

Friends of the South Slopes

May 2020



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Trails Are Open!

As of May 14, Myra-Bellevue and Okanagan Mtn. Provincial Parks are open for day-use, with the exception of the Myra Canyon Trestles Trail. (See page 5).

Additionally, FOSS' volunteers are now able to start their spring trail maintenance projects—with Covid-19 protocols in place.

BC Parks has posted "Be a safe trail user" signs at the main entrances to the Parks.

- Hike in single file
- Signal your presence to others
- Bring your 'clean trip' kit
- Avoid congested areas

Our outside spaces are SO important to us during this pandemic, for both our physical and mental health. Hike, cycle, run and ride responsibly by following the rules and respecting the personal space of other trail users.

Keep your newsletters coming!

Renew your FOSS membership!

Thank you for your patience while we fixed our on-line membership problems! Payments can again be made through PayPal on the FOSS website: www.foss-kelowna.org

Please encourage your cycling, hiking, running and riding friends to support FOSS!

*BC Parks signage at Harvard Rd. gate,
Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park*



Update on Trail Maintenance in the Parks

(Thank you, Herb Blamire, FOSS' Trail Maintenance Coordinator)

A very long trip around Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park recently by Herb and FOSS President, Brad Wright, included cutting downed trees, diverting run-off and repairing the upper bridge on the Fairlane Trail. The journey took them from Lost Lake to Captain Nemo - to Vapour - to Bellevue Access - to Blancher's Silver - to Doc Savage - to Swamp Thing - back to Lost Lake - down to Hromek Road - to Myra Bailout - to Fairlane – and finally back to the Stewart Road East Trailhead!!!

They noted that the trails are in better shape than most spring seasons, with lots of water up high but, all in all, good. IF YOU'RE EXPLORING IN THE PARK RIGHT NOW PLEASE KNOW THAT THERE ARE LOTS OF BEARS ROAMING AROUND!!! A (big, very bold!) cinnamon bear has been spotted several times on or near Fairlane!

Adopt a Trail volunteers are on the trails too, with recent work being done in the Crawford area and a 'danger tree' was removed on Race Classic. Work continues in Okanagan Mountain Provincial Park – thank you, Andrew Stevenson!

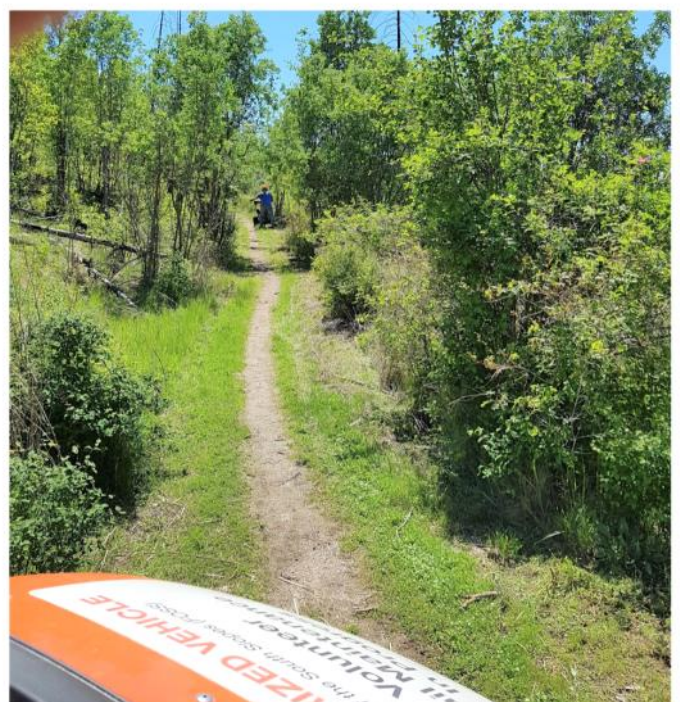
Herb recently held a couple of safety and project planning sessions with several FOSS Directors and key volunteers in attendance. He provided an overview of the FOSS safety plan, an integral part of FOSS' partnership agreement with BC Parks. FOSS has also developed COVID 19 policies and protocols which will be strictly adhered to by all volunteers. Thank you to all those participating, and for offering valuable input regarding future work to be undertaken on the South Slopes.

Several Directors recently received their chainsaw certification – thank you, Gord Detta for hosting/instructing. Further certification courses for those volunteers running power equipment are scheduled as required. FOSS has acquired a power 'brusher'- a crucial piece of equipment for maintaining our trails – and Herb has already held an introductory session for our volunteers, along with the use and safety protocols for other power tools we have available. The new brusher has already been 'tested' on Fairlane, Salamander and Jawbone!

Thank you, everyone!!

