

# Friends of the South Slopes

June 2023 (FOSS)



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

## ***Race Classic and Earring Trails Changes in Myra-Bellevue Park***

***(Message from the Board of Directors, Friends of the South Slopes Society)***

### **1.BACKGROUND Arthon Crawford Quarry**

Trails on the west side of Myra-Bellevue Park border the Arthon Crawford Quarry. Before the park was formed, trails were made that traversed the Arthon property. They were widely used by the public. The Arthon Crawford Quarry has expanded over the years. It is an industrial mine site and activities include blasting, a crushing plant and heavy equipment use.

The management at Arthon has attempted to keep the public off the mine site using signage and building barriers. This has not been respected. Arthon has serious concerns about injury or death from an accident. Their equipment has been vandalized and intrusions on

The FOSS Trail Maintenance Crew has many trail improvement projects in Myra-Bellevue. Recently, a section of Pink Hwy Trail was rerouted around a recurrent boggy area. Volunteers are busy brushing trails.



the property can run into hundreds of people in a day! Approximately a year ago, B.C. Parks decided to work with Arthon to close down trails that easily lead from the park into the pit. The trails targeted are Middle Bench (adjacent to the Arthon pit), Surf'n Turf (at the bottom of the park) and Crawford DH (at the bottom of the park). FOSS (Friends of the South Slopes) was asked to work with B.C. Parks to come up with a solution. FOSS holds a Partnership Agreement with B.C. Parks and major projects are reviewed. FOSS communicated with B.C. Parks staff on multiple occasions and met with them for 3 field visits.

## **Central Okanagan Search & Rescue (COSAR)**

FOSS has collaborated with COSAR in recent years to make Myra-Bellevue Park more accessible to rescue volunteers. This has included significant improvements to Bellevue Access, Lost Lake and Pink Highway Trails. The remaining large, inaccessible area of the park was Crawford Canyon. A medical emergency or serious accident on this side of the park would be extremely challenging. Improving access was discussed with COSAR. They strongly supported this approach.

## **FOSS Trail Maintenance**

This group of 50 volunteers (many of them are avid mountain bikers) maintains the hundreds of kilometres of trails in Okanagan Mountain Provincial Park, KVR Trestles and Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park. The only way this can be achieved is by using UTVs, trailers, motorized bush brushers, chainsaws, trimmers and multiple hand tools. FOSS requires at least a 2 metre width trail to safely transport equipment.

In the past, access to the Crawford Canyon was done through the Arthon property. This is no longer possible, as mentioned above. That left Race Classic from Flamingo Flats as the only route. The trail was extremely dangerous to maneuver trail maintenance equipment. Significant chance of a rollover resulting in serious injury or death forced FOSS to stop using that route.

## **2. CRITERIA**

Solutions required:

- a) Safe passage for park users out of Crawford Canyon towards the bottom of the park on a 'blue' trail because of the closure of Crawford DH & Surf'nTurf as they enter the Arthon property.
- b) Safe access for COSAR for Life and Safety
- c) Safe access for FOSS Trail Maintenance for trail maintenance of trails on the Crawford Canyon Side.

## **3. PROPOSALS**

i. Earring Trail Up/Down this proposal would use Earring as an up and down trail. To do this, there would need to be several switchbacks put in on 3 different slopes with an excavator. The trail would be 2-3 metres wide. This would satisfy the 3 criteria stated above. Problems included the number of switchbacks, close proximity to the park boundary and lack of material in the steep section below the Hillbilly junction. A solution for the lack of material was found: fly donated crush from Arthon by helicopter. However, the number of proposed switchbacks and the close proximity to the Park boundary did not have easy solutions. Because of this the Earring Up/Down option was rejected as a viable solution.

ii. Race Classic Up/Earring Down This would involve changing sections of the trail bed of Race Classic, but not moving the trail. Significantly less excavator work would be required. It would also allow some drainage improvements on Pink Highway Trail, which had not been done since 2007. The 'down' on Earring is much easier. At the steep rocky section below Hillbilly it would require removal of some rock, improvement of the bed and flying in crush from Arthon. The footprint of Earring Trail would not be altered and no excavator work is required. This proposal satisfies all 3 criteria. ***This was approved by B.C. Parks.***



## ACTION

FOSS did do between 200-300m of excavator work on Race Classic. This is a much loved trail. There are plans to do groundwork on the trail, seed it and within a year felt it would be back to a single track. The feedback received was the loss of a wonderful, flowing trail. FOSS wants to address this, so it returns to the fun trail it was previously.

