



**FRIENDS**<sup>OF</sup>  
KANANASKIS COUNTRY

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



### **In this month's newsletter...**

- Trail Care Update and Upcoming Projects
- Trails Fest - Thanks for coming out!
- News from the Board -- The Annual Report
- Welcome to Fred Folliot, Corrections and updates
- Kananaskis Special Places: Rock Glaciers
- Flowers of Kananaskis: Pussytoes

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### **Trail Care Updates and Upcoming Projects**

*by Nancy Ouimet, Program Coordinator*

We kicked off the Trail Care season in June, however like most years, it's off to a slow start. Parks trail crews start their season training at the end of May, and it takes a while for projects to get going before they can use our help. July is when requests really starting coming in, so get ready!

We had two days at Prairie Creek Trail (June 18 & 22) doing bioengineering work. The first of these two days didn't go as planned due to machinery failure that resulted in communication breakdown due to groups being split up and there being no cell phone coverage. We have debriefed this unexpected turn-of-events with the trail crew supervisor to ensure it doesn't occur again, and are exploring ways to incorporate the use of two-way radios when working at sites that don't have cell phone coverage.

The June 22 Trail Day focussed on integrating bioengineering techniques to improve water drainage to stabilize the trail and creeks banks. For those of you who aren't familiar with bioengineering here's a short summary:

### **Biotechnical Engineering (bioengineering)**

The use of plants for river bank protection and erosion control has a long tradition. Recently, these old soil conservation and stabilization techniques have been rediscovered and improved.



Bioengineering is the use of living plant materials to perform some engineering function. Treatments can range from simple live staking to complex systems designed to stabilize steep, eroding or unstable slope. Willows and cottonwood are most commonly used for bioengineering projects.

These species are used due to their aggressive growth on disturbed sites. The plant materials used sprout and take root.

Cuttings used in bioengineering projects should follow the “rule of thumb” that is, if it is not as big in diameter as your thumb it is too small. Minimum diameter of the cuttings at the tip end should be at least 2.5 cm, and larger cuttings tend to work better than smaller ones as long as they are not old and decadent. In terms of length, cuttings should be at least 40 cm long. Trim all of the small branches and twigs from the cutting before using it in a structure. Where live pole drains are being built, trim smaller twigs but pencil sized twigs can be left on the cutting as long as they



do not have leaf or twig buds on them.

These techniques offer “soft” engineering practices can provide possibilities to complement, improve or in some cases even replace traditional “hard” river-training constructions, such as placement of gabions or rock. These also offer a more ecologically acceptable way of bank stabilization that still compiles the land use and safety requirements.

In researching this technique, it was interesting to learn that in 1986, bioengineering techniques were first used by the Alberta department of Infrastructure and Transportation to stabilize a cut backslope on Highway 68, in the Kananaskis Country, and also to stabilize streambanks and culvert inlets at a number of stream crossings along Highway 40 and the Forestry Trunk Road, south of Grande Prairie. Field inspections of these sites conducted in 2004 verified that these projects were successful over a long period of time, even through periods of drought, heavy rainfall and flood.

### **Upcoming Trail Care Projects**

July 13 & 23: Prairie Creek Trail

July 15,16,17: Volcano Creek Multi Day Camping/Trail Building Weekend

Canmore Trail Alliance: Trail days every Thursday night (6-9pm). See [CTA Website](#) for projects and location details.

For more information and to sign up: Click [HERE](#)

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### **Trail Fest - Thanks for coming out to celebrate trails!**

Thanks to all the clubs & groups, presenters, and activity facilitators who united and showcased the many ways Kananaskis trails are used. Thanks to everyone who joined in celebrating Kananaskis trails, people & culture. And thanks to the Delta Lodge for offering a beautiful venue.

**Bonus Offer:** The Delta Lodge is offering an exclusive promo to ‘Friends’ of FKC called the “Trail Blazer” rate. The rate is a discounted mid-week rate from \$159/night. People have to call in to in-house reservations 403-591-7711 and request the “Trail Blazer” rate. Enjoy!





Oh, deer! Photo courtesy Alberta Environment & Parks

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## News from the Board -- Our Annual Report

By Derek Ryder, Chair

On June 25th, your Society held its Annual General Meeting. Required under the Societies Act, it is a formalize meeting where Directors are elected, Financial Reports are presented, essential Board legal business is done and our Annual Report tabled.

Like all good organizations, we write an Annual Report to be open and transparent to our members and to the Society at large what we have been up to. For the last 4 years, we have followed a consistent format of comparing what we achieved with what we set out in our Business Plan on a Subcommittee-by-Subcommittee basis. In a way, we write the report for ourselves to instill the discipline we need to run the Society effectively; but in reality, we write it for you and for the Public at large. We post it [on our website](#) for all to see. We encourage you to download it and give it a read (though for the sake of paper, we don't recommend you print it!)

