

Summer's here, and so are the bears. And the mosquitos.



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

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



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

- Executive Director's Report
  - Volunteer Project Updates and Upcoming
  - Celebrating Kananaskis Trails, People & Culture at Trails Fest
- News from the Board -- Notes from our AGM
- Safety In The Outdoors, Part 2: What to Carry When you Go
- Flowers of K-Country -- Wolf Willow

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**Executive Director's Report**

## **Volunteer Projects Update**

It has been a busy month for volunteer projects. A big thank you to the Crew Leaders and volunteers who participated on the following projects. Your time and energy is always appreciated.

**Tom Snow** - The 2013 flood damaged sections of the Tom Snow trail. Alberta Parks trail crew has invested numerous days into a complete rebuild and rerouting of 6 km of the historic trail, which is also part of the Trans Canada Trail. Volunteers helped with the fine-tuning the tread, and hauling cut ends trees and branches off the trail.



**High Rockies Trail** - The Friends got to work independently without Alberta Park staff. That's a big deal to us! We got to manage and execute this project, while ensuring everything was undertaken in a safe manner. Some of the sections of trail between Driftwood and the Three Sisters Dam where rocky and required material to smooth the tread. Volunteers operated two gas powered wheelbarrows, a gas tamper, and manual wheelbarrows to spread material where needed. This project kept us on our toes, thinking of the most effective ways to spread gravel of a 2km trail, and coming up with options to keep the project moving forward when one - and then both -- gas wheelbarrows decided to call it quits. A BIG thank you to volunteer **Don Hill** (and **Jeff Gruttz**) who fixed both wheelbarrows in the field and helped keep this project going. We still have more work on this project - dates are listed below.



**Trail Inventorying** - Over 25 volunteers were trained on June 11 on how to inventory Public Land trails and collect data on the condition of trails, signs, and infrastructure for the Kananaskis Public Land Use Zone. This information will help the Backcountry team identify where they should deploy their team in order to prioritize improvement projects. Volunteers are currently out collecting data from June 24 - July 9. Pictures on right side are the **Calgary**



**Newcomers Hiking** group who completed the inventory on Powderface Ridge.

**Visitation Monitoring** - Over 15 volunteers were trained on how to collect visitation

information using a survey. The survey will gather baseline demographic information about trail users in Kananaskis. Questions are designed to complement, and not duplicate, data generated from the remote cameras and trail counters. This project will commence in mid-July. If you're interested in helping Alberta Parks meet their conservation and recreation goals without digging dirt - here's a great opportunity to get involved. Contact Nancy to get more information at [nancy@kananaskis.org](mailto:nancy@kananaskis.org).



### **Upcoming Volunteer Project**

#### **High Rockies Trail: July 13, 14, 15, 17**

We're getting close to finishing this project...but we have a few more days of work to get there. So come help fine-tune some of the High Rockies Trail between Driftwood and the Three Sisters Dam. Some of the sections are rocky and could use material to smooth the tread.

Here's a fun idea...volunteer on this project and stay at the the [Spray Lakes West Campground](#)! You'll only have a 5 minute walk from your campsite to the work site.

### **SIGN UP HERE**

#### **Canmore Trail Alliance**

The Friends launched the Canmore Trail Alliance (CTA) in 2016 to engage trail users and local land stewards in trail maintenance and building in the Canmore Area through community initiatives that improve Canmore's recreational opportunities, enhance its trail conditions, and emphasize the importance of ecological integrity and sustainability.

Community trail days are every Thursday night from 6-9pm and occasional weekends. No sign up required.

See the [CTA Website](#) for more details.

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### **Celebrating Kananaskis Trails, People & Culture at Trails Fest**

We hosted the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Trails Fest on June 11 at the Canmore Nordic Centre.

It was great to see so many trail recreationalists united. Participants got to learn about cool trail projects, explore diverse trail related clubs, groups and associations, and take part in facilitated trail activities, workshops and presentations.

MLA **Cameron Westhead** and Canmore Councillor **Ed Russell** welcomed participants

and shared their appreciation for Kananaskis Country and its recreational opportunities.

