

Friends of the South Slopes

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Saying a Fond Farewell to the Myra Canyon Trestle Restoration Society

Effective Nov. 1, 2022, the Myra Canyon Trestle Restoration Society (MCTRS) will officially dissolve after an incredible 29 year run. The Society is currently working with FOSS to transition their assets to FOSS. In 1993 the Myra Canyon Trestle Restoration Society (MCTRS) was formed with the goal of making the trestles safer for the public. MCTRS was the catalyst for improving, preserving, protecting and promoting the heritage, historical and environmental features of the 12 km of the Myra Canyon trestles, tunnels and the trail system connecting them. These 18 trestles and two tunnels were originally built between 1912 and 1914. From 1993 to 2003, MCTRS volunteers added boardwalks and side rails to the trestles, cleared fallen trees, boulders and brush from the trail, added storm shelters and benches, and provided information to visitors – contributing tens of thousands of volunteer hours.

MCTRS played a vital role in protecting Myra Canyon by successfully lobbying for it to become part of the Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park (2001) and also for the trestles being recognized as a Canadian National Historic Site. Following the devastating 2003 Okanagan Mountain Provincial Park wildfire, MCTRS, along with BC Parks, managed the rebuilding of the 12 burnt wooden trestles and 2 damaged steel trestles, with funding from the Government's of BC and Canada. The Society restored the trail and rock faces, and replaced the damaged signage and toilets at their



own expense.

2016 was a proud moment when MCTRS was named BC Parks Volunteer Group of the Year. FOSS had received this honour in 2014.

The Myra Canyon Trestles section of Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park is a world-class tourist destination. None of this would be possible without the Myra Canyon Trestle Restoration Society's commitment to preserving this engineering wonder back in 1992.

FOSS would like to express its thanks & gratitude to the MCTRS Board Members and their countless volunteers who have given so much to our community over the past 29 years. You are leaving a lasting legacy for generations to come.

Morrissey Camp #2, KVR

The Myra Canyon Trestle Restoration Society's 'Swan Song' project was the Morrissey Camp interpretive site. The official opening was held August 31, 2022. This was one of the KVR construction-era camps, named after the 1912 contractor, E.A. Morrissey. The site is located near the west end of the Myra Canyon Trestles. Access is via June Springs Road, to Little White Forest Service Rd., turning left at the KVR. The trail is located on the right, just before the Ruth Station parking lot (it's the 2nd parking lot in from the KVR). Look for the signs and the short trail leading to the camp.

In 2007, MCTRS and the University of British Columbia Okanagan co-sponsored an historical archaeological dig at the site. The students and professors uncovered several features: two ovens, two wells, an animal watering hole and the old tote (service) road as well as cabin and tent foundations. Numerous artifacts were also identified.



Coming Soon....A New FOSS Website!

FOSS is completely redesigning its website to be more interactive and easier to navigate.

Look for the 'launch' in 2023

Targeted Grazing Project Field Tour, Sept. 28th

On behalf of the FOSS Board of Directors, Milt Stevenson and Daphne Richard attended this event. It was held on site, in the fenced area above Field Road, where 30 head of yearlings grazed for about six weeks in May and June of this year. Targeted grazing is anticipated to be a supplemental tool to complement a variety of wildfire risk reduction practices in wildland/urban interfaces, through reductions in fine fuels (grasses and shrubs).

Milt and Daphne had an opportunity to meet with 'the team' overseeing this pilot project: BC Cattlemen's administrative personnel, research consultants, representatives from BC Ministries of Forestry and Agriculture, City of Kelowna staff, and the participating ranchers. The discussions were most informative, highlighting the scientific plan/approach, and early results from this very comprehensively-monitored plot, which used forage cage testing, indicate that there was an approximate 30% biomass/grass height reduction – without seeing any reduction in overall range health. More extensive data, (including information on 'fine fuel management and soil carbon' and 'forage and water resiliency in a changing climate') is yet to be examined/assessed. The final study, available next spring, will dictate future protocols (ie. more cows, shorter time). FOSS will post the links on our website.

