

FRIENDS OF FISH CREEK

ANNUAL REPORT

OCTOBER 2014 - SEPTEMBER 2015

Enhancing the Lives of All Community

Members by Fostering Environmental

Sustainability in Fish Creek Provincial Park



Annual Report

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Our mission is to engage the community through education and awareness to conserve a truly unique naturalized urban park.

Our vision is a sustainable Fish Creek Provincial Park that improves the quality of life for present and future generations.

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TD LEARNING NATURALLY

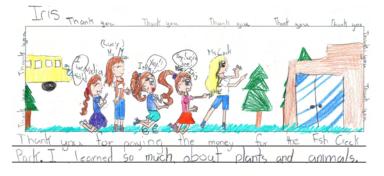
Alex O'Rourke, Learning Naturally Coordinator

The TD Learning Naturally program supports elementary schools located in economically disadvantaged neighbourhoods, often with high ESL and new Canadian populations. As a result, the Learning Naturally Program introduces many new Canadians to the quintessential Canadian outdoor experience to foster a lifelong love of the outdoors, parks and our abundant natural environment. The vision of the TD Learning Naturally Program is to inspire generations of informed, engaged and aware park users who support a culture of stewardship and conservation. Through continued grassroots and corporate fundraising efforts, the Friends deliver this program at no cost to parents or schools.

During the 2014-2015 academic year, the TD Learning Naturally program brought a total of 3,145 students to Fish Creek Provincial Park over 68 program days and provided a total of 82 buses. Children learn about the wonders of the natural world and the importance of environmental conservation through fourteen curricular linked programs like Insect Intrigue, Wildlife Cycles, Plant Communities, Wetlands, Tree Tales, Fish Creek Family, Fish Creek Land Histories and Stories and many more. Students arrive at the Fish Creek Environmental Learning Centre in the morning, meet the Learning Naturally Coordinator and gather in one of the five natural areathemed classrooms. These classrooms act as a home base for students while they participate in a full day of field studies in the park.

Teachers are invited to fill out a program evaluation form after completing the field trip. A majority of the teachers who completed the online survey, for the 2014-2015 academic year, rated components of the TD Learning Naturally Program as "Excellent."

The demand for the TD Learning Naturally Program has grown from 31 participating schools in the 2014-15 academic year to 42 participating schools for the 2015-16 academic year. This fall a total of 33 program days and 37 buses were booked with an estimate of 1,649 students participating in the program. For spring 2016, a maximum of 30 program dates is estimated to be scheduled.



PARK WATCH

Park Watch – one of the Friends' flagship programs – is our longest running program to date. Teams of volunteer stewards walk or cycle the park's trails, passing on observations to Parks Conservation Officers and management related to vandalism, litter, invasive species, public safety and the different



Park Watch Steward dousing fire.

types of park use enjoyed by the

public. Park Watch Stewards are also a supportive presence and are prepared to provide directions to park users, offer First Aid support if required and share information about Friends' programs to interested parties. Park Watch teams are a diverse group of individuals, friends and families, who take on this role in part to meet others who share an interest in having a positive impact on Fish Creek Provincial Park.

This year, 34 Stewards contributed 528 volunteer hours in total, with teams logging an average of 15 hours each, similar to last year. The main issues reported in the park this season were litter – mainly in the Shannon Terrace picnic area – a few fairly developed unauthorized campsites and numerous fire pits that sprung up throughout the park during summer and fall months. The Stewards were also able to support Alberta Parks staff directly by posting "Do Not Feed the Animals" signage in the Shannon Terrace area where it had been observed that the feeding of resident ground squirrels was becoming a significant issue. Our special thanks go to the Ratliffe family – Rose, Will, Karen and Michael – as well as Krista, Ryan and Ruby Tweed, who together shared the role of Supply Coordinator and helped keep the program running smoothly between May 1 and October 31.

WEED WHACKERS

Weed Whackers is all about trying to identify and remove new patches of invasive species found in the park. We are grateful to each and every one of the 57 individuals who came out this year to lend a hand. Special recognition goes to Esther Wiebe, who took part in all eight weed pulls in addition to spending countless hours patrolling the park's trails on the lookout for new invasive species. This year we saw a big jump in the number of volunteers taking part in the Weed Whackers program, with volunteers who collectively spent 318 hours removing over one metric ton of invasive plant material from the park!

Thank you all for your dedication and we look forward to working with you again in 2016!



