



FRIENDS^{OF}
KANANASKIS COUNTRY

If You Admire the View, You Are a Friend Of Kananaskis



In this month's larch-filled newsletter...

- The Patagonia Trail Care Program Report: New tools & re-routes
- News from the Board
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- The Critters of K-Country: Larches?
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The Patagonia Trail Care Program Report

by Nancy Ouimet, Program Coordinator

In the 11 years that I've lived in the Bow Valley, I have never experience summer, winter, spring, and fall all in one week! The 15cm snow fall put a halt on the trail crews and we had to cancel a few of our trail days as a result. The calm after the storm has brought some warm weather and we are making the most of it.

Trail Care Update

Considering some of September looked and felt like January, it was still a productive month. 7 trail days, in 5 different locations (Bragg Creek Loggers Loop, Upper Kananaskis Lake Trail, Prairie Creek Trail, West Bragg Snowshoe Loop Trail, and Canmore Nordic Centre) with 46 volunteers contributing over 300 hours of trail work. Thank you to the volunteers and crew leaders who did amazing work!

We spent a few days working on a reroute to a washed out portion of the Upper Lake Trail adjacent to the Kananaskis River in Peter Lougheed Provincial Park. Scores of hikers began to use the rerouted section while our team was doing the final touches and they complimented on how they liked the new trail.

Proposed Reroute to Washed Out Portion of Upper Lake Trail Adjacent to Kananaskis River
Peter Lougheed Provincial Park, Kananaskis Region



Similarly, we also worked on a reroute to a washed out portion of the Prairie Creek Trail in the Elbow Valley. It was amazing to see how fast our team progressed with the treading and we were able to build a new trail within a few hours. By the end of the day, hikers were using the new and safer section.

Upcoming Trail Care Days

Looking ahead, we will be working one to two days on the Pocaterra Trail and a few other days pruning trees and shrubs that got flattened by the snow on various ski and snowshoe trails. We will be going out until the trail crews decide to hang their tools for the season, so put on your

toques and jackets and let's make the most of what's left of the season. When we have confirmed dates on projects we will send you a note and post it on the Current Projects page of our website.

Nice Shiny Tools

These tools won't stay shiny for long. To help grow the Sheep & Elbow Valley trail crew tool inventory and their efforts to rehabilitate flood-damaged trails, we purchased wheelbarrows, pulaskis, fire racks, McLeods, hand saws, and loppers. These tools are going to be used by the Sheep & Elbow trail crew and Friends of Kananaskis Country volunteers.



If you've been out volunteering, you have seen how much use the tools get and how having an assortment of different tools is essential. These tools were purchased as a result of our grant from the Banff Community Foundation designated towards the purchase of tools and equipment to rehabilitate flood-damaged trails.

Thanks again to the **Banff Community Foundation** for their support.

Volunteer Appreciation Event

Mark your calendar! We will be holding our annual Volunteer Appreciation Event on Wednesday, October 29 in Calgary to celebrating a fun and successful Trail Care season and give thanks to all the outstanding volunteers and crew leaders who worked on maintaining, improving, and building Kananaskis Country Trails. E-mail invitations are forthcoming. This event is also supported by the Banff Community Foundation. There will be food, drinks, door prizes, and a guest presenter, so make sure you save the date. We look forward to saying Thanks in person. See you there!



subcommittees, adjusting Board meeting frequency, and creating an Advisory Council – an idea I'm personally thrilled about.

The idea for the Advisory Council is to enable folks who wish to assist in the goals of the Friends, but do not have time to be full Board members. I shudder to use an allegory to the Canadian Senate, but I will. The Council's job is to provide "sober second thought" and wisdom to the Board, plus assisting us in setting strategic direction. Council members will be appointed by the Board, and long standing and full-term Board members who wish to "pull back" are logical invitees. We have several other highly active members we will be approaching, too.



As our annual trail care season draws to a close, we enter the winter with a renewed focus on managing our change. It's fundraising season, it's strategy season, it's education season – and time for our winter Speaker Series to get going. It's going to be a great winter.