As an outcome of the AGM, I'm pleased to say that all of our Board members and officers of the Society will be continuing in their roles. As noted below, we were also pleased to have Fred Folliot step forward to join



The Friends of Kananaskis  
Cooperating Society

**ANNUAL REPORT**  
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our Board as a Director at Large. We have much on the go, and “many hands make for light work.”

While the general public and Society members are welcome to attend our AGM, it's rare that they do – and to be honest, it's not a terribly interesting meeting anyway. But our Annual Report *is* interesting. It helps donors understand what we do with the money we get. It dissects our business and celebrates our accomplishments. It honours and acknowledges the unsung heroes that make our society work.

It is our pleasure to offer it for your consideration. Click [here](#) to get your very own copy.

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### **Welcome Fred Folliot!**

The Friends are pleased to welcome Fred Folliot to our Board of Directors. Having lived in the Bow Valley for about 25 years, Fred and his family now reside in Dead Man's Flats. Fred has been an active volunteer on other non-profit Boards in the past. He has done trail work with us and others before, has taken our Crew Leader course, done trail work on the TransCanada trail, with the Alpine Club of Canada on the Abbot Pass hut access, and is an active mountain biker and former ACMG Hiking Guide. In his “real life,” he is an Addictions Councilor with Alberta Health Services. He brings to our Board and to our Trail Care Subcommittee a mountain biking focus that we have been lacking.

We're pleased to have Fred join us!

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### **Corrections and Updates from our May Newsletter**

As regular readers of this newsletter will know, we've been running a series of articles breaking down the rather complex elements of Kananaskis Country. The May newsletter featured an article on the Kananaskis Country Public Land Use Zone (KC-PLUZ).

Friends Advisory Council Member Alf Skrastins pointed out we forgot to mention something in the article. We noted the Greater Bragg Creek Trail Association's work in the KC-PLUZ in creating their 130 km trail network. But as Alf pointed out, we neglected to mention:

- the officially authorized trails that are constructed and maintained on Moose Mountain by the Moose Mountain Bike Trail Society ([MMBTS](#)) and
- the trails between Moose Mountain and West Bragg Creek which are built and maintained by the Calgary Mountain Bike Alliance ([CMBA](#)). They look after about 70km of trails.

Each of these groups had to go through the same process as the GBCTA in arranging complex Land Use agreements.

Alf also noted that there are also Parks-maintained trails on the Public Land in the same area that we forgot to list, including Tom Snow, Sulphur Springs, Elbow Trail, etc. While some of these exist partially on bits of Park land, most lie within the KC-PLUZ.

The total visits to the West Bragg Creek/Moose Mountain trails substantially exceeds trail use in all of the rest of the KC-PLUZ.

We apologize to the MMBTS and CMBA for these omissions.



### **Kananaskis Special Places: Rock Glaciers**

*1st in a series by Derek Ryder, Director of Communications. Reprinted from our September 2012 issue*

*I was speaking to some newer members recently and mentioned some of the articles we wrote in newsletters past. They were intrigued, and so I checked the stats and found out not many of you have looked at material we have published. Based on "popular demand", I offer this reprint of one of the most interesting of Kananaskis' Special Places, and the article that kicked the series off -- Ed.*

The greater Kananaskis area protects numerous special places, and in this series of articles, I'm going to take you to a number of my favourites. Some of these hide, and some are in the open but get passed by. All are worth exploring if you want to see the unique bits of our

beloved space.

Many people have not heard of rock glaciers. Just as snow can collect, compress to make ice, and then start to flow, if you pile enough rock up on an ongoing basis in the right place, you'll eventually develop a rock glacier where the rock can flow, too. The mechanism is pretty simple: continued, long-term erosion of a mountain collects in a space referred to as an accumulation zone. But you need a bit of geography as well. Not all rockfall makes a glacier; not every scree slope is the start of one. The next thing you need is that basin to be of a shape that enables the rock to collect then has a flow path further downhill. Now if you add more rock to the top, the weight of the rock cause the rock in the basin to flow – not fall, but actually flow, like a liquid – downhill.

Some rock glaciers have inside them a core of ice, or just a lot of ice in between the rocks. This ice is far more plastic than the rock, so it enables the combination – like a slushie on steroids – to flow more easily. But you don't need to have ice inside.

Kananaskis Country has at least two examples of rock glaciers, one much better than the other. The easiest to see isn't that impressive but is conveniently located at the Rock Glacier lookout on Highway 40 just north of the Highwood Pass. Here, Mt Rae is eroding.

A bunch of siltstone from the Triassic aged Sulphur Mountain formation is falling down and builds up. The vegetation clearly shows the rock down low is moving. But don't worry about getting out of the way; the movement is on the order of 2 cm per year. Ice glaciers, by contrast, move at 10-30 m per year.