2015 saw a continued focus on riparian restoration projects, culminating in enhancement work to our 2014 site (downstream of Bridge 11) and a new site in Hull's Wood near the Bow River confluence. Both areas experience a high degree of off-trail use, leading to soil compaction, decreased plant diversity and increased streambank erosion; this can negatively impact native fish populations and other resident wildlife, not to mention park infrastructure. Restoration projects such as this allow us to engage the wider community in direct, hands-on stewardship activities that have a positive effect on the health of the park.

Three separate restoration outings were executed in late October, engaging 50 volunteers in 266 hours of hands-on stewardship work. Over 400 willow cuttings were harvested from the east bank of the Bow, then transplanted to two sites in addition to the planting of rooted snowberry and poplar seedlings which had been harvested from the west end of the park earlier in the year and nurtured at the Venturers Society's native plants nursery. A significant donation of over 700 willow stakes from Eastern Slopes Rangeland Seeds Ltd was shared between the Friends, the City of Airdrie and the Elbow River Watershed Partnership; this will allow us to experiment with over-wintering willows in the hopes they will still be viable for additional plantings to these sites in 2016. We consider these areas "enhanced" as opposed to "restored" in their entirety, being works in progress that will continue to require monitoring and maintenance in the coming years.

This project was made possible through the support and direction of our partners - Alberta Parks, Cascade Water Resources, The Venturers Society, Trout Unlimited Canada, and the Alberta Riparian Habitat Management Society (commonly known as Cows and Fish), as well as from our various funders - the Recreational Fisheries Conservation Partnerships Program, the Watershed Resilinency and Restoration Program, the Alberta Conservation Association, and the Land Stewardship Centre. *Pictured above, Restoration volunteers on Oct 15, 2015.*



Yoga

This was the 3rd year that Naomi Parker and Gwen Draude Woolverton led outdoor Yoga sessions in the Bow Valley Ranch in Fish Creek and we are very grateful for their hard work and dedication to this program. 126 participants came out from July to September, and each year more community members enjoy Yoga in Fish Creek. This amazing program continues to bring people into the park and help them experience it in new and beneficial ways. (pictured below)

Meditation

2015 also marked the 3rd year for the popular Meditation program. Experienced Meditation Instructor Hetty Laidlaw helped 46 participants relax and unwind in Fish Creek through guided meditation sessions. We would like to extend our thanks to Hetty for her commitment to the Meditation program in Fish Creek.

Painting

New for 2015, the Friends collaborated with local artists to offer Plein Air Painting sessions in the park. We are thankful to the instructors and to all participants, and look forward to continuing this endeavour in the future. In total 13 enthusiastic participants took part in 3 sessions: Karin Huehold (July 17 - Watercolour)

Debbie.lee Miszaniec (Sep. 12 - Painting Day in the Park - pictured above) Sheila Shaetzle (Sep. 19 - Acrylics)

Nordic Walking

Another new Wellness-based program we launched this year was Nordic Walking, also known as Urban Poling. 10 participants came out on July 6 and Julie Walker led this enjoyable session.

Special thanks to the following volunteers for helping with these programs: Michael Doyle, Gail Goldsmith, Liza Schach, Doreen Smale, Ginette Soos, Nicole St. Arnaud, Margie Wheeler and Shelly Weins.



MINIBUS TOURS



The 11-seater electric minibus was used for a variety of events from May to September, including community engagement programs and shuttle service at events such as Creekfest, A Taste of Autumn and the PWC Volunteer tree wrapping day (pictured above). The minibus provides a way for visitors to experience the park and exemplifies the Friends' mission of inclusion and increasing access.

Archaeology in the Park

Friends Volunteer Drew McKibben led *Archaeology in the Park* tours on June 16, July 25 and Aug. 13, in addition to a private minibus tour for seniors from United Active Living. In total 31 people enjoyed learning about the unique archaeological history of the park.

History and Nature

On June 5 and July 13, Wayne Meikle, retired park planner, founding member of the Friends of Fish Creek and dedicated volunteer, led tours of Votier's Flats and the Bow Valley Ranch for 11 visitors. Wayne also led a private tour from the BVR on July 12 for a group of 4. Eight individuals from United Active Living enjoyed a minibus tour of the Votier's Flats area on July 23 area led by Katie Pearson, Program Coordinator with the Friends of Fish Creek.

Geology

Rob McWilliam, retired professional geologist and SAIT professor, led the *Fish Creek Rocks* geology tour on July 21 for six people and a tour for United Active Living on Sep. 4. This was his third year teaching about the unique geology of this park.

Photography

Thirty-seven people learned about Photography through the instruction of Bob Bakker, film and digital photography enthusiast and dedicated tour guide, at the *Unleashing the Power of Your DSLR Camera* sessions. These extremely popular outings took place on June 11 and 27, July 23, Aug. 11 and Sep. 10.