Training on the Power Brusher

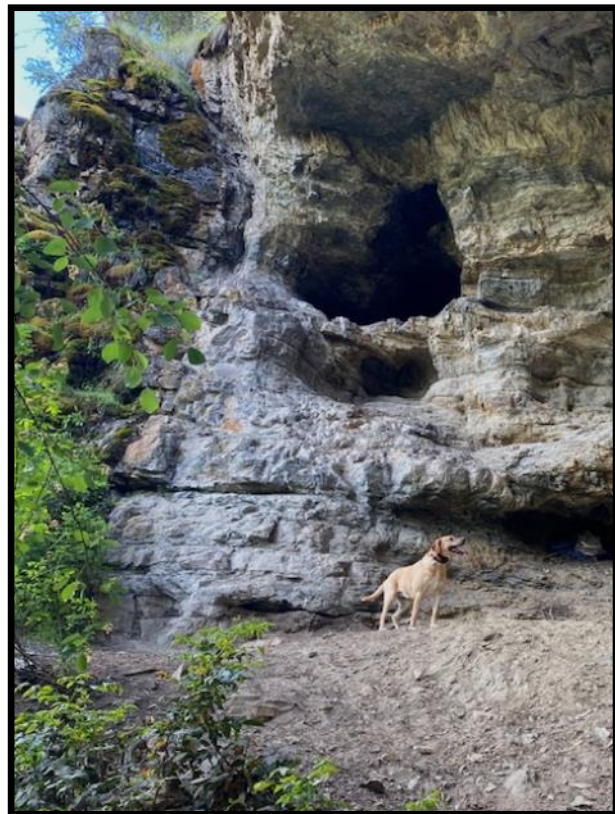
Brushing
Salamander Trail



Exploring the 'Link'

During the closure of Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park, many of us chose to explore the trails between McCulloch/Field Road and June Springs Rd. This network of trails encompasses KLO Creek Regional Park, City of Kelowna property (formerly South East Kelowna utility property) and the Crown land connecting south to June Springs Rd. It is a high priority in FOSS' future plans. FOSS refers to this area as the KLO Creek Myra Recreation Area (KMRA) and sees it as 'The Link' to connect a trail system to Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park and beyond. The idea of a 'Get Back' Trail was first proposed over seven years ago by former FOSS director Ken Wiklund. It's now a work in progress for FOSS' 2020 board of directors, as it dialogues with the City of Kelowna, Regional District of Central Okanagan, Recreation Sites & Trails BC and BC Parks to make this vision a reality. Here is a collage of photos taken this spring in this beautiful area.

FOSS will be installing some signs in the area, identifying a few of the main trails; the remainder will be put up after the fire mitigation and trail rehabilitation work is completed next spring. There is such a wonderful myriad of trails here - and some fun, interesting names have been suggested by the local riders, hikers and cyclists!



....and more photos taken in May in 'The Link'. Well worth FOSS' efforts to lobby local and provincial land managers to see these lands established as a recognized recreation area!!!



If you look carefully, you'll see the historic irrigation siphon on the east side of KLO Creek Canyon, as viewed from the lookout point on the canyon's west side



...And let's not forget Myra-Bellevue Trails!

Sunset from Piper's Trail
above Lost Lake



Allan's Bridge, Fairlane Trail



Myra Canyon Rail Trail Remains Closed

The Myra Canyon Trestles and Rail Trail between Myra Station and Ruth Station, and including the parking lots, will remain closed indefinitely due to COVID 19.

On the BC Parks' website: bcparks.ca/explore/parkpgs/myra it states that this closure ***"is to ensure the continued health and safety of BC Parks visitors, employees, park contractors, volunteers and partners and to support efforts to reduce the spread of COVID-19."***

You can check the BC Parks website for updates as to the status of this closure.



The BC MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS, NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT has updated its 'Trails Strategy for BC'.

This update is available at:

https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/sports-recreation-arts-and-culture/outdoor-recreation/camping-and-hiking/rec-sites-and-trails/rstbc-policies/trails_strategy_review_what_we_heard_21april2020.pdf

Initially adopted in 2013, the Trails Strategy for B.C. is a call to action that invites all British Columbians to join in supporting and developing a sustainable network of trails throughout the province. The Trails Strategy for B.C. is managed by the Provincial Trails Advisory Body (PTAB), a partnership between:

- Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development (RSTBC);
- Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy (BC Parks);
- Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture;
- Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure;
- Outdoor Recreation Council of BC;
- BC Wildlife Federation;
- Wilderness Tourism Association;
- BC Recreation and Parks Association;
- And six public representatives from the Outdoor Recreation Council's membership.

This strategy is a collaboration of provincial agencies, recreation organizations, local governments, land users, First Nations, and others from across the province. Guiding this collaborative undertaking are the following principles:

- Sound Environmental Stewardship and Management
- Respect and Recognition for First Nations' Interests
- Mutual Respect between Trail Interests and Other Resource Users
- Respect and Understanding among Diverse Trail Interests
- Partnerships and Collaboration
- Secure Recreation Opportunities for All Trail Users
- Benefits for Individuals, Communities and the Province