

The smoke needs to clear -- so we can see all the bears that are out and about!



FRIENDS^{OF}
KANANASKIS COUNTRY

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



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Executive Director's Report

by Nancy Ouimet

Volunteer Projects Update

It has been another 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.

High Rockies Trail - We spent another three days on this project in July, until the two gas powered wheelbarrows quit on us. These [Canycom](#) wheelbarrow's have proven to be essential to the efficiency of the project, moving up to 1,000lbs of gravel/load at about 2-3km/hr. But they have also proven to be finicky with a tendency of having mechanical issues.

Superstar volunteer Don Hill has come to the rescue and been working to repair the wheelbarrows. Thank you to the volunteers who moved several loads of gravel 'manually' to keep the project going and make progress. We only have about 200m of trail left to complete (trail section stretches over 2km) once the wheelbarrows are up and running again.



Lantern Creek/Picklejar Lakes Trail - While a bit remote, the Lantern Creek Trail is the "official" route to the Picklejar Lakes, a very popular fishing lake that's also popular with backcountry campers. At this time, random camping is permitted in the area, but an official campground has been proposed to reduce impact on the high alpine terrain. The trail is also used by horses, and between that and it's



"evolutionary" creation (it's just an informal route that has come into use over time, and was never planned), there are several sections desperately in need of help. Parks crews from the Peter Lougheed District are working on sectional re-routes of the trail (including improving a very steep section near the lakes). Friends volunteers are helping hand-build



a new portion of the trail in two forested sections that are about 3 km out (and 250 m up) from the parking lot. These are bypasses around poorly drained sections of trail that are in miserable shape. When done, it will become a hiking-only trail (horses will be directed to the lakes via another route), so is much narrower than other machine-built, multi-purpose trails we've been working on in places

like Tom Snow. The photos show a before and after view of the build of a small section. See below for another opportunity to work on this trail.

Galatea Lake/Guinn's Pass Reroute - Over the last few weeks, Alberta Parks has been building a new alpine trail from Galatea Lake that will replace a portion of Guinn's Pass. We were fortunate to get invited to help build this unique backcountry trail. Several volunteers jumped to the opportunity! Although it was hard work, they all had an amazing experience...

"It was nice to take a helicopter ride but to put in the work on the trail was the highlight. This trail will be an essential hike for people. It is so scenic with the pinnacle of Galatea hanging above the two lakes and The Opal Range yielding to Fortress. Quite a view! Of course you are on the steep terrain on Mount Kidd and it is stunning.

You get so focused on the work at hand and making your section of trail the best in the Rockies and you forget to look up. But when you do you want to sit down for the day. This trail will be a classic for the next hundred years. That it traverses many avalanche chutes and has some really hard trail building sections add to the allure. That it joins the spectacular Ribbon lake area will allow many loop options add to the experience. The trail crew really do work and you can't possibly keep up to these dedicated people. As a volunteer, I was there to help and would like to think I was instrumental in the whole trail but my little sections are going to be special to me! The work they accomplished was monumental."

-- Friends Volunteer!

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. Volunteers have started collecting information and the project will run into September. If you see FOKC volunteers gathering information at trailheads, say hi and take a minute to do the survey.



[Upcoming Volunteer Projects](#)

Lantern Creek/Picklejar Lakes Trail - August 4: We have another day of work to complete the project we started on July 28-29. We will be working with Alberta Parks on the Picklejar Trail mentioned above.

[SIGN UP HERE](#)

[Projects – To be posted soon](#)

High Rockies Trail: 1-2 days to complete this project once the 2 gas powered wheelbarrows have been fixed.

Rawson Lake Interpretive Signs: 1-2 days to install interpretive trail signs along the

Rawson Lake trail.

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



Mom and her fawns in July. Photo courtesy Alberta Environment & Parks

News from the Board -- Policies

By Derek Ryder, Chair

Your Board has been hard at work revamping the governance structure of the Society now that we have moved to a Policy Board structure. One of the primary jobs of the Board

under that structure is to... set policy (what a surprise).

Last fall, before starting this transition, the Board had in place 6 policies: Media, Recognition, Gas Cards, Advisory Council, Safety and New Board Member Onboarding. In addition, we had descriptions of 6 subcommittees with policy statements embedded in them.