## REHABILITATION

B.C. Parks and FOSS will hire an independent mountain bike trail designer to design a flow trail on the excavator disturbed area of Race Classic. The trail will have to preserve a safe portion of the bed for the safe passage of COSAR and FOSS' trail maintenance volunteers. This should not be a problem. We would like to work with other users, especially Mountain Bikers of the Central Okanagan (MTBCO) to do this work. This will be executed as soon as possible. We feel that in the end, it will be a great trail again.

On the steeper Earring section below Hillbilly, FOSS would use the same designer to layout a 'blue' trail that would have features to make it an interesting trail. This part of the project would be done in the fall. This would fulfill B.C. Parks criteria for this project. After this is completed, trails into the Arthon Crawford Quarry would be closed.

Arthon Crawford Quarry is a generous corporate citizen, concerned about safety and is asking park users to respect private property. B.C. Parks is respecting this by closing trails that enter the Arthon property. FOSS is working on solutions to mitigate these changes for park users.



## FOSS Welcomes Its Newest Adopt a Trail Sponsor

The Zawislak/Furuya Family adopted Pink Highway Trail (in Myra-Bellevue) between Flamingo Flats and Obelisk Junction at Lookout Trail. The family, who is sponsoring the trail in memory of Brad Zawislak, wrote:

*"Brad was the greatest. His smile & laughter were larger than life. He had the ability to walk through any difficult situation with an optimistic can-do attitude and left an impressionable blueprint to be a better person.*

*Together was our favourite place to be, and at the end of any cloudy day, Brad would bring the sunshine home. On July 12, 2021, Brad was tragically lost to the Kelowna crane collapse. We will miss you forever, forget you never."*





# Some FOSS History.... Looking Back to 2006

On the right is a photo of the BC Forest Service wildfire lookout at the summit of Little White Mt. This photo taken in June, 1992 by Brenda Thomson. The lookout was constructed in 1914 by the 'Dominion Forest Service'.



In August, 2006, FOSS worked with BC Parks' staff to dismantle and remove the lookout which had fallen into disrepair and had been vandalized. FOSS volunteers and BC Parks' staff, their camping equipment and supplies were flown in by helicopter. The muster station was on the KVR. The work party camped at the summit of Little White Mtn. The debris and the crew were helicoptered out at the end of the three day project. FOSS volunteers were: Dan Hobson, Cathy Richards and Mark Coffey.



*Ready for pickup*



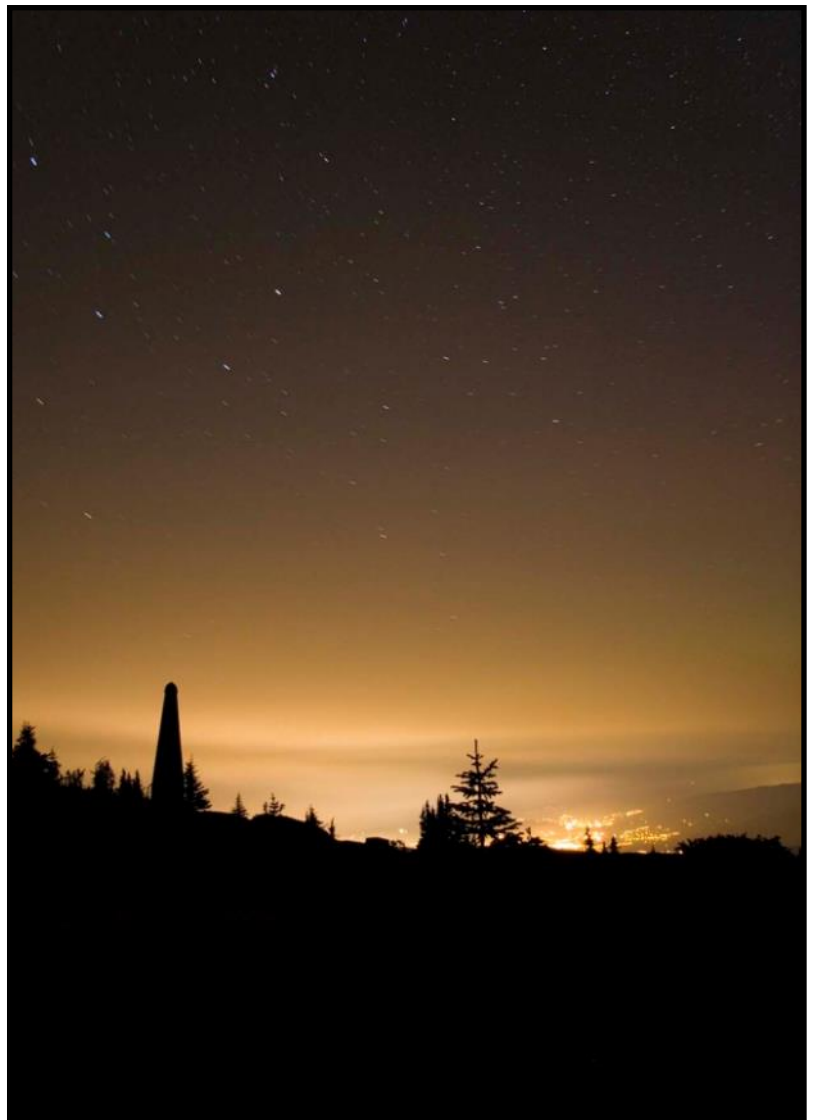
*Cathy, Dan & Mark*



*Dismantling the lookout tower*



August, 2006—Mark Coffey's spectacular photo of the night sky from their campsite on Little White Mt.



