

Friends of the South Slopes

February 2022



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FOSS—2022 Board of Directors

Jan. 26, 2022—For the 2nd year in a row, because of the ongoing COVID pandemic, FOSS' Annual General Meeting was held via Zoom. Thank you to the members who participated in the Zoom meeting and also thank you to our members who voted by proxy.

Your 2022 Board of Directors is:

Brad Wright
Daphne Richard
Sandy Hilton
Teresa MacKenzie
Milt Stevenson
Alan Milnes
Sharon Shepherd
Cam Kourany

Brad

Alan

Teresa

Daphne

Milt

Sandy

Sharon

Cam

AGM President's message 2022 *(This report was presented at the AGM by FOSS President Brad Wright. It is reprinted in this newsletter for the information of our members who weren't able to join in the Zoom AGM)*

I dedicate this year's message in the memory of long time FOSS director Pete Spencer who tragically passed away October 11, 2021. Pete's tireless efforts and leadership guided FOSS from the early days until his passing. He will be dearly missed.

2021 was another challenging year for Friends of the South Slopes (FOSS) with great results due to outstanding contributions from volunteers and sponsors. The continuing COVID-19 pandemic and climate challenges were unable to stem volunteer tenacity and commitment to make the Okanagan Valley a better place to live.

2021 Adopt-a-Trail (AAT) Sponsors and Volunteers accomplished a wide array of great trail maintenance projects totaling 564 work hours in Myra Bellevue and Okanagan Mountain Park areas. The FOSS Adopt-a-Trail committee continues to support and facilitate wherever possible. Please contact FOSS if you have any suggestions or would like any assistance from the FOSS Trail Crew.



A foggy winter's day on Earring Trail

The Strategic Relationship Committee (Stewardship) was very active in 2021 dealing with strategic issues and proposed developments. The committee is constantly monitoring and advocating for environmental stewardship for sustainable Okanagan South Slopes outdoor recreational opportunities. The 2021 – 2022 Stewardship Plans included:

- Targeted Grazing Pilot Project South of Field Road and Gallagher's Canyon Community – advocating for local user expectations and continued reasonable access to the myriad of traditional trails in the area.
- Trail maintenance discussion with City of Kelowna regarding KLO Creek Myra Recreation Area (KMRA) trails – request for renewal of the trail maintenance agreement re: the Utility Property above Field Road and also the Priest Creek Linear Park.
- Kelowna Parks Master Plan – FOSS' submission/committee participation focuses on the overall connectivity/big picture vision, stressing the importance of access from the community to the vast trail system on our South Slopes.
- Thomson Flats Development – Working with other community groups to advocate for South Slopes recreational and ecological connectivity/access.
- Regional District – FOSS continues to work with the RDCO re: securing key easements/links and additional natural areas to further enhance the overall trail system/recreational opportunities.
- Ministry of Forests (FLNRORD) – FOSS has made a Section 57 application for maintenance/rehabilitation of trails on crown lands near Myra Bellevue Provincial Park – important links in the Kelowna South Slopes corridor.
- Ministry of the Environment (BC Parks) – Land Tenure application has been made to have crown lands adjacent to June Springs Road incorporated into Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park.

- Okanagan Collaborative Conservation Program (OCCP) – involved in committee discussions on the Central Okanagan Ecosystem Connectivity corridor initiative (65 km long, 1 km wide area extending from Okanagan Mountain and Kalamalka Provincial Parks): actions relating to stewardship, land securement/protection.

The FOSS Trail Management Committee (Trail Crew) is the observable and very active group on the trails. Volunteer crew members worked 629 hours on trail maintenance in Myra Bellevue and Okanagan Mountain Parks.

2021 Trail Activity included:

- * Increased the number of trained trail volunteers. Trained a cohort of 27 volunteers to allow a higher level of trail maintenance.
- * Integrated Adopt-a-Trail with our trail maintenance program where possible.
- * Brushed the main double track trails and several single tracks in Myra Bellevue Park to park trail standards.
- * Lost Lake Trail Maintenance - regrading and widening of Lost Lake double track Trail from Hromek road to Stewart Road East to mitigate erosion and maintain trail standards.
- * Field work shut down in mid-July due to heat (WorkSafeBC) and fire danger (Wildfire Regulation).
- * Relocated 2 bridges from Priest Creek Linear Park (City of Kelowna) to Myra-Bellevue Park.
- * Improved the Golden Mile entrance to Okanagan Mountain Park and completed brushing on 5 kilometers of Wild Horse Canyon Trail.

The Financial report is sent in a separate file and reveals a very positive year due to exceptional sponsors, grants and donations from FOSS supporters and members.

A heartfelt thank you to FOSS members, volunteers, sponsors, Adopt-a-trail supporters/volunteers, BC Parks, and all collaboration partners for making 2021 a successful productive year.

Sincerely: Brad Wright and the FOSS directors

Targeted Grazing Pilot Project — Fencing Being Installed.

