BC Parks has a great culture, and I am thrilled to be joining such a talented team!"



**Reminder!!! FOSS' Annual General Meeting**  
**7 pm Thursday, Feb. 13, 2020**

**Location:** EECO Centre,  
Mission Creek Regional Park  
2363 Springfield Road,  
Kelowna, BC



*Who are these two  
BC Parks  
Wannabees???*

## Wildfire Mitigation in Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park January 2020

FOSS President, Brad Wright, and Directors Jane Blamire, Milt Stevenson and Daphne Richard, joined Jonathan Finlay, Area Supervisor East Okanagan, for BC Parks, to walk the ongoing worksite in the area currently undergoing wildfire mitigation below the Angel Springs parking lot off the Little White Forest Service Road. Jonathan described in detail the careful study and planning that went in to preparing for this mitigation in the Park, devising a plan that will have the least impact on the flora and fauna while still providing the desired end results of wildfire risk reduction. Now, after over two years of careful planning, the project is underway and expected to continue over the next 2 winter seasons.

Jonathan had only praise for the Forest District, Gorman Employees, and Contract Partners who have paid such careful attention to detail in ensuring the measures put in place by BC Parks are being executed on the ground. Some differences to other Wildfire Risk Reduction projects include:

- Substantial Ecological Reserve Areas throughout the treatment area, to ensure future habitat is maintained.
- These Ecological Reserves provide a mosaic within the timber to mimic a natural fire regime.
- The stand density was brought up from 60 Stems per Hectare to 90 in Units 1, 180 in Units 2 and 3. This metric offers greater diversity throughout the retained forest, while still achieving wildfire risk reduction targets. (A detailed map of the project will be presented at the AGM).
- These targets of 3 to 5 metre crown spacing are metrics designed to reduce crown fire potential, and create safe defendable areas where both Aircraft and Wildfire Crews can effectively build fire guards.
- BC Parks has also established a 2% ground disturbance threshold requirement during removal operations; this threshold is typically 10% during a traditional harvesting operation.
- To achieve this disturbance target, the methods and equipment being used are specialized, lighter, smaller framed, using rubber tires, brush mats, and working only within frozen ground conditions. The skilled operators can be extremely selective, retaining species variety, and all while limiting the disturbance within the Park.

Right now the warm weather has presented some challenges with softer ground; this is being mitigated by leaving cut timber on the roadside until the next freeze when trucks can work with minimal impact to the Park. Similarly, piles of branches and debris await being chipped and transported away. Jonathan also confirmed that upon completion of the work, the major trails (ie. Myra Bailout and Angel Springs) will be restored, and the top soil that was removed for the road construction will be put back and the area reseeded.

The FOSS Directors are so appreciative of the time Jonathan spent with them, answering questions and explaining/pointing out the work that is being undertaken.



***BC Parks and Ministry representatives will speak to the specifics of the project at the FOSS AGM; you don't want to miss it!***

### Guest Speakers:

- ◆ Steve Bercek, (BC Parks' Community Liaison Officer)
- ◆ Geoff Popowich, (Sr. Park Ranger, East Okanagan)
- ◆ Ian Petersen, (Stewardship Forester/FLNRO, Myra Wildfire Mitigation Lead)

Julia, visiting from Germany, tried snowshoeing for the first time (Angel Springs Trail)



Winter hiking on Fairlane Trail



Photo Credit: Teresa MacKenzie

**Consider joining the team! The FOSS Board of Directors is seeking a few new members. Please contact FOSS at: [info@foss-kelowna.org](mailto:info@foss-kelowna.org)**

*If you haven't renewed your FOSS membership for 2020 --- please do! By snail mail, on-line at [www.foss-kelowna.org](http://www.foss-kelowna.org) or at the AGM on Feb. 13.*

*Friends of the South Slopes Society  
2020 Membership*

Annual Membership (\$20.00) \_\_\_\_\_

\*Donation: \_\_\_\_\_

\*You will be issued a tax receipt for donations of \$10 or greater

Please make your cheque payable to:

**Friends of the South Slopes Society**

And mail to FOSS at: Box 28011 RPO East Kelowna, Kelowna, BC V1W 4A6

Pay on-line at: [www.foss-kelowna.org](http://www.foss-kelowna.org) — under 'membership' tab.

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I wish to receive my FOSS newsletter electronically in pdf format: Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

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