A big thanks you to **Julia Lynx**, Program and Events Assistant for organizing a successful event - and the Canmore Nordic Centre for allowing us to take over the Day Lodge.

**TRAILS  
FEST**

**THANK YOU FOR VOLUNTEERING  
AND JOINING US IN CELEBRATING  
KANANASKIS TRAILS, PEOPLE  
AND CULTURE!**

Alberta Environment and Parks  
Alberta Parks Inclusion Program  
Alberta Hiking Association  
Alberta Wilderness Association AWA - Historic Horse Trails  
Association of Mountain Bikers Protection and Enjoyment AMPEE  
Alberta National Mountain Bike Race Association  
Alberta Wilderness Association AWA  
Biosphere Institute of the Bow Valley  
Bow Valley Riding Association  
Calgary Outdoor Recreation Enthusiasts  
Canmore Trail Alliance CTA  
Canmore Community Cruisers  
Canmore and Area Mountain Bike Association CAMBA  
Girl Guides of Canada  
Canada Parks and Wilderness Society CPWS  
Great Divide Trail Association GDTA  
Footprints Overseeing  
Kananaskis Trails  
Lynx Trail Running  
McElhannay  
Meander Trails  
Mountain Equipment Co-op  
Rocky Mountain Adaptive  
Red Bull  
Rocky Mountain Ramblers Association  
Runde Mountain Cycling Club  
Seniors Outdoor Club Calgary  
Slow and Steady Hikers  
Town of Canmore  
Trail Sports  
WildSmart Canmore  
Yamaska Mountain Adventures  
Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative Y2Y

We welcome your feedback and insights on how Trails Fest was for you. Email [julie@kananaskis.org](mailto:julie@kananaskis.org) with your thoughts, innovative ideas and reflections.  
Stay in touch!

[www.kananaskis.org](http://www.kananaskis.org)

**FRIENDS**  
OF KANANASKIS

Canmore Nordic Centre  
Alberta Parks  
City of Canmore



*A grizzly sow and her cub check out a Kananaskis trail sign. Photo courtesy Alberta Environment & Parks*

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## **News from the Board -- Notes from our Annual General Meeting**

*By Derek Ryder, Chair*

As we are incorporated under the Societies Act, we are required to hold an Annual General Meeting with an agenda that's specified in our Bylaws. While it's open to the public, it's really not a terribly interesting meeting like some of our regular Board meetings (which are occasionally quite entertaining, if that's a good thing). Rather it's full of procedures like Board re-election and Officer and Financial appointments.

Board members serve a term that "ends" in the 3rd AGM after they are elected, but Board members can stand for re-election after 3 years, and also quit any time. In this year's AGM, **Kevin Smith** stood for re-election, and **Loralie Johnson**, our Treasurer for the last 4 years, stepped down. The Board once again elected me as Chair, **Kevin** as Vice Chair, **Kayla Simpson** as Secretary, and welcomed **David Schultz** as our new Treasurer.

I know I speak for the whole Board in being sad to see Loralie leave the Board. She and I were elected to the Board in the June 2012 AGM, so we have spent a lot of time together over the last 5 years. Loralie took over as Treasurer in August 2013, and during her tenure, made substantial improvements in the financial management of the Society. She is

the one who takes the credit for “fixing” the Societies financial woes of yore, upgrading our accounting and improving the budgeting and reporting processes.

To that end, one of the processes that Loralie and I re-introduced when we joined the Board was the publication of the Annual Report. Our reports from 2012-2013 through 2015-16 were substantial tomes running 26+ pages; we had a lot to prove in some of those years about demonstrating that our affairs were in order. Much has changes since then, so this year under Nancy’s guidance, we deliberately condensed the report down, and split it in two. We drilled our 2016-17 Annual Report down to 5 easy-reading pages, and published our Financial Statements separately. Both are available from the Annual Reports Page in the library on our website [here](#).



It is an honour (and a lot of fun) to work with this Board of seasoned veterans and new folks, too. We are always looking for new folks to join us, especially if you have financial or fundraising backgrounds. Why not consider giving it a try?