If you have been out on the KMRA Trails (former SEKID Property at the south end of Field Rd. & Crown Land to the west) you'll have noticed that the fence posts for this project are currently being installed. The contractor will be on site for a few more weeks. No date yet on when the cattle will be onsite. Follow FOSS on Facebook for up-to-date information.



The Targeted Grazing project is part of a Provincial wildfire mitigation initiative on Kelowna's South Slopes. The BC Government provided funds to the BC Cattlemen's Assoc., and the project is being overseen by Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development.



2022 commemorates 25 years since the Friends of the South Slopes (in its current incarnation) was established!!

The Society was formally registered in Feb. 1996, with the stated purpose of proceeding with an application for a park (Crawford Trails) and to intervene in an application to BC Lands for an asphalt recycling plant in the area. After the application was denied, F.O.S.S. became inactive.

But 25 years ago this year, in October 1997 —
The Friends of the South Slopes was

reactivated when a small group of people interested in developing a recreation use plan and environmental preservation for the South Slopes informally gathered at Mike Whitaker's house. FOSS contacted groups that utilized the South Slopes and asked them to work with FOSS as an 'umbrella' group. A more formal structure to FOSS was put in place after the April 15, 1998 AGM.

Board members elected at that AGM were: Mike Whitaker, Daphne Richard, Penny Gubbels, Peter Thompson, Eric Rayson, Isabel Pritchard, Bill Redston and Ian Pooley.

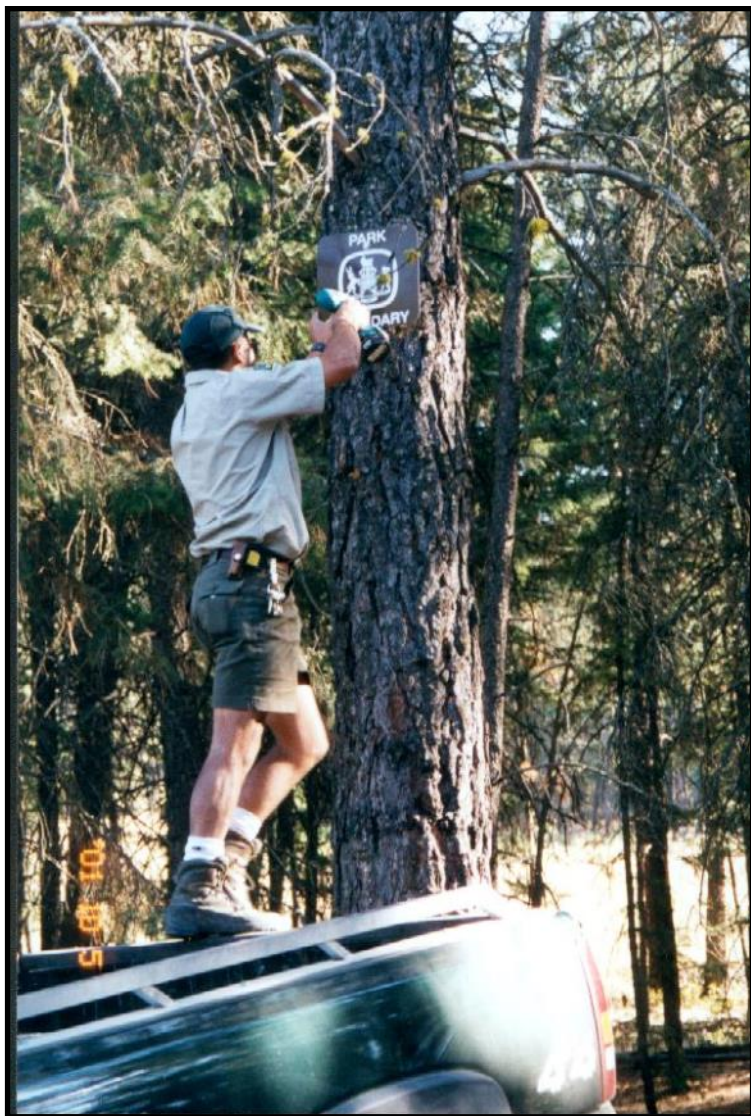
Isabel retired from the board last year after 24 continuous years as a director. Daphne (current director/VP & Strategic Relations Committee) and Penny (KMRA Committee, Adopt-a-Trail Committee, Facebook Admin. & Newsletter Editor) continue to be active and involved with FOSS.

Looking Back: Oct. 2001—BC Park Ranger Ezzy Cheverie installing a 'park boundary' sign at the Harvard Rd. gate entrance to the newly minted Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park.

Over 4000 Volunteer Hours in 2021!

Looking back over this past year, FOSS wants you to know how grateful we are for our remarkable, dedicated volunteers and for the financial support and recognition we have received. We will continue to work for you, and with you, to make our South Slopes even better!! Thank you!

Stay tuned to hear about FOSS' plans for 2022.



We acknowledge that our community is located on the traditional, ancestral, unceded territory of the Syilx/Okanagan people