In our annual March offsite, our facilitator led us through a process that encouraged us to think about what other policies we might require. In late May, the Governance Subcommittee identified the need for 5 more, and subsequently added a 6th: Advocacy, Confidentiality, Cooperating with the Government, Fixed Assets, Governance and Recruiting. These were written in June and circulated to the Board prior to our Annual General Meeting.

At a meeting after our AGM, our facilitator took the whole Board through a guided process to identify other policies we might need, resulting in 4 additional: Fundraising, Succession, Executive Director and Cooperating with Like Minded Partners. Work is underway on all four of these.

Our plan is to finalize all of these by late August, and vote on all of them in our September Board meeting. In addition, we're developing a Policy Framework Summary document which will be made available to all Board members.

Most of these Policies govern how the Society is managed, so only affect members on the periphery. Any policy like the Safety Policy, which directly affects Society members and not just Board members, will be posted in the Library area of our website.

Help Alberta Parks by filling out a survey!

If you use trails, Alberta Parks wants to hear from you. This summer, you're going to see the poster on the right at trailhead kiosks throughout Kananaskis Country. It's inviting you to take part in a short, 5 min on-line survey to find out about trail use. The data will be used to help in Park planning and management programs.

This is the first time in many years that Parks planners have collected data on who's where and what they're up to. No personal information is collected.

Have your say on how you use trails in Kananaskis. Click [here](#) to go directly to the survey site.



The poster is titled "We need you! Tell us about your day!". It features a blue header and footer. The main text is white on a light blue background. It includes a list of survey questions, a small photo of a group of people on a trail, and a photo of a deer. The footer has the Alberta Parks logo and the text "Thank you for helping us make Kananaskis Parks even more amazing for people and wildlife!".

We need you!
Tell us about your day!

Alberta Parks is conducting a trail user survey throughout Kananaskis Parks to determine:

- What kinds of recreational activities trail users are engaging in
- Group sizes and the number of vehicles people arrive in
- Basic demographics of the Kananaskis Trail User

Results will be used in Park planning and management.

YOUR input is important for Kananaskis Parks!

No private information will be collected and your answers are completely anonymous. The survey will take less than 5 minutes to complete.

Fill out the survey now at: www.albertaparks.ca/kansurvey
Or take a card below and fill it out at your convenience!
No cards left? Take a picture of this poster and go to the link later.

Thank you
for helping us make Kananaskis Parks even more amazing for people and wildlife!

Alberta Parks



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 **WEAR** when you Go

I guess you could summarize this entire article by simply saying “**Not This**” to the photo at right. That’s Lady Gaga out for a hike in California. Among other things, you’ll note she’s wearing high heels.

That might seem like a joke, but it was real, and it’s probably not even the most unusual things Kananaskis Public Safety have seen people wearing that have led to back country – or even front country – rescues.

Let’s start with the most egregious of Ms. Gaga’s errors: correct **FOOTWEAR**. Kananaskis Public Safety believes about 1/3rd of the accidents they respond to are related to improper footwear. You need footwear with a good lug tread pattern, solid ankle support, and some kind of toe cap for all the rocks you’re going to find in K-Country. Some people swear by all leather, some are OK with a mix of leather and mesh material, some like above the ankle, some below, and if those are the decisions you’re making, you’re in the right frame of mind. What doesn’t work is:



- **Flip flops**. You may laugh, but I’ve seen them on the Ha Ling trail.
- **Skateboard shoes**. The smooth tread on these will be perilous on downhill descents on gravel surfaces where you’ll feel like you’re on a bed of marbles;
- **Open toed sandals**. There are some that are “made for hiking”, but the same way an “all season” tire is really only 3 seasons here, open sandals are not for hiking here. One crossing of a scree slope will show you why. Use your Texas to cross streams, but the straps simply don’t offer enough connection to your feet for any distance over uneven terrain.
- **Most running shoes**. These are made for running, not hiking, and while they would probably be fine for that walk to Troll Falls, anything more challenging will prove they lack the torsional rigidity needed for long distance hiking.

Having **waterproof boots** is a personal choice. A bunch of SnowSeal can waterproof most any leather boots, but other than boots made from all leather, every other boot will let

in water. It's entirely up to you if you can handle the squelchies.

Make sure you have broken in your hiking boots before heading out. I once met someone descending Ha Ling in bare feet; their new boots had given them such bad blisters that they preferred the pain of a barefoot descent to the pain of their boots.

