



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](#)

August has been another great month of trail work. If you enjoy building new trails and trail reroutes that replace degraded sections of trail - this summer has offered great opportunities. A big thank you to the 19 volunteers who worked on the 5 trail projects and contributed 120 hours towards improving Kananaskis trails! Note we have 2 more August trails days scheduled Aug 25-26 that are not counted yet. Here are a few updates on our August projects:

Lantern Creek/Picklejar Lakes Trail - This is the official route to the Picklejar Lakes, a popular fishing lake that's also popular with backcountry campers. Friends volunteers completed a few days, building reroutes around poorly drained sections of trail that were in bad shape. We have now moved higher up the trail and started working on a longer reroute that will replace the eroded steep section of trail, shown in the picture.



High Rockies Trail - We spent "solar eclipse" day working on this project with one gas powered wheelbarrow - until it broke - again! Needless to say we are brainstorming other ways to get this project completed without using these wheelbarrows, or having to use manual wheelbarrows.

Rawson Lake Interpretive Sign Install - There are 7 beautiful signs being installed on the Rawson Lake Trail. One is located by Sarrail Creek Falls on the Upper Kananaskis Lake Trail and the 6 others are located on the Rawson Lake trail.



This project was more complicated than we anticipated since the sign pedestals are metal and being anchored into concrete. Volunteers and Parks staff hand dug each hole to about

18 inches deep, filled with concrete, and will be assembled once the concrete has hardened. Next time you're on this trail, let us know what you think of the signs!



Visitation Monitoring - Over 15 volunteers were trained on how to collect visitation information using a survey. The survey gathers baseline demographic information about trail users in Kananaskis. 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 25 & 26: We will be working with Alberta Parks on the Lantern Creek Trail reroute section mentioned above. Great project if you like hiking and building new trails.

[SIGN UP HERE](#)

[Projects – To be posted soon](#)

Chester-Sawmill Winter Trails: We will start brushing the new winter trails in September and October. We have about 10 days of work on this project to get the new trails brushed, cleared and signed before the snow falls.



Razor's Edge Trail: We will be doing maintenance work and building a new section of trail in September and October.

[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

Volunteer Appreciation Event -- October 25!

Mark your calendar, on the evening of **Wednesday, October 25** the Friends of Kananaskis Country and Alberta Environment and Parks would like to take this special opportunity to **THANK YOU** to our outstanding volunteers and members for your time, effort, and contribution to our beloved Kananaskis Country Trails. Giveaways, awards, free food & drinks - we look forward to celebrating a good season of trail stewardship.

More details coming soon!

EVENT DATE: Wednesday, October 25, 201

EVENT TIME: 6:30 – 9:00pm

EVENT LOCATION: Capitol Hill Community Association

ADDRESS: [1521, 21 Avenue, Calgary NW](#)



New Supporters - OnwardUP & Valhalla Pure Outfitters

The Friends of Kananaskis Country is grateful to again be the recipient of OnwardUP's [1% For The](#)

[Planet](#) donation with a grant of \$2,500. [OnwardUP](#) is an independent group of sales and marketing representatives servicing the outdoor retail industry of Western Canada. It partners with the most innovative outdoor companies with a mutual commitment to inspire outdoor experiences and respect for the natural environment. We are delighted to be partners with OnwardUP to ensure future generations have the same opportunities to enjoy Kananaskis Country.



We are also pleased to have received a \$2,000 grant from [Valhalla Pure Outfitters](#) to support our work in the Canmore Area. [Valhalla](#) is located on Canmore's Main Street, and they have everything to outfit you from mountain top to coffee shop. Locally owned and operated since 2001 they support local organizations like the Friends of Kananaskis Country.



Thanks to both organizations for supporting local charities!