The 'Turbo Slugs' Adopt a Trail Sponsorship plaque is now up on their adopted trail, Outhouse Trail.

**Welcome Aboard!**  
Two new directors have been elected to  
FOSS' Board of Directors  
Logan Pay & Steve Hall

**Logan** is up and running as FOSS' 'tech' guy! He is migrating FOSS' very old (developed in 2000) membership data base into a more modern and interactive platform. He is also developing an Instagram page, and he will co-administer FOSS' Facebook page.

**Steve** is already getting his feet wet on FOSS' Trail Maintenance Crew.



Terry Hanson & Bert Murray—painting an Emergency Shelter on the Myra Canyon Trestle Trail (KVR). The 3rd volunteer, Ted Wilford, took the photo.



## May 6, 2023– Women's International Mountain Biking Day

There was a large turnout to this event, hosted by MTBco. FOSS was on hand to support the women's mountain biking community and to showcase its trail maintenance equipment and efforts to maintain the trails in Myra-Bellevue.



2023 Memberships.....We have fifty one 2022 members who haven't renewed their memberships for 2023 — if you are one of them, please go to the FOSS website: [www.foss-kelowna.org](http://www.foss-kelowna.org) and renew!!



## ***BC Timber Sales—Proposed Cut Blocks in the ‘Donut’ BCTS Cut Block K8U1***

FOSS was notified that BC Timber Sales (BCTS) plans to prepare and develop a new cut block (totalling 20.4 hectares) and associated roads in an area south of the KVR between Little White Forest Service Road and Bellevue Creek. The area is identified on the map on page 8.

The consultation map and legend have been cropped to fit this newsletter. BC Timber Sales asked for feedback, which FOSS' Board of Directors sent on May 21, 2023. The Board's feedback included:

- 1) retaining a sufficient and undisturbed buffer zone between the road building and cut block and the KVR/Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park border. This is important to:
  - Prevent erosion during spring runoff and heavy rainfalls.
  - Retain natural aesthetics along the KVR (noting that is part of a world class recreation corridor and part of the Trans Canada Trail).
  - Retaining a natural space for wildlife on both sides of the KVR. Reduce human-animal conflict
- 2) Maintain traffic and safety protocols for all trucks and equipment on the KVR, June Springs Rd. and Little White Forest Service Rd.

The Board received a response from the Planning Forester, BC Timber Sales, on June 8th. In summary (this is a synopsis of the BCTS response):