I guess hiking in a skirt could work, though Ms. Gaga's looks like it would catch on every tree branch and rosebush here. My nephew likes hiking in a kilt (yes, they make [hiking kilts](#)). For most of us, though, it's pants and shirts, and it's firstly about the **MATERIAL** and secondly about **VERSAILITY**.



You want your material to be a **COTTON-FREE product made from synthetic fibre**. To this end, Ms. Gaga may have gotten it right. Polyesters and their ilk wick moisture and dry quickly; anything with cotton in it (including cotton/poly blends) absorbs moisture (like sweat or rain) and take forever to dry, getting you cold in the process. Way back when, wool was the best fabric because it was warm when wet (though it wasn't durable), and merino wool is popularizing it again especially for socks and base layers. (The kilt at right is a wool/nylon blend; avoid the all cotton ones).

Personally, I like the versatility of zip-off cargo pants, enabling me to start the day in long pants, and switch to shorts when it warms up. I like the versatility of a long-sleeve hiking shirt when it has tabs to hold the sleeves if I roll them up, and the ventilation you can get in a polyester hiking shirt is a really good thing. I use a 2-sock system to reduce the risk of blisters, with an ultra thin polyester pair under my wool hiking socks (which happen to be [Darn Tough](#) socks, but any sock designed for hiking with more than 85% wool is fine). My wool socks keep my feet warm even if I develop the squelchies (*my boots are not waterproof*).



For me, the hardest layer is underwear. Men's underwear is almost always cotton. I've been drenched in a rainstorm, but had everything dry within an hour except my shorts (not a comfy feeling). I've just never found fast dry, polyester undies. Suggestions are welcome.

In the winter, polyester or wool as a **base layer** is essential; get rid of those cotton long johns that will somehow always get wet and freeze on you.

Once you're dressed, you need to think about **WARM LAYERS**. When it comes to warm layers, you always need to carry at least 1 more layer than you think you need. There are all sorts of varying thicknesses of polyester pullovers and fleece that work just great, as would a really lightweight wool sweater. Making a comeback is down; it's windproof (which fleece isn't), ultra light and packs down to nothing, but much more expensive and it can't handle being wet at all. Still, I normally carry my down sweater as an extra warm layer winter and summer, in addition to an extra fleece/synthetic pullover.



Possibly the worst thing you can hike, climb, paddle or bike ride in is **blue jeans**. They're hot when it's hot, cold when cold, cold when wet, absorb moisture like crazy and never actually seem to dry. Coming up next in the "never wear it" department is a **cotton T-shirt**, so leave your 1994 Eagles "Hell Freezes Over" reunion tour shirt at home. Again, you laugh, but again, I was caught in a rainstorm once with someone wearing that exact shirt with his jeans, and he was soaked. He verged on hypothermic, and I knew he wouldn't be dry until he got home.



Being soaked is bad, so your clothes need to include **RAIN GEAR**. I've tried it all and hate almost all of it. This whole "waterproof breathable" thing of GoreTex and others just doesn't seem to work for me; I always seem to get wet from the inside on a rainy day. So my go-to is a brimmed hat with a waterproof poncho. The hat keeps direct rain off my face (I hate that). I like ponchos because they drape over you and your pack, covering almost down to your knees, but have such wide open sides that the ventilation keeps me only slightly damp. The Gore-Tex raincoat I own channels water to the waist belt of my pants, meaning everything from the waist down gets drenched; ponchos don't do that.



Here in the land of ticks, I wear **gaiters** until July 1 each year, and they happen to be waterproof. With the poncho, being outside in the June-soon rainstorms, I usually have only wet knees and the squelchies.



