

Friends of the South Slopes

September 2021



Outhouse Trail, Sept. 2021 MBPP

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FOSS Volunteers Return to the Parks—Trail Maintenance Resumes!

Record heat, smoky skies, a spike in Covid-19 cases.....it's been quite a summer in the Central Okanagan!

In late June, FOSS Directors notified their volunteers that trail maintenance projects were cancelled because of the extreme wildfire conditions. The Okanagan saw a number of wildfires but we were fortunate that there were no serious fires on the South Slopes.

With cooler temperatures, trail maintenance projects resumed in early September—both through FOSS' Adopt a Trail Program and with our other trail maintenance volunteers. See the 'Trails Report' on Page 3 for details.



A Smoky Day on the South Slopes

KLO Creek Myra Recreation Area Report – Sept 7, 2021
(Daphne Richard, Chair, KMRA Committee)

Targeted Grazing Proposal for the City Utility Property and Adjacent Crown Lots

On August 19th, FOSS Directors Milt Stevenson and Daphne Richard met with Rob Dinwoodie, Range Officer, FLNRORD, and his assistant, Colin, to do a walkabout in the area, to discuss/determine the locations for the perimeter fencing, gates and cattleguards – a major concern for the community/users, as this project IS going ahead. It was a good, productive field visit, and the current plan will alleviate many of the potential problems and issues: wire being cut; gates left open, etc. – when the cattle are there the public will have easy access around/outside the grazing area. Questions still remain regarding the exact location of the perimeter fencing/trail along/through the powerline right-of-way. FOSS President Brad Wright kindly provided Rob with the name of the contact person at FortisBC. Rob will advise us once the fencing contractor has been assigned, to arrange for another site visit prior to fence construction, which is expected to begin this fall.

The mutual decisions necessitate a partial rerouting of the Get Back Trail, the important link between Myra-Bellevue and KLO Creek Parks. FOSS identified a new route and Milt/FOSS is prepared to organize/undertake this, along with other trail work required adjacent to the private property on the west side of the Crown Land Lots. FOSS has again asked for a renewal of a trail use/maintenance agreement, similar to that which we held with S.E.K.I.D. for many years. Our request has been forwarded to the City's Property Manager, for review. This department manages the leases/licenses on City Lands; we should hear back shortly.

We still do have serious concerns about this project and will do our best to stay on top of developments in this regard in order to advise/update the many trail users.

Super Fund Raiser, P.A.C.E!

Thanks to some fantastic fund raising by Rene Unger of P.A.C.E Sports Fitness, FOSS has \$20,000 to start work on clearing the Wildhorse Canyon Trail in Okanagan Mountain Park. This trail was significant in the early history of the Okanagan as a pack route for traders and indigenous peoples.

Parts of Wildhorse Canyon Trail are barely passable and will require the use of large equipment and the work of a dedicated crew of FOSS volunteers to open it up. Once the Golden Mile entrance to Okanagan Mountain Park is modified to allow safe entry for the needed machines and it is safe to work in the park, work will commence on the trail. The unprecedented drought and fire conditions this summer have unfortunately delayed the planned work on the trail.

We are all hoping for a cool fall to start on this project and realize Rene's dream of making Wild Horse Canyon Trail a first class trail.

As well as having a passion for Okanagan Mtn. Provincial Park, Rene is also one of FOSS' Adopt a Trail Sponsors (Earring Trail in Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park). P.A.C.E.'s community involvement goes beyond supporting F.O.S.S. —Rene has 'given back' through donations to: Canadian Mental Health Association, Canadian Cancer Society, Kootenay Columbia Trail Crew Society, West Kelowna Trail Crew Society, Friends of the Rossland Range and the Kelowna Food Bank.



FOSS TRAIL MAINTENANCE REPORT—SEPTEMBER 2021 (Milt Stevenson)

FOSS' volunteers are just starting back up in the upper areas of Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park as fire ratings have improved. I expect regular trail maintenance will be minimal given our 3 big projects, except for the FOSS Adopt a Trail volunteers who are scheduling projects on their adopted trails.

Major Projects Scheduled for fall this year:

1. LOST LAKE TRAIL UPGRADE

Prep work has started on upper Lost Lake trail. We widened the footprint so Herb Blamire can start working with the excavator the week of September 12. The plan is to start higher and work down. Preparation work started on Sept. 7th, when FOSS' Trail Crew logged 14 hours clearing back the trail. When we get closer to doing the bridge work, our focus will be lower down. Some of the trail upgrades and bridge work dovetail nicely. ***This upgrade is part of a project funded through a \$10,000 grant from the Central Okanagan Foundation. COF has been supporting FOSS projects for over 20 years, something we are extremely grateful for.***

2. PRIEST CREEK BRIDGE RELOCATIONS

I am hopeful that work can start towards the end of the month. Helicopter availability will be the rate determining step. Two of the Priest Creek bridges will be relocated—one to replace the Fairlane Trail Bridge over Priest Creek and the second one to replace the Fairlane Loop Bridge north of Lost Lake Trail. ***BC Parks is providing \$15,000 in funding for this project.***

3. OKANAGAN MOUNTAIN PROVINCIAL PARK— Wild Horse Canyon Trail.

Looking to do this once the bridge relocation is complete. Hopeful that this will occur mid-October, but could certainly push into November.

Sept. 8, 2021—Mike Shepherd & Alan Milnes, two of the volunteers from a FOSS crew clearing upper Lost Lake Trail in preparation for the upcoming erosion mitigation/trail contour project
(Photo credits: Eric Chamberland)





...is hosting 'Cranksgiving' on Sunday, Oct. 3, 2021. Some trails in MBPP will be affected by this

event, as will the Stewart Rd. East Trailhead & parking lot. On Oct. 1 & 2, MTBco will flag the trails being used, and this flagging will be removed immediately following the event. If you plan to hike/bike/ride/run on Oct. 3, please consider avoiding the Lost Lake Trail/Pink Hwy/Boris section of the park and choose other areas of Myra-Bellevue.



SUN, OCT 3 AT 9 AM PDT
2021 Cranksgiving Funduro
Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park - Kelowna



During an August hike to Goode's Basin Trail in Okanagan Mtn. Provincial Park, The Central Okanagan Naturalist group that 'adopted' that trail encountered a barrier they couldn't remove with their hand saws!

OOPS! Because of an editing error in the June newsletter, Kelowna Cycle's logo didn't appear in the list of trail sponsors for FOSS' Adopt a Trail Program.

Kelowna Cycle, 'The Hub', has been part of the AAT since the sponsorship program's inception in 2012.



There have been reports of aggressive behaviours from coyotes in MBPP, and in one case one went after a dog. Please be aware!!! Here is some timely information from Wildsafe BC:

<https://wildsafebc.com/species/coyote/>

Also, our resident bruins are out and about all over the South Slopes. Be alert—this is their home!