Sad Goodbyes to James Early & Erica Borgstrom

One of the casualties of workload and time commitments is my Co-Chair, **James Early**, who submitted his resignation from the Board this past week.

James joined the Board in November 2012, and made significant impacts on our organization in his tenure. Even before stepping up as Co-Chair with me a year ago, James created the Governance sub-committee and assisted us in pulling together policies, procedures and practices to ensure the Friends future. He developed a new Board member orientation manual, too, and worked with the Government to renew our Cooperating Agreement. In addition, he helped draft the revised Bylaws that we passed this year.



His second main focus was that of Education, and he was instrumental in executing last winter's Speakers series, plus instigating the Interpretive Trails renewal project.

James has played "good cop" to my "bad cop" in managing the Board in the last year. We have spoken often, and the tag team approach of Co-Chairs has been extremely

successful.

Still, James is a lawyer (a Partner with Parlee McLaws) trying to develop his Environmental Law practice, and sits as a member of the Board of the Alberta chapter of [CPAWS](#) (though we had him first...). He has been nominated as one of Calgary's [Top 40 Under 40](#) in 2014 (keep your fingers crossed), and he just got married this summer. He runs an active environmental [Twitter feed](#) and [blog](#), too, and something out of all of that had to give. I will miss our chats.

Another of our Board member losses is **Erica Borgstrom**. Erica joined the Board in June 2013 and served as our Treasurer for a year. She, too, had job changes (and a promotion), and her time constraints got to be too much as well. She assisted in maintaining the ongoing excellence in our finances, helped in the transition of our Bookkeepers earlier this year, and introduced some key reporting that helped the Board significantly. She was unable to stand for re-election as Treasurer in our June Annual General Meeting, and has now left the Board entirely. We will miss her enthusiasm and cheerfulness.

