



April 2, 2025
Fairlane Trail



Box 28011 RPO East Kelowna, Kelowna BC V1W 4A6 <http://www.foss-kelowna.org> info@foss-kelowna.org

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

FOSS' Annual General Meeting Held April 1, 2025

FOSS President Cam Kourany welcomed 56 FOSS members and guests to the Society's Annual General Meeting. He presented a brief overview of 2024—highlighting the 6,369 volunteer hours logged by FOSS, 3,192 hours by the trail maintenance crews and 3,177 hours by Board Directors and other volunteers working on FOSS committees. The chairs of each committee reported on 2024 accomplishments and their goals for 2025 and beyond. Cam conveyed a message of thanks to everyone who donated to FOSS last year and thanked BC Parks for its ongoing support.



Guest speaker Dr. Maury Williams, Professor Emeritus (History) from UBCO shared his knowledge and enthusiasm for the history of the KVR. He spoke on the “Three Ages of Myra Canyon” - *The Past* (construction of the KVR), *The Immediate Past* (Myra Canyon Trestle Restoration Society/MCTRS) and the *Future* (FOSS' role in carrying on the legacy of the MCTRS). Dr. Williams' passion for the subject of the KVR was apparent! FOSS is grateful to him for his ongoing commitment to identifying historical sites and work camps along the Myra Canyon section of the KVR. Under his direction and expertise, FOSS constructed a trail to the Huissi Work Camp in 2024 and developed the information signs. — with more camps to rediscover and information signage to be installed!



Photo Credit: Logan Pay

SEE PAGE 5 OF THIS NEWSLETTER FOR FOSS' 2025 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

FOSS Trail Maintenance Crews Are Back Working in the Parks!

It's the annual sign of winter's end - FOSS trail maintenance crews are back clearing windfalls and mitigating runoff and erosion issues that emerge every spring.

Okanagan Mountain Provincial Park:

March 25, 2025 a hardy crew of four FOSS volunteers spent an eleven hour day clearing windfalls off the Wildhorse Canyon Trail, 17k to Goode's Creek down to Buchan Bay. To say the project was a challenge is an understatement! Here are some before and after photos of two of the 'monsters' the crew encountered. (Photo credits: Milt Stevenson)



Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park (MBPP):

Crew leaders and volunteers are back working on trail maintenance projects in MBPP too! Two new projects were approved by BC Parks on April 4th, after an on-site meeting where Trail Boss (and 'tick magnet') Milt Stevenson amassed twelve ticks. The existing trail through Myra Wetlands will be

rerouted parallel and east of the existing trail to take park users out of the sensitive wetland habitat. The second project is the construction of a bypass trail on Big Drops Trail. This will provide an 'easy out' for uphill traffic and a way for hikers and equestrians to skirt around the rocks that give 'Big Drops' its well-earned name. These two major projects will be coordinated with Cam Sorensen of **Contour Trails**. Volunteers from FOSS' crews will work with the contractor and receive training to elevate their trail building skill set.

If you are interested in learning more about becoming a volunteer for FOSS' trail maintenance crew, there are two upcoming volunteer orientation sessions: Saturday, April 12 at 2 pm and Saturday, April 19 at 2 pm. These orientations will be held at FOSS' Trail Maintenance Depot at the Stewart Rd. East Trailhead in Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park.

Please register by contacting Milt Stevenson at: trails@foss-kelowna.org

Have fun, work hard, meet new people, give back to your community
VOLUNTEER for FOSS' Trail Maintenance Team!



Changes to FOSS' Adopt a Trail Program

FOSS is streamlining and consolidating its **Adopt a Trail Program (AAT)**. This program was introduced in 2007 as a 'community' program. It was expanded in 2012 to include a 'sponsorship' component. **The AAT Sponsorship Program** encourages businesses/corporations/organizations/groups/families to adopt a trail in either Myra-Bellevue or Okanagan Mtn. Provincial Parks. Sponsors pay an annual fee which is most appreciated as it provides a dependable revenue stream which helps to fund FOSS' extensive and expensive trail maintenance program. The Sponsorship Program has grown to 23 sponsors. Recognition plaques are posted on their 'adopted' trail so as you are out on the trails, you can see their support. Initially, trail maintenance on their adopted trail was a requirement of the Sponsorship Program. However, going forward, this condition has been removed. All trail maintenance projects are now centralized under **FOSS' Trail Maintenance Program**, managed by FOSS Director Milt Stevenson. This is a team of over seventy trained volunteers under the direction of qualified crew leaders. Although sponsors no longer are required to maintain their adopted trail, FOSS encourages them to join FOSS' Trail Maintenance Team and to work on trail projects under Milt's leadership.

FOSS WELCOMES ITS NEWEST ADOPT A TRAIL SPONSOR-Peter & Laurie Thompson who have adopted Windfall Trail. The Thompsons (and their dogs) walk in the park almost daily.

The Community Adopt a Trail Program has been ended. There were only a few participants. They have been notified and thanked and encouraged to join FOSS' Trail Maintenance Program.

Electrification Is Happening!



If you were are at the Stewart Road East Trailhead the first two weeks of April, you will have seen lots of trucks, a skid steer, an excavator and a work crew along the roadway and at the entrance to the park. FOSS is bringing electricity to its Trail Maintenance Depot!