FOSS would like to sincerely thank the local rancher, Colin Thomson, for his attention to public sentiment.

It's Easy to Donate!!

Do you enjoy the trails in Myra-Bellevue & Okanagan Mtn. Provincial Parks? Did you know that FOSS' Trail Maintenance Crew depends 100% on grants and donations to purchase and maintain the machinery, equipment, tools and fuel that's required for our volunteers to brush, clear and improve your trails?

New 'donation' signs are being installed at entrances to the park. It is as easy as 1-2-3! Pull out your phone, scan the QR code on the sign and donate!

FOSS' Trail boss Milt Stevenson, his grandson Scott and Louie the dog were out installing posts & signs on Oct. 21.



'Thank you' to FOSS member, Kim Inglis, for sharing this photo of her gentle-giant, William (retired police horse), who was very smitten with the cows, especially #4! Kim is also an Adopt a Trail sponsor



Fall Trail Maintenance Report (FOSS Trail Maintenance Crew)

- Milt Stevenson (Crew Boss) & Alan Milnes (Adopt a Trail volunteer manager)

In September, trail work was focused in Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park. Crews concentrated on trails that were going to be used in the BC Bike Race and MTBco's Funduro and Cranksgiving events. Work was done on Middle Bench, Upper Bench, Salamander, Jawbone, lower Vapour, 'A Deer's Tale' (Interpretive Trail), lower Bullwinkle and Scarlett's Loop. Maintenance included brushing, clearing, sign repairs and erosion mitigation. The rotting bridge on Spring By Pass Trail was removed and replaced with a culvert.

Work in Okanagan Mountain Provincial Park started in early October. Trail clearing is being done on CN Trail, Goode's Basin and Wild Horse Canyon Trail. When this work is completed, crews will spend several days on the KVR.

There are 15 new volunteers on the Trail Maintenance Crew. This brings the total number of trained volunteers to 40 — which gives Milt and Alan lots of flexibility in putting together crews and projects.



Gary, Neal & Matt on Earring

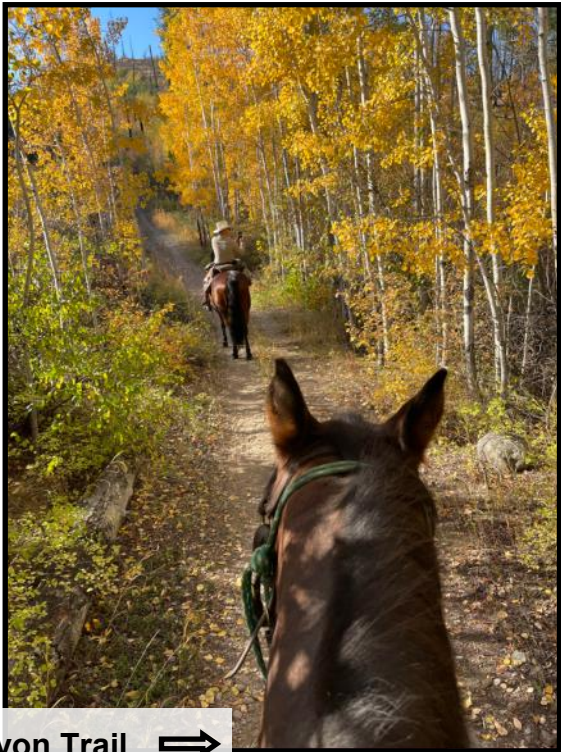


Derrick on Scarlett's Loop



CN Trail, Okanagan Mtn. Provincial Park (Jack & Cam)

Alan & Eric, CN Trail



Scott & Cynthia Walker enjoying a fall ride on Wildhorse Canyon Trail ➡

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