Special thanks to all minibus tour guides and volunteer drivers Bob Andrew, Don Cowie, Carl Johnson, Helen Newel, David Reid, Paul Seaman and Syl Zacher.

YOUTH NATURE PROGRAMS

2015 was an exciting year for the Youth Nature Program as our volunteers engaged over 1000 members of the public! Our incredible volunteers led Naturalist programs for various youth groups from south Calgary such as Beavers, Cubs, Sparks and Guides. Our volunteers also engaged families at four public events: Creekfest, Star Night (March and October) and Doors Open YYC. We are fortunate to have some very motivated volunteers who actively participated in the development of two new youth programs that will be available for youth group bookings in spring 2016. Thank you to all the volunteers who took part, from assisting kids with crafts at Creekfest and Star Night to leading interactive youth programs in Fish Creek. Your involvement is much appreciated. A special shout out to Becca Gillhespy, the 2015 Youth Nature Programs Award Recipient, for consistently going above and beyond.

PARK CLEAN UPS

Fish Creek Provincial Park is generally quite clean because visitors respect the park environment by not littering and by removing the litter they do see. Some of these individuals pick up litter as part of their daily routine, like one man we met on the trail this summer, Alan Clifford, who picks litter in the park for three hours a day! Thank you to Alan and everyone who helps to keep Fish Creek beautiful.

This year, eight organizations borrowed clean up equipment to host group clean-ups with their members. A total of 171 individuals took part in these initiatives, collectively removing approximately 60 bags of garbage from the park. If you know of a group that would like to borrow equipment to host a clean up event in the park, email katie@friendsoffishcreek.org a month before the event date.

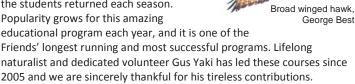
TREE WRAPPING

The beavers have certainly been active in Fish Creek Provincial Park this year building dams to slow the flow of water and creating habitat for themselves and other wildlife like birds, amphibians and insects. Part of their lifecycle involves the felling of balsam poplar both to use in construction and feeding.

Trying to strike a balance with these furry creatures that call Fish Creek home, the Friends organize volunteers to wrap the base of trees that are in areas that are not currently inhabited by beavers to proactively discourage them from setting up home in these areas, especially areas with human infrastructure like stormwater ponds and culverts that can be adversely affected by a change in water flow. This year, 27 volunteers took part in the wrapping of 100 trees and the unwrapping of approximately 50 trees that were at risk of girdling by the wire.

BIRDING COURSE

For the Autumn 2014, Winter 2015 and Spring 2015 Birding Course seasons, approximately 330 individuals enjoyed learning about birds and other wildlife in Fish Creek and other natural areas. Many of the students returned each season. Popularity grows for this amazing



These courses take place at seven different times each week. To meet the growing demand for this course, Gus has enlisted an entire team of dedicated volunteer instructors. Our sincerest thanks to Gus and the other Birding Course instructors, including John and Lorrie Anderson, Dan Arndt, George Best, Kingsley Blades, Rob and Theresa Brown, Ken Burton, Trevor Churchill, Bernie Diebolt, Ganesh Doluweerawatta, Dan Edwards, Kris Fernet, Janet Gill, Barry Hertz, Carol Hachey, Peter Hoyer, Bob Lefebvre, David Mitchell, Joanne Nemeth, Ron Ostrander, Rose Painter, Ralph Parks, Aileen Pelzer, David Pugh, Stephen and Dorothy Spring, John Stegeman, Carole Steeves, Diane Stinson, Marian Swatschina, Dave and Martha Taylor, Tony Timmons, Paul Turbitt, David Vernon, Wayne and Joan Walker and Rob Worona.



TRAIL CARE

Trail Care is another one of our longest running programs and we are truly grateful for the support and assistance from the Calgary Mountain Bike Alliance

(CMBA) and Alberta Parks.

Through this program, we work to maintain the 14 km single track trail network which spans the west end of the park between Macleod Trail and 37 St SW. CMBA volunteers contributed close to 100 hours in 2015 through two Trail Care outings near Votier's Flats (July 4) and Shannon Terrace (Sep. 19). Tasks included trail maintenance, wetland crossing construction, rock armoring and tread hardening. Special thanks to Nicole Gaskell and Jack Pound for coordinating and leading these work days. We would also like to thank the 11 volunteers from ATCO Power who came out on June 2 and helped with trail widening and reclamation work near Votier's and Bebo Grove, and the volunteers from Deloitte for their help with trail maintenance near Bebo Grove on Oct. 2. (pictured here.) Thank you to Joe Gerritsen for assisting Fish Creek Provincial Park Conservation Officers with sign installation and repair.