Over the past two years, FOSS (under the leadership of FOSS Director Alan Milnes) has been working to bring power to our two sea-can maintenance/storage units. Without electrical power to this site, it has been extremely challenging to operate the trail maintenance program and the security system. The sea-cans have no light, heat or electrical power available. Maintenance of equipment, and there is a lot of it, had to be completed offsite as a result. Our security system was insufficient to protect the sea-cans and their contents as it ran off batteries and a small 50W solar panel. Recharging VHF radios, which are essential for the safety of our crews as well as efficient crew functioning, had to be charged offsite.



The current battery system which provided electricity for our security system required constant monitoring and swapping out of the batteries every few days — to be recharged offsite. Milt Stevenson, Trail Management committee chair, has looked after the onerous task of monitoring and swapping batteries for the past 4 years! He won't be sad to see the end of the 12V deep cycle battery mambo!

There have been a few bumps along the road to getting this project approved, but now the approvals from FortisBC and the City of Kelowna have been secured, permits are in place and the project is underway. Gary Todd from Primary Engineering was contracted by FortisBC to design the electrical distribution system to the sea-cans. Gary was a delight to work with, responsive, and available when we needed him to answer questions and provide advice. **CGL Contracting** under the

leadership of Rob Rietman was hired to complete the trenching project along Stewart Road East. Rob's crew will have installed a 4 inch underground conduit over a distance of 223 meters to the park entrance. They worked efficiently and carefully paying special attention to the details.

From the park entrance, FortisBC will



Photo credits for the electrification project: Alan Milnes

erect poles to carry overhead cable to our electrical meter adjacent to the sea-cans. FortisBC will also be responsible for both hanging the cable and pulling it through the conduit to the sea-can electrical meter. Jeff Snaychuk of **Lakeland Electric** has been hired to wire the sea-cans to provide a variety of lights and plugs in both sea-cans as well as a significant upgrade to our exterior security lighting.

Having electricity will be a game changer for the trail maintenance crews. Lights, power, action! Going forward, when FOSS buys new equipment it can now consider electric tools instead of gas powered tools.

Electrification Project Fully Funded!

This project is VERY expensive, costing approximately \$120,000. **BC Parks** provided funding for the design of the system as well as a significant portion of FortisBC costs. **The Trans Canada Trail Society** provided funding through a grant competition in which FOSS successfully participated. We will soon have signs erected at our site acknowledging their contribution. **FortisBC** provided a discount in the project cost as their contribution to this project. And lastly, a very generous **private donor** (who wishes to remain anonymous) made a substantial contribution to this project that resulted in this project being fully funded. The FOSS board of directors is eternally grateful to each of these supporters for their generosity.



Welcome to the 2025 Board Members

Alan Milnes	Chair, Adopt-a-Trail Committee
Milt Stevenson	Chair, Trail Maintenance Committee
Cam Kourany	President, Chair of the Board
Sandy Hilton	Treasurer
Sharon Shepherd	Vice-President
Steve Hall	Board Secretary
Rick Ellery	Chair, Strategic Relations Committee
Paula Levens	Promotion and Communications Committee
Amanda White	Promotion and Communications Committee
Hugh Culver	Chair, Promotion and Communications Committee
Logan Pay	Promotion and Communications Committee

Amalgamation of BC Parks and Recreation Sites and Trails

Until recently, BC Parks fell under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy and BC Recreation Sites and Trails (BCRST) fell under the Ministry of Forests (until 2022 when it transferred to Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy). BCRST manages trails and recreation sites on BC's Crown Lands.

Following the 2024 BC Provincial election, these two recreation focused government departments have transformed to the new Ministry of Environment and Parks.

John Hawkings, the executive lead for recreation strategy and service transformation for the Ministry of Environment and Parks is leading the amalgamation. The restructuring went live in January, 2025.

New Branded Gear Unveiled

Along with FOSS' new logo, FOSS has purchased branded gear that can be displayed at community events and promotional activities.

Look for the FOSS tent as it celebrates BC Trails Day Saturday, June 7, 2025 at the Stewart Rd. East Trailhead in Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park.

Follow FOSS on Facebook & Instagram for current news! Search [FOSS-Kelowna](#)

BC Trails Day is part of the international celebration of Trails Day. It serves to foster awareness about responsible recreation and environmental stewardship while promoting access to and enjoyment of our province's outdoor spaces.

The **Outdoor Recreation Council of BC** (ORC) coordinates and promotes BC Trails Day and we thank them immensely for their support and advocacy for outdoor recreation in our province.

With thanks to the ORC for this clip art



FOSS Inducts New 'Members of Distinction'

At the April 1, 2025 AGM, FOSS honoured four new 'Members of Distinction'. This award is granted by the Board to a person who has rendered extraordinary service to the Society over many years and who has shown dedication and passion to the mission of the Society. Honorees are given lifetime membership in FOSS and are recognized with a plaque on the bench at Rose Lookout.

Inducted this year are (left to right) Peter Thompson, Teresa MacKenzie, Herb Blamire (accepted on Herb's behalf by Cam Kourany) and Brad Wright. All four were long serving members of FOSS' Board of Directors and contributed greatly to FOSS' success.

Peter—9 terms from 1998-2005

Teresa—9 terms 2009, 2011-2013 and 2018-2022

Herb—8 terms 2006-2010 and 2014—2016

Brad—15 terms 2009-2023