August, and the battles begin. Photo courtesy Alberta Environment & Parks

News from the Board -- Partnerships

By Derek Ryder, Chair

The Friends operates in partnership with Alberta Parks to fulfill the complimentary vision “*Alberta’s Parks inspire people to discover, value, protect and enjoy the natural world, and all its benefits for current and future generations*”. This month I thought it would be worthwhile to clarifying what that does – and does not – mean.

The Friends was formed as a charitable Cooperating Association in 1996 registered with the Alberta Government, and governed by the Society Act. This is one of only a few ways people can work with the Provincial Government to do government sanctioned projects.

Another is the “Steward” model (there is a Steward group that supports at least a part of Kananaskis, coincidentally called the Kananaskis Stewards; I’m a member of that group, too). Stewards are not incorporated, and are not a society. They are a volunteer group managed directly by Alberta Parks always working directly under the supervision of someone from Alberta Parks. In the case of the Kananaskis Stewards, Stewards work on projects normally identified by a Conservation Officer (CO), often under the direct supervision of a CO. If the CO can’t join us, someone from Parks (almost always a wonderful lady named MP Chappeland) is there to supervise us. The Kananaskis Stewards do a lot of different activities, from vegetation management to picking up garbage to putting up signage. A distinct subset of the Stewards supports just the Ecology department (I’m one of them, too) doing wildlife research and other work as directed by Parks Ecology employees. But Stewards are not “Partners” with Parks; they are volunteers working directly for Parks.

The Friends as a Society does not work directly for Parks **except** when we are physically out on the trails. That Parks Volunteer Agreement you sign when you come work on trails with us actually makes you a direct Parks volunteer for that work, just like you would be if you were a Steward. For all other matters, the Friends are independent of Parks. For instance, we:



- pitch ideas (like, for instance, revamping the Interpretive Trail network, or proposing new winter trails in the Chester Sawmill trail network) to Parks through Parks approval processes, or support Park’s own proposals and ideas;
- assist where we can on moving projects through those processes (like Kananaskis Trail Advisory Group and Kananaskis Trail Committee) to get Parks to approve the proposals, often including working to get other organizations or individuals on board;
- once the project is approved through various Government processes, where necessary, we raise funds to assist with the project’s execution (like for instance, paying for part of those interpretive signs); then
- we promote the project to the public and our volunteers to encourage you to come out and help with the project’s execution (you could have come out to help install the signs at Rawson Lake this past week, for example); then
- When you finally show up to volunteer, you become a direct volunteer for Parks.

We only do projects that have been approved by Parks, no matter what we would “like” to do (and

there's lots we would like to do but can't). Even the "independent" work we do – such as the recent project upgrading the trail bed of the High Rockies Trail – is on approved Parks projects. The only difference is that on "independent" projects, in the field, there is no Parks person directly supervising the work.

Our Cooperating Agreement with Parks provides the framework under which we operate, and defines the obligations under which we work. It formalizes the partnership between the two separate, independent parties. Our agreement makes it clear that the Friends is there to help Parks do what Parks wants – and has approval – to get done. It's worth taking a look at the Cooperating Agreement on the Library pages of our website; just click [here](#).

Our job is to support Park's vision and be a good partner, but also to stay independent. This occasionally comes with challenges, because what we may need to do to achieve our part may be different than what Parks wants or needs to do to execute theirs. But we always strive to be a good partner, doing our best to help Parks get more done than they could do without us.

Still time to 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 Volunteer Conference is Coming!

Registrations are now open for the 2017 provincial Volunteer Conference!

The annual Volunteer Conference is being hosted this year in the Kananaskis Region based out of Calgary, September 22, 23 & 24th. The theme for this year's event is "Alberta Parks – Celebrating 85 Years".



The Conference Registration Package and Online Registration Form can be accessed [here](#).



Registration Deadline is **Noon September 8th**. Registrations will be processed in the order that they are received until we reach the maximum capacity limit or the deadline, which ever happens first.



Safety in the Outdoors, Part 4

4th 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 EAT to keep your energy up

I'm not a dietician or nutritionist, and this article isn't about gluten or organics or GMOs.