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### Get Well Vince!

Our good friend **Vince Zafra** was injured in a climbing accident on June 18th. Vince is the only non-Board member to sit on a Friends subcommittee, helps us extensively with putting on our Winter Speaker Series, manages our Instagram account, and generally is an awesome person and incredible help to the Society. We all wish him a speedy recovery.



## Safety in the Outdoors, Part 2

*2nd in a series by Derek Ryder, Director of Communications*

We all want to play safe in K-Country, and in this series of articles, I'm going to cover the basics of how to have a great day out there. Here's some of what the series will cover:

- What to **KNOW** before you go
- What to **CARRY** when you go
- What to **WEAR** to make sure your day is great
- What to **EAT** to keep your energy up
- What to **DO** if everything falls apart and you need help.

This series is being produced with the support of **Kananaskis Public Safety**, and in particular, thanks to **Morgen Funston** of KPS for her wisdom and suggestions.



## What to **CARRY** when you Go

It's really hard to be prepared for any adventure without an actual **PACK** of some kind. For any trek of more than about 20 minutes, it's impossible to have what you need on you in your hands. I've seen people starting an ascent of Grotto Mountain – a 7 hr adventure – with just one tiny pack for 4 people, and the other three were carrying 500 ml water bottles in their hands. Getting used to carrying a pack gets you used to carrying the right gear.



A good pack is light, has air ventilation so your back doesn't sweat, has at least 3-4 pockets to stay organized, comfortable shoulder straps (with a chest strap) and a good waist belt, and a rain cover to keep contents dry. It moves with you, not by itself (because a swinging bag can readily throw you off balance). Messenger bags are great for the city, not for the mountains.

The first thing that goes in your pack is your **EMERGENCY KIT**. We wrote an extensive article on emergency kits back in [February 2014](#), so I just will summarize the minimum contents here, without explaining why and how much:

- A space blanket
- A foam sit-upon pad
- A plastic rain poncho
- A windproof lighter
- An LED headlamp
- A map and a compass
- Toilet paper
- A first aid kit, plus extra bandaids
- A water filter
- A 2,000-calorie food pouch
- A Swiss Army knife
- A whistle
- Emergency warm clothes including a hat and gloves



Remember that your emergency gear is just for emergencies and you probably won't touch it for the day, except your sit-upon and your map.

Mountain bikers really need to carry a **TIRE REPAIR KIT** and **AIR PUMP**; flats can happen anywhere. I got a flat on the Legacy Trail last year, and on the Watridge Lake trail 3 years ago. A **TOOL KIT** helps a lot; I was once stranded when one of my pedals fell off, and I had to push my bike for almost 5 km all because I didn't have a wrench.

You need to carry **WATER**, and probably more than you think is necessary. Most

everything you do in the outdoors will make you thirsty. As it gets warmer, you'll sweat more and will need to stay hydrated. Count on at least 1.5 litres per person for a day hike, more for overnight trips, more for really hot days, more still for big vertical climbs or very long trips. Some people like hydration packs that fit in your backpack and have a little hose to suck on. I'm personally a fan of plain plastic water bottles, because I partially freeze them and carry them in home made insulated bags, meaning I have ice-cold water all through my day. I also have an extra liter (usually fully frozen in the morning) in my car for the end of the day. One day, I will write about an adventure I had in K-Country where I got badly dehydrated; it's not fun, and I will never run short of water again.

The [February 2014](#) article on emergency kits talks about drinking water from backcountry sources, and we looked at water treatment options like purification tablets, filters and UV systems in our [November 2015](#) newsletter.

Always carry your **PHONE** -- and a little more. Ten years ago, phones weren't nearly as useful as they are now. There are many apps that can help you with navigation, they could be a lifeline to help if you can get cell service, their GPSs work even without cell reception, they have built in (better than nothing) flashlights – the list goes on. Phones don't like water, so carry a **ziplock sandwich bag** for it if it rains. Program your phone in advance with the Kananaskis Public Safety number: 403 591 7755.