FISH CREEK SPEAKER SERIES

In October 2014, the Friends of Fish Creek and Alberta Parks amalgamated the Friends' Speaker Series and Parks and Protected Areas slideshow series, and renamed it Fish Creek Speaker Series. Between Oct. 2014 and Sep. 2015, 675 patrons attended these talks. Thank you to the following presenters and to everyone who attended. We would like to acknowledge the following volunteers for helping these events run smoothly: David Arnott, Brian and Valerie Bell, Don Cowie, Nelson Dechant, Doreen Fulton, Rebecca Gillhespy, Jason Kang, Chelsea Pasutto, Libby Roth, Kathy Seaman, Doreen Smale and Jennifer Solem.

Oct. 23 - The Secret Lives of Bighorn Sheep –
Dr. Kathreen Ruckstuhl, U of C Associate Professor

Nov. 20 - Writing-on-Stone Provincial Park: Where History, Stories and Dreams Become One – Aaron Domes, Head of Visitor Services at Writing-on-Stone

Jan. 22 - Geology: The Foundation for Alberta Parks – Dr. Mark Fenton of the Alberta Geological Survey

Feb. 19 - **Fire in Kananaskis Country** —
Scott Jevons Geographical Information Systems (GIS) Specialist and Alberta Parks Fire Ecologist in Kananaskis

Mar. 19 - Blast from the Past: An Archaeological Exploration of Fish Creek Provincial Park – Drew McKibben, Heritage Interpreter

Apr. 16 - The Healing Power of Nature: Naturopathic Medicine and a Healthy, Balanced Lifestyle – Dr. Gayle Maguire, College of Naturopathic Doctors of Alberta and Canadian Association of Naturopathic Doctors

May 27 - Springtime in Fish Creek: Wildlife, Conservation Officers and You – Fish Creek Provincial Park Conservation Officer Arthur Hughes

June 18 - Dirt Road History of the Plains and Foothills –
Bill Evans, Engineer, Photographer, Explorer and Dirt Road Adventurer

Sep. 24 - A Day in the Life of an Urban Conservation Officer – Fish Creek Conservation Officers Arthur Hughes and Thomas Blake

CAPTURE NATURE - PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST

On July 1, we launched our first ever Photography Contest. Thank you to Vistek, Starbucks, and StrobePro for donating prizes. Special thanks to everyone who participated and to voluntary jurors Bob Bakker, Dann Soloman, CJ Wessely, Shirley Otway, Dan Arndt and JP Gaston. Pictured



above Grand Prize winning photo by Tim Hopwood.

WAYNE MEIKLE ALWAYS WILLING TO SHARE KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE

Wayne Meikle received the 2015 Volunteer of the Year Award in the category of Community Engagement in appreciation of his efforts to inform people about the history and natural features of Fish Creek Provincial Park. Between October 2014 and October 2015, he engaged over 350 individuals and helped raise much needed



funds to support the Friends of Fish Creek. Wayne is also a founding member of the Friends of Fish Creek, was instrumental in park clean up efforts following the floods of 2005, and played a key role in the development of the paved pathway system and engineered wetlands in the park. We are truly grateful for his dedication and support, and look forward to collaborating with him in the years to come.

Wayne led the following tours in Fish Creek over the past year:

- Ghosts of Fish Creek at the BVR, Oct. 27, 2014
- Wayne's Winter Walk on March 14 at Votier's Flats (pictured here)
- On May 2, he led a "Jane's Walk" outing at Lafarge Meadows
- June 5, Private Walking Tour for Southland Leisure Centre at Votier's Flats
- Minibus Tour of Votier's Flats, June 5
- Led a Private Minibus Tour to showcase Fish Creek on July 12
- July 15. Nature Minibus Tour
- On Aug. 1, he presented about the history of the BVR as part of Historic Calgary Week
- Aug. 22, Wetlands Walking Tour at Bebo Grove
- Sep. 26, Walking Tour of Votier's Flats
- Oct. 27 and 28, Led two Ghosts of Fish Creek tours at the BVR

MACRO AND LOW LIGHT PHOTOGRAPHY



The Bow Valley Ranch Visitor Centre was the ideal setting for the Friends to once again partner with film and digital photography enthusiast Bob Bakker for the intermediate level Macro and Low Light Photography sessions. These took place on July 11 and Aug. 29, and in total 19 people came out to improve their photography skills.

CREEKFEST

The Friends of Fish Creek hosted the fifth annual Creekfest water celebration on July 19 at the Bow Valley Ranch as part of Alberta Parks Day, and we welcomed over 2,200 visitors to the event.