Being in the outdoors is an **energy consuming business**. Here are the ranges of calorie burn rates for a few of the activities we do in K-Country. The ranges given account for variance in intensity, body weight and duration:

Hiking:	300 - 600 cal/hr	900-4,500 cal/day
Rock Climbing:	400 - 800/hr	1,200-5,000/day
Mountain Biking:	500 - 800/hr	2,500-6,000/day
Horseback Riding:	250 - 375/hr	1,200-2,000/day
Canoeing/Kayaking:	200 - 1,000/hr	2,000-6,000/day
Cross Country Skiing:	400 - 900/hr	2,000-4,500/day
Snowshoeing:	450 - 800/hr	2,500-3,500/day

You can see the calorie burn rates for other activities [here](#).

Those numbers are huge. Given that a sedentary job like an office worker burns all of 40 calories per hour, that low-cal salad thing you eat every Thursday just won't cut it while out having fun on Saturday burning 10-20 times the calories. Not in an office job? [Here's](#) an interesting link comparing calorie burn rates of other occupations.

What happens if you don't take in enough calories while out in the wilderness? Well, having experienced it, the first thing that starts to go is your **energy level**, followed closely by your **ability to focus mentally** and **make good decisions**. This is why the Kananaskis Public Safety folks worry about this stuff, and why eating properly is a part of safety in the outdoors. A failure to eat properly through the day leads to a higher likelihood that things will go south on you at the end of the day. The "low energy" leads to slips, trips and falls. The "mental fatigue" leads to poor decisions on everything including route choices, failure to take breaks and an urge to hurry up at the end of the day. This seriously boosts your risk of accidents.

I have been in the wilderness with folks who know this is coming and keep a caffeine-laden energy drink for late in the day to combat this fatigue. With all due respect to Red Bull, amping up on caffeine when you're fried because you didn't eat properly exacerbates the problem, and doesn't "give you wings." If you drink it, do your "Red Bulls" before lunch.

"Eating properly" has to do with recognizing you're going to be burning calories like mad and compensating for that by **carrying with you enough nutrition rich, calorically dense food to keep you fuelled through the day**. That doesn't mean "energy bars". I used to hike regularly with a friend whose hiking lunch was 2 Clif bars (500 calories) and a 1-litre Gatorade (80 calories). While there's nothing wrong with either, that's just not enough to sustain you on a day when you're burning 3,000 calories. Clif and other similar bars are awesome to keep in your emergency and snack kit, but they are not a meal replacement in the outdoors.

My friend also erred in rarely eating breakfast – again, something you can get away with during a low-calorie burn mid-week day, but will bite you on an adventurous day. Make sure to **start your day with a good “something”** to help you get through that morning.

We sweat in most of the outdoor activity we do, even in the winter, but the jury remains out on whether we do so enough to warrant replacing electrolytes. A good balanced lunch has all of the sodium and magnesium that you need (and a banana has 8x the potassium of G2, so have one for breakfast). **Water is almost always good enough**, and in an earlier article, we wrote to carry 1.5 l/person per day at minimum. Fruit juices can push the sugar too high and lead to headaches, so need to be partaken in moderation, as do many sodas. But again, it’s a personal choice thing, so if you’re drinking enough water, feel free to have your G2 or tea or Kombucha or can of Coke or whatever turns your crank with lunch, because for the most part, **fluids are fluids**.



Being in the outdoors is the opportunity to take whatever it is you like to eat every day, and **kick it up** with extra things you also like to eat that increase the energy density. Some examples:

- If quinoa salads are your thing, and you eat them every day, good for you. But take that lightweight weekday salad and add things for the weekend like nuts, raisins, dates and chia seeds.
- If you’re a sandwich person, stop scrimping on the cheese and the meat and feel free to put a little mayo on it if that’s your thing.
- Climbing mountains and paddling rivers is the time to treat yourself to the horrible snacks you love but don’t eat because they’re “just calories”, so feel free to break out the chips and Cheetos.