But I strongly recommend that if you're going to bring and rely on your phone, splurge \$20 on a **BACKUP POWER** for it. I use my phone's apps to track my progress all day and will have 40% or more battery life at the end of the day. But Kananaskis Public Safety is full of stories of people whose phone batteries ran out, sometimes while lost and trying to be rescued. My phone has a 1,850 mAh battery, and my back up power bank has 5,000 mAh, enabling me to re-charge my phone almost 3 times. The power bank does weigh more than my phone, and I have to remember to keep the correct charging cable with it in my pack.

If you can afford them, **emergency satellite locator beacons** are awesome. Devices like SPOT, inReach and others – or even a full fledged satellite phone – dramatically reduce the time for people to find you if you need help. In general, the two-way communication capability of inReach or a sat phone are far preferred over just pushing the “SOS come get me” button on a SPOT device. These devices, though, are not at all cheap to own or maintain.



Don't show up at a trailhead without the **ROUTE INFORMATION** you got during your “know before you go” exercise. Carry the map mentioned above, plus a description of the route you're going on. I'm old school and tend to carry Gillean's entire guidebook

describing my hike or bike route; I find it fun at lunch to look at other routes in the area. reading their descriptions to see if I would like to do them.

But if you want to save weight, you can always take a photo on your phone of the page of the guidebook for the route you're going on, or carry just a printed photocopy. I learned the hard way that ink jet printer ink bleeds when it gets wet, so shy away from printing single pages any more.

You must, of course, carry your **BEAR SPRAY** and know how to use it. It needs to be *on you*, not in your pack, and you need to be able to get at it within 2 seconds. Everyone over the age of about 10 should have their own; kids younger than that should be between 2 folks with bear spray, and everyone needs to be within a tight group of 6 m or less. Hiking solo? Consider carrying 2 cans.



Of course you're going to carry **FOOD**, but that's for next month's article on What to Eat. You'll also need extra **CLOTHES**, but we'll cover that in the What to Wear article.

In summary for what to **CARRY WHEN YOU GO**:

- A proper **pack** for each person;
- Your lightweight **emergency kit**;
- Mountain bike **tire repair and tool kits**
- More **water** than you think you need;
- Your **phone**, and an extra **power supply**. Consider an **emergency locator beacon**.
- Your **route information**;
- Your **bear spray**;
- **Food** and **extra clothes**



### **The Flowers of K-Country: Wolf Willow**

*7th 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.

It's unmistakably silver and only looks a little bit like a willow, so should probably be called by its other name, Silverberry. But everyone knows this flowering shrub by the common name Wolf Willow, even though it's not a willow, but rather, a member of the Oleaster Family, and thus related to Buffaloberry.



No matter what you call it, you sure can't miss it. Even if you don't see the medium height shrub's iridescent silver leaves, you can smell it a mile away. The plant is covered from top to bottom in tiny, shiny, silver scales. And in May and June, it has tiny yellow flowers which emit that pungent aroma that to me says "spring" and "flood" at the same time, because the aroma coincides with the high water we get during spring run off.



I always think of this shrub as a river valley dweller, but you'll find it all over the place in dryer soils, gravelly and disturbed places like roadsides, hillsides and ravines. It can grow as single plants or as aromatic clumps (sometimes all along a trail, as in the photo), and can be found as far south as Wyoming and Utah, and as far north at the Yukon. It's also a popular ornamental plant for gardens.

Those wonderfully smelling flowers turn into a tiny fruit, which is dry and mealy and was only ever used as a famine food by native North Americans. The Blackfoot and the Cree used the single seed inside the fruit to make beadwork. Some B.C. tribes used the tough, fibrous bark for baskets and ropes.



**Your Donations are Always Appreciated and Needed**

We are pleased to recognize the contributions of the [Calgary Foundation](#), [FortisAlberta](#),

[TransAlta](#), [Banff Canmore Community Foundation](#), [Patagonia Elements](#), [Husky Energy](#), 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!

Friends of Kananaskis Country  
201-800 Railway Avenue  
Canmore, AB T1W 1P1  
403-678-5593

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