Creekfest is a free event designed to entertain and inform families about the importance of conserving our local watersheds. We welcomed back Juno-award winning children's performer Peter Puffin's Whale Tales, Coyote Kids Theatre, Parks Canada's Mountain WIT, and Roland Kirzinger, Fish Creek Environmental Education Coordinator who acted as MC. New this year local musician Alex Boisselle performed and yoga instructors, Gwen Draude Woolverton and Naomi Parker led an outdoor yoga session. Graham Sucha MLA addressed the audience, Boston Pizza's mascot Lionel entertained visitors and the Alberta Lake Management Society led an informative walk near the creek.

Thank you to the following organizations and individuals for their assistance and participation: AB Beverage Container Recycling, AB Institute for Wildlife Conservation,



Bow Habitat Station, Bow Valley Ranche Restaurant, Bow Waters Canoe Club, Calgary Blue Dot Movement, The Calgary Foundation, Calgary Public Library, CPAWS, Carnivals for Kids at Heart, The City of Calgary, Great Events Catering, Green Calgary, Debbie.lee Miszaniec, MEC, Sylvia Prochownik, Pumphouse Theatre, Ranche at Fish Creek Restoration Society, Sheila Schaetzle and Trout Unlimited Canada.

Special thanks to First Calgary Financial and McLeod Law LLP for supporting Creekfest. Creekfest and the Watershed Stewardship Public Awareness Campaign were sponsored in part by Alberta Conservation Association, and funded in part through the Watershed Stewardship Grant, a program of Land Stewardship Centre financed by AB Environment and Sustainable Resource Development. Thank you to AB Culture and Tourism — Community Initiatives Program, and to the Bow River Basin Council for supporting Creekfest.

We are sincerely thankful to Youth Central and all the volunteers who helped Creekfest run smoothly, to all local media for helping raise awareness about this event and to the community members who came out to enjoy the fifth annual Creekfest Water Celebration.

A TASTE OF AUTUMN

On the evening of Sep. 17, the Friends of Fish Creek hosted the second annual A Taste of Autumn – Wine & Beer Tasting and Silent Auction Fundraiser at the Meadow Muse Pavilion here in Fish Creek. Close to 60 community members came out to support the Friends of Fish Creek's conservation efforts and enjoyed a variety of appetizers, sampled wine, beer and spirits from local producers, and bid on a diverse array of auction items, all of which were generously donated by volunteers and community partners.



Tastings were generously provided by local producers Last Best Brewing and Distilling, Spirit Hills Honey Winery, Wild Rose Brewery, Eau Claire Distillery, Six Corners Brew Works, Tool Shed Brewing Company and Chinook Arch Meadery. Auction items and draw prizes were donated by Boston Pizza, Six Corners Brew Works, Canmore Nordic Centre, Capture the Flag, Councillor



Peter Demong, Eau Claire Distillery, Richard Gotfried MLA, Byron Frederick, Doreen Fulton, Janet Horbacio Photography, Karin Huehold, Roland Kirzinger, Last Best Brewing Co, Wayne Meikle, Bob Morrin, Naomi Parker and Gwen Draude Woolverton, Pedalhead / Skiworks, Sylvia Prochownik, Robin Read, Dave Rodney MLA, Sheila Schaetzle, Peter Spear, Spirit Hills Honey Winery, Ginette Soos, Graham Sucha MLA, Tool Shed Brewing Co, Venturers Society, Wild Rose Brewery as well as Gus Yaki and the Birding Course Instructors.

Special thanks to TD Canada Trust Deer Valley, to pianist and composer Sheldon Zandboer, Learning Naturally Coordinator Alex O'Rourke, and to Great Events Catering and the Bow Valley Ranche Restaurant.

We are sincerely grateful to everyone who attended and purchased tickets. Thank you to the volunteers who helped the event run smoothly: David Arnott, Jim Chobotuk, Carl Johnson, David Mitchell, Carol Moore, Sean and Maggie Murphy, Larry and Helen Newel, Libby Roth, Paul and Kathy Seaman and Doreen Smale.

(Bottom photo courtesy of David Mitchell)

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Tom Jackman, Chairman of the Board of Directors, Friends of Fish Creek

The Friends of Fish Creek Provincial Park Society has enjoyed a solid year in 2015 that delivered a new suite of programs that better reflects our member's interests and needs of the park.

I was recently asked "What does the Board of Directors do?" The short answer to this question is that we provide the structure for the Friends of Fish Creek to carry on its activities.