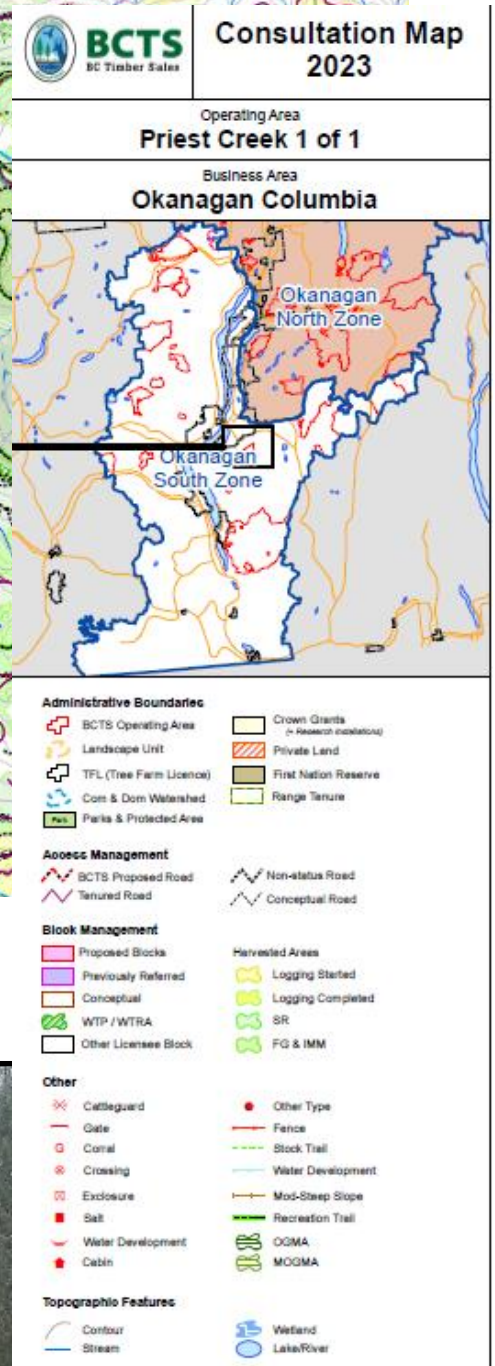
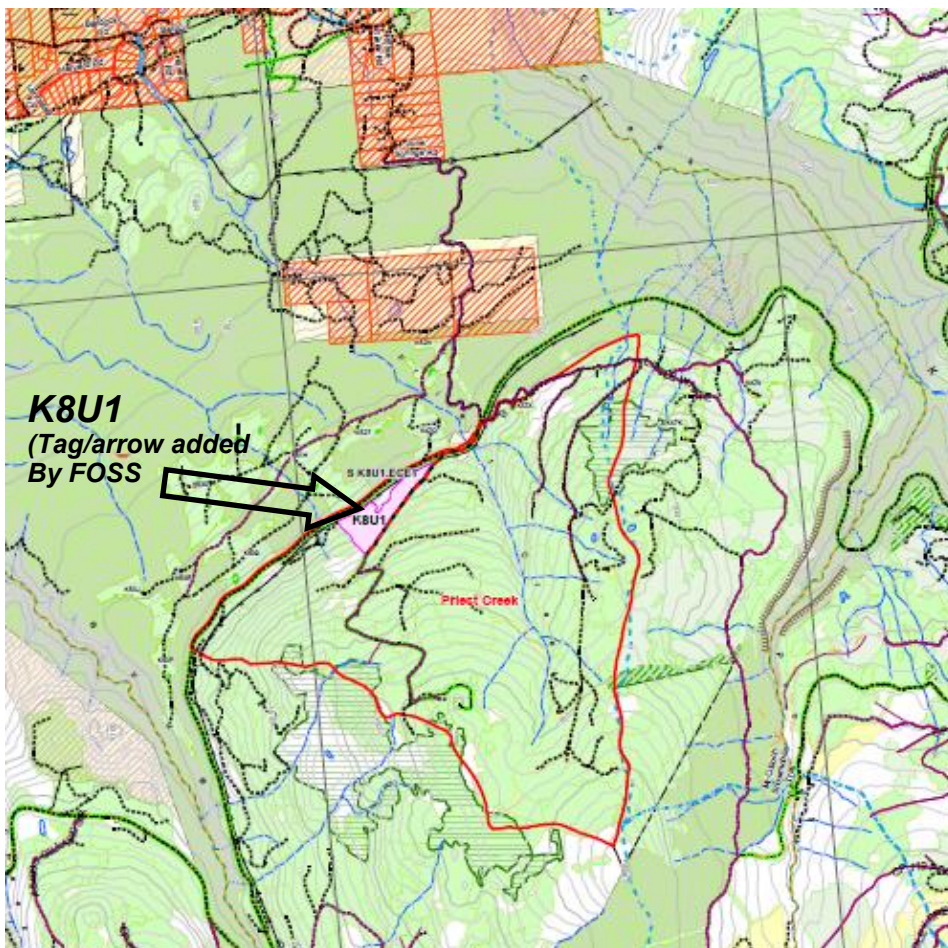
- The cut block is in the preliminary stage of planning and FOSS' input is valuable
- If K8U1 proceeds to development, they will take FOSS' recommendations under consideration
- Many of FOSS' requests will be accommodated under the requirements of the BCTS Forest Stewardship Plan #771 and related regulations
- As the KVR is classified as a Category A Regionally Significant Trail under the Okanagan Shuswap Land and Resource Management Plan, BC Timber Sales is required to establish a 100 metre wide trail management zone on either side of the trail, as well as complying with requirements for Visual Quality Objectives.
- Harvest operations will require the use of approximately 500 meters of the KVR Trail surface between the proposed harvest area and Little White FSR and harvesting and hauling during the peak recreation season will almost certainly need to be avoided.
- Restoration of the trail surface to its previous condition will be required at the completion of the project

(See Page 8 for mapping)

*Happy 1st  
Day of  
Summer  
June 21, 2023*







Recreation Sites & Trails BC posted this 'Public Notice': "A May 2023 landslide just outside and to the West of Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park (approximately 2.4 km West of Little White FSR) has closed the trail until further notice."



May, 2023 Washout on the KVR, east of Little White Forest Service Rd. near Vapour Trail