Eat whatever you like to eat, but when in the wilderness, **make it bigger and better** to compensate for the fact that you’re almost certainly working way harder than you normally do.

In an ideal world, your best wilderness foods are **high in protein, have moderate carbohydrates** and sugars, and are **lower in fat**, simply because the fats (while calorically dense) take longer to convert to usable energy. The glucose packets that runners use are pure carbohydrates for instant energy, and that's probably a bit more "instant" than you need when you're snowshoeing all day. The famous **GORP** (which in the original form was "Good Ole Raisins and Peanuts" and dates back to 1910) is a great example of a tried and true lightweight, calorie-dense wilderness food: protein and fat from the peanuts, carbs from the raisins. The salt helps with your electrolytes, too. Some add chocolate chips or Smarties, but that pushes up the ratios of fats and sugars (and they melt on hot days), so I don't do it, but if chocolate makes you happy, go for it.



Smart, experienced wilderness people – like the Alberta Parks trail crews we work with – **plan snack breaks into their day**. On trail care days, most crews make us stop for a small snack around 10:45 am and 2:30 pm in addition to the noon lunch break. This is where GORP and Clif bars and Sesame Snaps come in handy. Spreading your calories through the day is a good strategy to keep your energy up all day.

Finally, if things aren't going well in your day – you feel you're lost, or late, have some sort of important decision to make, or having troubles of any kind – take the advice given regularly by Public Safety when they get an emergency call: "**Stop, Sit, Snack and Sip**". Slow down, sit down and grab your carb & sugar rich, Clif/granola/sesame snap/GORP snack. Feel free to dip into that emergency stash, because failure to do so could lead to an emergency. Munch for a bit and have some fluids. Sit for a bit longer, and the fuel you just ate will have its magical, serotonin inducing calming and clarifying effects. I promise things will feel better, and you'll be in a much better position to make the decision about what to do next.



In summary for what to **EAT TO KEEP YOUR ENERGY UP**:

- Have a **solid breakfast**, and have a **banana** with it;
- Maximize "**calorie density**" for whatever food you carry;
- Carry balanced meals, making them **more than you would normally have**;
- Try to get your calories **first from proteins, then carbs, and lastly fats**;
- **Calorie splurging is OK** and in fact good;
- Consciously **spread your eating through the day** to regularly re-fuel
- **Stop and re-fuel** with carbs and fluids if you're struggling for any reason.



K-Country Curiosities: Grotto Canyon's Rock Stacks

by Derek Ryder, Director of Communications

No matter where I go in Kananaskis these days, I find that people like to spend their time stacking up rocks. I think it started with cairns. Rock piles first started at trail intersections and turns and were built to guide you across scree slopes. Then cairns begat other and bigger cairns, and that progressed to inukshuks, which grew into precariously balanced rocks, which then became just the stacks of rocks I see today.