This isn't a great example of a rock glacier. From the parking lot, it just looks like a pile of rubble, as this first photo shows (*thanks to Barry Taylor, from [HikingWithBarry.com](http://HikingWithBarry.com), for use of this photo*)



The accumulation zone of this rock glacier isn't visible from the highway; it's better to get back to have a look. Like, say, from across Highway 40 at the top of Pocaterra Ridge (a hike I have personally never done but is on my list). Barry Taylor got there and took the photo below, giving much better perspective on the size of the glacier (and making it clear that one day, in a couple of hundred years, it will take out Highway 40).



This rock glacier moves so slow that the accumulation zone has grass on it. You can see that the Mt. Rae rock glacier doesn't look much like a glacier so much as a giant scree pile. But the ones in the photo below and at the top of this article look like a glacier.

This is a spectacular example of a rock glacier with two lobes. You can clearly see the flow of the rock on both lobes, and each is over half a kilometer long. They actually look like they're

made of ice, though I doubt they are. Here, a whole lot of that same Sulphur Mountain formation is sliding down just like at Mt. Rae. These are, without question, the best examples of rock glaciers in all of Kananaskis Country.

However, unlike the Mt. Rae rock glacier, these hide and are not easy to see. They come off an unnamed peak between Mt. Buller and Mt. Bogart. You can see the nose of the one on the left if you get up on Red Ridge, but only the nose.



The best vantage point (*where I took the photos at top and to the right*) is from the Red Basin hike, #79 in Gillean Daffern's Kananaskis Trails Guide, Vol 1, 4th edition. The hike leads up to a grassy shoulder of Mt. Buller that is readily visible from the Spray Lakes day use area on the Smith-Dorien Spray Trail. However, there is really no trail at all to get up there, so if you do want to go there, you need to be an expert bush-basher, have a good GPS, map and compass reading skills and a willingness to explore. And by the way – the last time I was up there, we found lots of fresh bear scat, rub trees and bear digs on the way up. The area is also popular with hunters, especially in the fall. There are lots of interesting things back there besides the glaciers – but they are for another article.

*Ed. Note: Since I wrote this article, I ran across another fabulous rock glacier, but it's over in Banff Park, and just as hard to get to see!*



### **The Flowers of Kananaskis: Pussytoes**

*5th in a series by Derek Ryder, Director of Communications*

I freely admit, I am not the flower person in my family. That honour goes to my partner, Karen, who is forever stopping on trails to take pictures of every flower she sees. Her diligent and patient teaching has introduced me to some of K-Country's pretty spectacular flowers, both big and small, and in this series, I will be sharing her fabulous images of some of them.

I have always wanted to write an article about a plant with a silly name like "Pussytoes". Yes, this is not made up. The common name comes from the flowers which allegedly look like cat feet (though not really like my cat's foot). Relatives of dandelions, the Latin genus, *Antennaria*, means "feeler" and comes from the antenna-like hairs that can form on some of the flowers.



There are at least 10 species of Pussytoes that can be found in these parts: Alpine, Field, Low, Nuttall's, Racemose, Rosy, Showy, Umber, Woodrush and Woolly. Many of these species can form seeds without pollination – meaning the offspring are genetically identical to the parent plant. Create the slightest genetic mix up and you get a new race within the same species. Which means, in short, there could be thousands of kinds of Pussytoes. They are often given the common name as "Everlasting", because the flowers appear early in the spring and stay around until the snow falls. Cut and dried, pussytoes will last a very long time



(but no cutting the ones in K-Country).

Flowers can be white and compact, white and fuzzy, slightly yellow, pinkish, quite red, and a whole lot of tones in between. While some species prefer dry, others prefer moist or woody or grassy or low elevation or high, so you can find them all over Kananaskis. On the hillside in the Wildland park behind my

house are at least 2 different species growing almost side by side, probably Woolly and Rosy, but clear identification is difficult. I even have some – probably Showy -- growing in my yard, pictured at right.



The flowers sit at the end of a long wispy, weak stem, so they can stand tall but they flop over easily. The flower stems on some species are only 4" tall, but the Showys can be a foot or more. The flowers sit on a squat bed of silvery green and usually fuzzy leaves.

Different species grow from Alaska to New Mexico. Native North Americans used some in smoking mixtures, and chewed some as gum.



**Your Donations are Always Appreciated and Needed**

We are pleased to recognize the contributions of the [Calgary Foundation](#), [TransAlta](#), [Banff Canmore Community Foundation](#), [Patagonia Elements](#), [Husky Energy](#), [Rotary Club of Canmore](#) and the many individual donors and clubs & organizations who support our work.

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 restore flood damaged trails. Friends of Kananaskis Country is a registered charity in good standing and we provide charitable receipts for donations over \$25.00. 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!

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