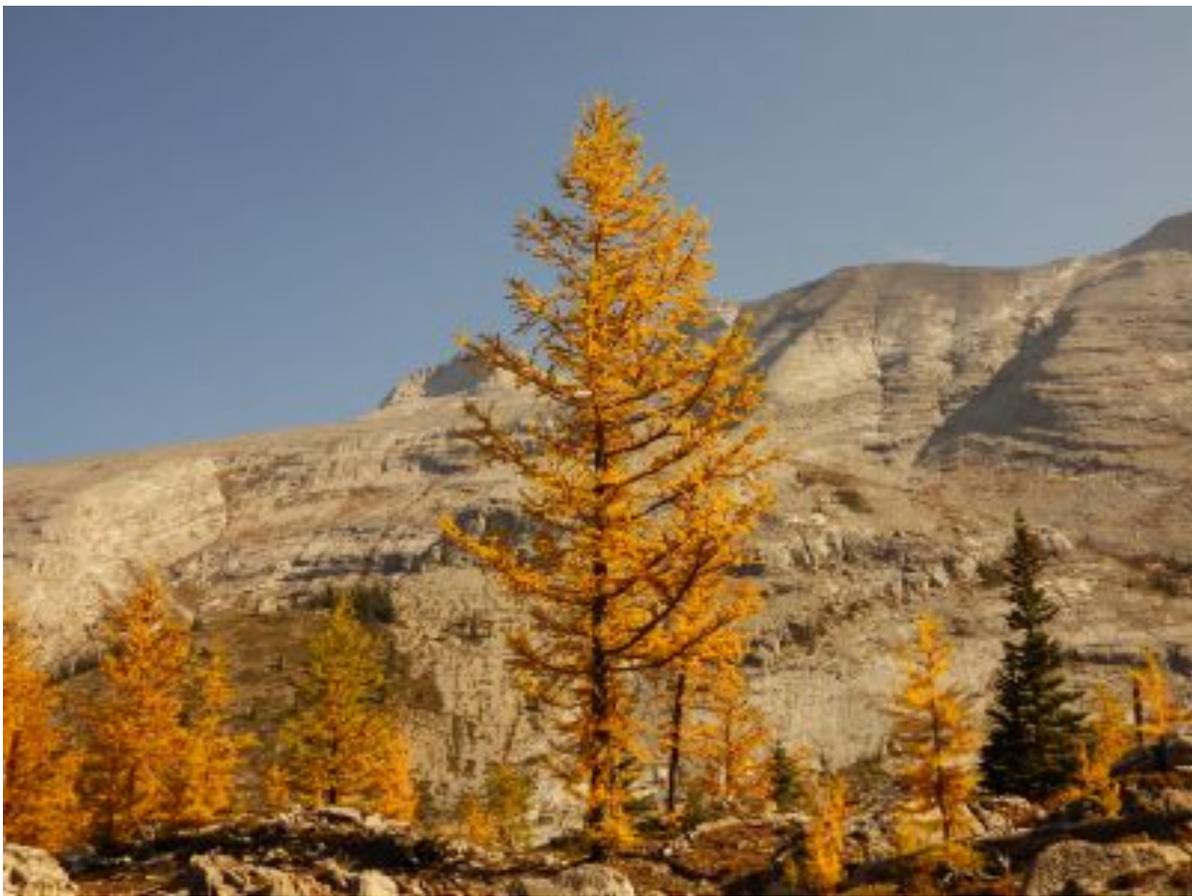
Fabulous photographs to see

Friends and supporters of the Friends, [Thirteenth Avenue Photography](#), is hosting a wildlife and landscape photography show called "The Wild Beside Us". Husband and wife team Chad Larsen & Andrea Halwas strive to find the beauty that exists in our world and capture that moment in time. The show is running at the Fish Creek Environmental Learning Centre from September 1st to October 31st. For more details, click [here](#).



More with the GBCTA

We've done some work recently with the [Greater Bragg Creek Trails Association](#). They are in their fundraising window, collecting funds for a number of their trail projects. Their work on technical mountain bike trails and equestrian trails makes what they do a little more unique. If you're interested in supporting the trails in the West Bragg area, please visit their website for more info.



The Critters of K-Country: Larches

Sixth in a series by Derek Ryder, Director of Communications

Kananaskis Country is home to a wide variety of creatures, great and small. Big ones, like bears and elk, get a lot of attention. In this series, I'm going to look at some of the ones we pay less attention to.

Okay, larch trees are **REALLY** stretching the definition of "critters". However, many years ago in university I wrote a paper for an Environmental Philosophy class called "*Are Trees Sentient Beings?*" So sure, they're critters, for this month, at least.

Because it's larch season, that 2-3 week window where there's a colour in our forests other than green, and up high, it's due to the larch. The primary larch in

question in these parts is the **Subalpine or Lyall's Larch** -- *larix lyallii*. Larches are deciduous conifers, dropping their needles in a brief blast of green turning to yellow turning to gold in the fall, but otherwise having all the attributes of other conifers like spruce, pine & fir, since it is actually in the pine family.





The Subalpine Larch is an interesting creature in that it can only survive at high altitude – generally 1,800 m and above. You can try to plant one lower, but it will wither & die, getting too hot in the summer. Subalpine larch can survive very low temperatures and thin rocky soils, which is why the tree is normally found near treeline. The northern limit of its range is up near Bow Pass in Banff Park, and it grows as far south as southern Montana. They can get to be **VERY** old trees, with the oldest one recorded in the province in Kananaskis, dated in 2012 at 1,917 years old (no, I don't know where it is). Lyall's Larch tend to grow in small groves interspersed with pine and spruce trees; a full larch forest is very rare indeed.

There are three other species of larch you also could encounter. The extreme southern end of K-Country is the extreme northwest corner of the range of the **Western Larch**, *larix occidentalis*. The Western Larch can survive down to 500 m elevation. To the north east of K-Country is the western edge of the native range of the **Eastern Larch or Tamarack**, *larix laricina*, of which there are lots in Northern Alberta.



Tamaracks like muskeg and wetlands – and full sunshine. And in Canmore (and elsewhere) you can find a LOT of non-native **Siberian Larch**, *larix sibirica*. Siberians are popular and readily available in local greenhouses, so every larch lover plants them. [Bow Point Nursery](#) carries locally sourced Tamaracks, too.