The Friends of Fish Creek is a registered society in Alberta and as such is bound to the Societies Act. We have enacted bylaws that require a Board of Directors, made up from members of the Friends, to oversee our operations. This covers setting strategic objectives, preparing a budget to raise and disburse funds, as well as making sure we have appropriate banking, insurance, operating policies, stakeholder and membership relations, and productive employees and contractors.



The Cookhouse, Friends of Fish Creek office at the Bow Valley Ranch in Fish Creek

The Directors are from a variety of backgrounds that all share a passion for Fish Creek Provincial Park. We volunteer our time to the Friends organization so it can operate for the benefit of all members as well as the general public.

In 2015 we welcomed David Mitchell to our Board of Directors. David has been a member for many years and has been active with birding programs as well as a volunteer photographer for many events. Emmett Hogan, a long-time member and Park Watch Steward retired from the board this past year to pursue other interests. Emmett had been a director for eight years and was chair of the Governance Committee. Emmett contributed to the board with insight and candor while always finding a humorous aspect to make us chuckle.

On behalf of the Friends of Fish Creek Board of Directors, I would like to thank all of our Society's members, volunteers, community partners, donors, sponsors and supporters. We are looking forward to 2016 with a strong board, a great team of employees and a solid financial base.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Nic DeGama-Blanchet, Executive Director, Friends of Fish Creek

2015 has been our best year yet for programs and involvement and I would like to thank all of the special people that attended and supported this year's suite of programs.

Of course none of this would have been possible without the outstanding efforts of Chris, Katie and Shana and our amazing volunteers and financial supporters; we are indeed building a wonderfully engaged park community to the benefit of the park and all of its users.

Our ability to deliver the number and diversity of programs in 2015 has been enabled by our transition to a more computer-based system for program registration. We have to say a special thanks to our amazing IT volunteer Benjamin Barager who has played an essential part by upgrading our IT capacity. Thanks to Benjamin's ongoing support we have a secure, reliable system capable of supporting our needs which frees up staff time so they can concentrate on their primary roles.



Our two signature events, Creekfest (pictured above) and A Taste of Autumn, both provided opportunities for engagement and inspiration. Creekfest continues to grow and each year we break the attendance record from the previous year, and A Taste of Autumn has begun to establish itself as the place to be on an early autumn evening in the park. Both of these events have started to generate teams of loyal volunteers that turn up each time we hold the event and make it possible to turn a plan into reality.

Once again we have broken previous records in personal donations and membership numbers in 2015; on behalf of the board and our hardworking team I would like to extend a very heartfelt thank you to those of you who made personal

onations this year, the local businesses that provided sponsorships and donations, and to all our members both long term and new. Without your support we would not be able to continue to develop community support and engagement toward the sustainability of Fish Creek Provincial Park.

REPORT FROM FISH CREEK PROVINCIAL PARK

Jennell Rempel
Community and Partner Relations Team Lead

Kananaskis Region Reorganization: to enhance leadership specialization. The changes for Fish Creek were minimal, with the Manager (Travis Sjovold) responsible for both the administrative and leadership function of the Park remaining the same. With the retirement of Dave Hanna, the current management team now includes Pat Ronald (acting for Dave Hanna), Travis Sjovold and Michael Roycroft (Trails and Special Facilities), all reporting to Regional Director Mark Storie.



2015 Alberta Parks Volunteer Conference, Sep 25-27 at Calhoun Bay.

Reorganization within the Public Engagement team has Roland Kirzinger as Team Lead for Formal and Environmental Education (including coordination of the Fish Creek Environmental Learning Centre), and Jennell Rempel in a new role as "Community and Partner Relations" Team Lead (for volunteer and partnership coordination in both normal ops and Flood Recovery programs). Jennell will continue to work with the Friends as the Park Liaison, and is now working with many other Cooperating Society boards in the Region (e.g. William Watson Lodge Society, Friends of Kananaskis, Greater Bragg Creek Trails Assoc.) to build organizational support for partners

Flood Recovery: repairs ongoing

- pathway work and bank stabilization along the Bow River
- Bridge #9 and associated trails
- Shannon Terrace to Bebo Grove Pathway
- Trout Unlimited Canada completed a large bioengineering project on the Mallard Point Side Channel
- Planning for re-development of Bankside day use area
- Volunteer events in 2015 focused on collaboration with the Back Country Trails program, and requests within K-Country

AB Parks Trailers: Kananaskis and South Regions now have shared access to a large event trailer/portable stage.

Fish Creek Provincial Park is part of the South Saskatchewan Regional Parks Planning process (completion in 2016.)