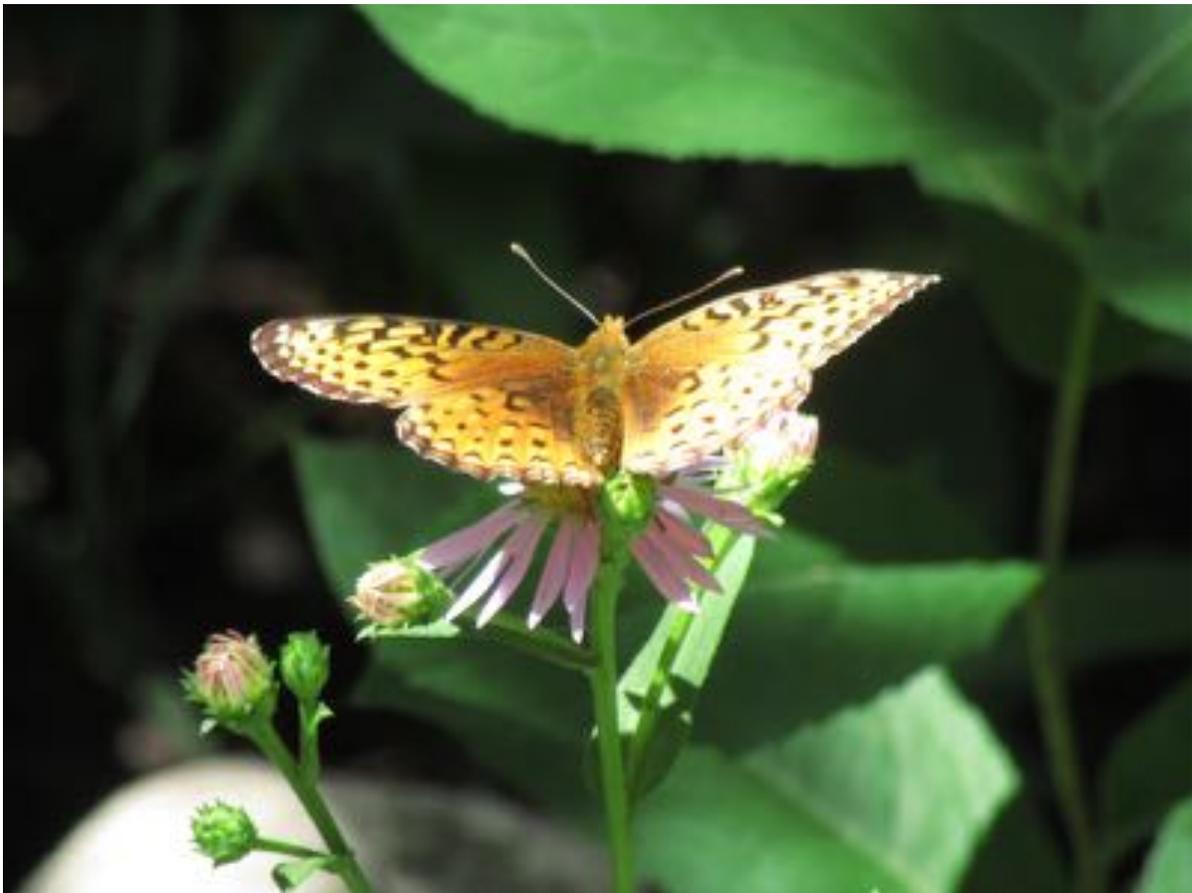
My emergency gear always has a pair of fleece gloves in it, but in the winter, a **second back-up spare pair of gloves** is a godsend. Finding the exact right glove that keeps your hands warm without

being wet is a challenge; if your hands do start to get cold in a damp glove, being able to swap out can save your fingers.

In the end, being safely dressed in the outdoors means **forgoing style**, which Ms. Gaga has in spades, and **embracing functionality**, which she does not.

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

- Proper **footwear** for the sport you're engaged in;
- Clothes made of **synthetic** fabrics, and **NO COTTON**;
- **Versatile** clothes that can fit any environmental condition;
- **Base layers** and **warm layers** to match your budget and the conditions;
- An **extra warm layer** (or 2) for the coldest and ugliest conditions you're likely to encounter;
- **Rain gear** and **gaiters**;
- **2 pairs of gloves** in the winter



The Critters of K-Country: Titania's Fritillary

22nd 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.

There cannot be a better-named butterfly than a Titania's Fritillary. Just try to remember it when you see this butterfly flitting around Kananaskis. It's not the only bright orange butterfly you'll see, but it is surely the most common. Why Titania's Fritillary? Ask German entomologist [Eugenius Johann Christoph Esper](#), who identified it as the first in a new family and named it in 1790.



The top wing has many black spots on the orange background, but the underside is very unique with a yellow chevron pattern. This is one of those butterflies that usually sits still



with its wings wide open and so seeing the underside can be challenging; I've never successfully photographed it.

Titania's Fritillary is indeed a very common butterfly around the world, though it is endangered in Finland for some reason. In addition to mountainous regions and the northern boreal forest in Canada and the northern US, this northern circumpolar species can be found in the Pyrenees, the Alps, the Baltic, Scandinavia, Russia and Asia.



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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!

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