Since it's larch season, where can you go see the beautiful colours and strange shapes of the Subalpine Larch? Well **EVERYONE** likes to hike into Larch Valley in Banff (a hike of ~5 km one way and 400 m gain), but you'll find larches all over K-Country with peaceful walks of similar distance and gain, but without the crowds or need for shuttle busses and parking headaches. Pick most any hike that leads to treeline at the 1,800 m level and above,

and you'll find larches. Try Tryst Lake, Rummel Lake (a beautiful grove right next to the lake), Chester Lake (and up into Three Lakes Valley), Burstall Pass, Sparrowhawk Tarns (the most larches I have ever found in one spot), Read's Ridge, Pocaterra Ridge, the

south end of Mt. Lawson, the Black Prince Cirque, the back side of Mt. Kent – or the parking lot of the Canmore Save-On-Foods (Siberian Larch HQ).

Because there are more larches in any of those places in K-Country than in Larch Valley.



The Movies of K-Country: *The Right Kind of Wrong*

16th in a Series by Derek Ryder, CoChair and Director of Communications

There have been many movies filmed in K-Country, some famous, some less so. In this series of articles, since I'm not a movie critic, I'm going to talk about these movies in a different light: how well they depict our favourite neighbourhood.

One of the more recent movies filmed in K-Country is *The Right Kind of Wrong*, which was filmed in August 2012 in the Banff & Canmore area, and released in October 2013. Directed by Jeremiah Chechik (who directed *Benny & Joon* & *The Avengers*), and starring *True Blood*'s Ryan Kwantan, Sara Canning, Will Sasso and Catherine O'Hara, it's a movie about a guy who falls for a girl – on her wedding day – and his attempts to woo her away from her new husband.

It's a real shame this wasn't a better movie – because I'm in it. I, along with a lot of other locals, was cast as an extra. My 30 seconds of screen time is all in the first 10 minutes (and in the "Making Of..." documentary on the DVD). You can read on my personal blog [here](#), [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#) what being an extra in the movie was like (Catherine O'Hara stole my grilled cheese sandwich, but I don't hold it against her).



There's LOTS of local scenery, and it all looks beautiful. Catherine & Ryan's characters have a long conversation on the banks of the Bow River in Canmore. Ryan flies a hang glider at Fortress Mountain (and over Wind Ridge, and lands near Pincher Creek. Ah, movie magic). Sarah's trailer is parked at Two Jack Lake. Ryan works as a dishwasher at Murrieta's in Canmore. The wedding scene (the scene I'm in) was filmed at a church in Banff. Sarah leads "history walking tours" of her town, and manages to get from Canmore to Banff & back in seconds. The only thing I found strange was that they reversed a shot of Ryan riding a bike across the bridge in Canmore, so the Three Sisters are backwards. No idea why; ask Jeremiah if you ever see him (he's a very nice man).

I had **SO** wished this to be a better movie. The premise starts out interesting (Ryan's shortcoming are written up in a blog by his ex-wife called "*Why You Suck*"), then the story just goes downhill and gets confusing. There's some unnecessary nudity that earns it the R rating and makes it unsuitable for kids. Still, Ryan waved at me, Sara and the rest of the cast were really nice – and Catherine stole my grilled cheese. For me, it was worth the \$19 I had to pay to get it recently, almost a year after release. If you buy it, I'm available for autographs...



Your Donations are Always Appreciated and Needed

We are pleased to recognize the contributions of the [Calgary Foundation](#), who in 2014, made a 4 year commitment to support the Friends in flood recovery efforts.

The Friends are also supported by the [Patagonia stores in Calgary and Banff](#), who are our 2014 Trail Care Program

Title sponsor, and suppliers of high quality gear for the outdoor enthusiast.

There are many ways to express your gratitude for Kananaskis Country and we are always grateful for contributions that help us maintain our programs, operations and help us restore flood damaged trails.

Friends of Kananaskis Country is a registered charity in good standing and we provide charitable receipts for donations over \$20.00. You can reach us directly by mail at the address below, through the [donations link on our website](#), through [ATB Cares](#), or [CanadaHelps](#). Thank you for your support!

Friends of Kananaskis Country
201-800 Railway Avenue
Canmore, AB T1W 1P1



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