(cont'd on next page)

REPORT FROM FISH CREEK PROVINCIAL PARK

(cont'd from previous page)

The amalgamation of AB Parks and Friends Speakers Series into one shared presentation series is working well. Friends staff have done great work in marketing and coordination of the series.

Alberta Parks Gathering (Nov. 3-5) was the first meeting of its kind, where staff (current, alumni, and staff of Cooperating Societies) were invited to gather for a three-day learning & networking session. It was hosted in Canmore, and was attended by over 300 people.

"Better Impact" database for managing volunteer program information, in collaboration with the Friends of Fish Creek and other partners is continuing to build.

There was significant change in the Learning Naturally Program in the past year. Collaboration between Fish Creek and Friends staff on all aspects of managing the transition contributed to a very successful 2015-2016 program season, led by a fantastic new Learning Naturally Program Coordinator, Alex O'Rourke.



Julia Millen has been seconded to a regional flood recovery position for a period of 24 months, and Shalane Friesen is "Acting" Environmental Educator.

Arthur Hughes has moved to a Conservation Officer position

in the Bow Valley, and his position was filled by (former seasonal Park Ranger)

Ryan Hannusch. We are fortunate to have Thomas Blake remaining on as a Seasonal Park Ranger into the winter season.

Jill Miller ("Acting" Inclusion and Accessibility Specialist) is based out of the Fish Creek Environmental Learning Centre in this Regional position. Jeremy Bakken is an incredible addition to our Maintenance Team.

A few Program Stats (October 1, 2014 – September 30, 2015):

Conservation Officers:

9,373 individual public contacts, 22,086 group contacts

Sikome Aquatic Facility: 130,000 visitors

Environmental Education Programs total:

14,639 students (includes Learning Naturally, k-6, JR/SR High)

8,427 participants (includes students, teachers, volunteers)

Learning Naturally:

76 program days, 3602 students, 179 classes

(Oct. 2014 - Sep 2015) 22% of programs covered by Parks

EE staff during transition between Coordinators.

Formal Public Programs total:

Star Night (2 events): 1,250 participants

THANK YOU DONORS

We are sincerely appreciative of all of the supporters below who have helped make the 2015 one of the Society's most successful years in terms of donations.

Deer Level \$5,000 - \$14,999 Rick & Elaine Barnes

Beaver Level \$1,000 - \$4,999

Phil & Ellen Greer, Tim Hopwood, Richard Kim, Noela & David Moffit, Bob & Louise Morrin, Patricia Prevey, Stewart & Janice Scott, Enterprise Holdings Foundation, TD Canada Trust Deer Valley

Aspen Level \$500 - \$749

Douglas McIntosh, Craig Senyk, Jeff Tonge, Anita Veeneman, CH2M Hill

Birch Level \$100 - \$499

David & Norma Anderson, Tracy Anderson, Leslie Coe, Lorna Coglon, Nic DeGama-Blanchet, Kyle Drinnin, Marilyn Glerum, Gerald Halford, Bill & Helen Hiebert, Stanley Ingham, Chris Lalonde, Bev Lane, Geoff Lawrence, Patricia Lee, Lisa Listgarten, Ches & Heather Maciorowski, Muriell & Chester Nagy, Lynda & Gordon Needham, Marie Nelson, Katie Pearson, Patricia Pietersma, Linda Read, Graham Sucha MLA, Marlyss Valiant, Leao Vermeylen, Michael Watson, Mark Wasylenko, Nancy Wilkey, Team TELUS Cares

Special Recognition

Heather Addy, Cindy Alexander, Christina Arnold, Stefan Bakken, Shana Barbour-Welsh, Judith Beale, Patricia Bitzer, Rob Blyth, Sally Bowen, Pat Brown, Bob Bowman, Judy Cartwright, Patricia Claydon, Marion Compagnon, Dawn Craig, Joyce Crew & Neil Puffer, Jacqueline & Walter Deegan, Deanna Downton-Jullyan, Bush & Michael Eastep, Isabell Elden, Mary Enright, Keith Ferguson, Geraldine Fish, Beatrice Flood, Grant Gale, Anne Greco, Arturo Gueld, Bob Harris, Joanne Hatch, Eileen Herring, Wim Jalink & Marijke Jalink-Wijbrans, Cornelus Koster, Ryan Krenz, Ross Lennox, Jeanine Lewis, Ruben Lipszyc, Judy MacLachlan, Arnel Magsombol, Jonn Malmgvist, Lloyd & Earlene Manz, Eleanor & Phillip May, Karen McDaniel, Joanne McNair, Tony & Evangeline Merzib, Matthew Mink, Carol Moore, Linda & Arnold Nugent, Ron Ostrander & Elena Schacherl, Nikita Parmar, Gordon Peers, Aileen Pelzer & Gus Yaki, Robert Pollard, Jill Pollock-Ceh, Rose Ratliffe, Manoj & Daxa Raythatha, Robin Read, Cathryn Nicola Roe, Ila Rae Sharpe, Darlene Shymkiw, Richard Slopek Carmen Solana-Martin, Don Stiles, Carol Stokes, Gene & Anne Swain, Ryan Tweed, Larry Wasyliw, David & Esther Wiebe, Sigrid Wili & John Miles, Monique Withers, Ruth Zinck, Leonard Zybutz & Deborah Wood-Zybutz