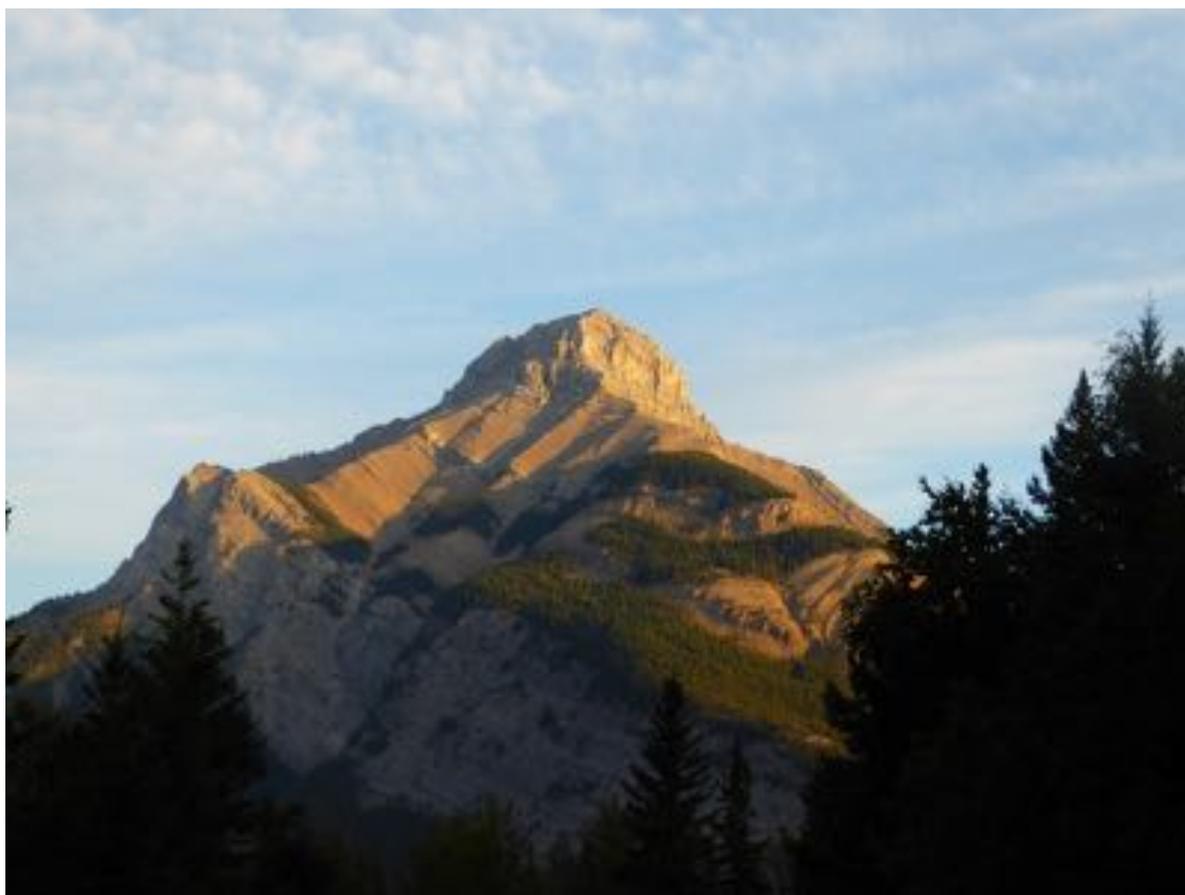
It's kind of obvious why rock stacks have become popular. First, Kananaskis is FULL of rocks, and the 2013 flood exposed more of them in many of the trails we use. Second, if you're just stacking up rocks, anyone can do it, and it's free. Third, it's something to do when you're having lunch or just hanging around with nothing better to do. Fourth, it's not graffiti, so not illegal in any way, nor is it

permanent nor harmful (assuming you're not pulling rocks out of a creek bed where bugs could live under them). Finally, it's something kids would like for sure.

If you put together a rocky trail that's extremely popular with families and has an obvious "end of trail point" that's a bit isolated, you have a recipe for rock stacks. The king of these is Grotto Canyon. If you go up the canyon to the waterfall, turn left and continue up another 100 m, you're going to enter what surely must be the biggest rock stack field in all of Kananaskis. There has be over 500 stacks here ranging in size from 3 rocks to 50. They're stacked on the canyon floor, they're stacked on the canyon walls. There a monster parabolic arch, pictured above. There are precariously balanced stacks and things that just look like cairns or piles, and even rocks artistically placed on the ground in odd geometric designs.



The funny part is that, for the most part, they all grew there this summer. I was up in the canyon in February and there were essentially none at that time. Perhaps there was a stacking competition recently. Or maybe it's just families having fun. And isn't that part of what Kananaskis is for?



[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!

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