Amalgamated Transit Union, Canadian Online Giving Foundation, Full Circle Adventures, Tim Horton's Deer Valley, Truist Foundation

Thank you to those who donated in memory of Gail Klasky, dedicated volunteer and supporter of the Friends of Fish Creek Pauline Chambers, Sandra Darlington, Lise Hubbard, Beverley Jacoby, Cathy Leinweber, Lillian Tickles, Patrick Yau, and the Cartier Bridge Club

2015 Outstanding Volunteers

Carl Johnson Bill Hiebert Inspiration Award

(Volunteer of the Year)

Drew McKibbon Educator of the Year
Wayne Meikle Community Engagement

Debbie.lee Miszaniec Social Enterprise
Phil Greer Board of Directors

Doreen Smale Wellness

Gus Yaki and 2014-15 Birding Course Instructors - Birding

Nicole Gaskell and Jack Pound Trail Care
Bill Hiebert Creekfest
Dave Reid Minibus Driver

The Ratliffe Family (Will, Rose, Karen, Michael) - Park Watch
Krista and Ryan Tweed Park Watch Honorable Mention

Doreen Fulton Fish Creek Speaker Series

Esther Wiebe Weed Whackers Alex Kent Restoration

Becca Gillhespy Youth Nature Programs
Phil Smith Behind the Scenes

Benjamin Baragar IT Genius

Bob Bakker Capture Nature Photo Contest

VENTURERS

Mike Depper, Lindsay Watkinson, Ed Quiring, Michele Jean, Len Esau, Trevor Boardman, Robert Cornell, Chris Flint, John Hank, Linda Harvey, Tim Krynen, Fred Lorenz, Mitch McCarthy, Chris Rose, Travis Schwab, Conrad Tiedemann

FISH CREEK PROVINCIAL PARK STAFF

Travis Sjovold, Jennell Rempel, Roland Kirzinger, Rob Hummel, Irene Till, Alexandra O'Rourke, Troy Christianson, Marie Plavetic, Julia Millen, Shalane Friesen, Jeremy Bakken, Huntley Johnston, Ryan Hannusch, Thomas Blake Seasonal: Rudy Szymanek, John Mattix

Previous: Arthur Hughes, Melanie Pachkowski, Melanie Jacques, Jaci Blackwood

2014 - 15 FRIENDS OF FISH CREEK BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chairman Tom Jackman Vice-Chairman **Emmett Hogan** Treasurer Phil Green Secretary Stewart Scott Director at Large **Bob Morrin** Director at Large Richard Link Director at Large Ainsley Grant Henry Villanueva Director at Large Park Liaison Jennell Rempel Park Liaison Roland Kirzinger

2015 FRIENDS OF FISH CREEK STAFF

Executive Director, Nic DeGama-Blanchet, nic@friendsoffishcreek.org Program Coordinator, Katie Pearson, katie@friendsoffishcreek.org Program Coordinator, Shana Barbour-Welsh, shana@friendsoffishcreek.org Communications Coordinator, Chris Lalonde, chris@friendsoffishcreek.org AGS Bookkeeping, Gloria Simmone

THANK YOU 2015 VOLUNTEERS!

John & Lorrie Anderson, Bob Andrew, Dan Arndt, David Arnott, Kathy Aubichon & Mark Pacanowski, Kellie Babin, Bob Bakker, Gerry Bamber, Benjamin Baragar, Don Barrington, Jo-Anne Bechtel, Lori Belair, Brian, Valerie & Jason Bell, Julia Bennett, George Best, Annette Bicknell, Kingsley Blades, Jennifer Blagden, Len & Sarah Bleile, Nancy Boa, Robert & Theresa Brown, Colleen Browne, Harry Brugmans, Peter Bunch, Ken Burton, Joanna Card, Jason Cheever, Jim Chobotuk, Ronnel Chua, Trevor Churchill, Alan Clifford, Kathy Cottrell, Don Cowie, Joyce Crew & Neil Puffer & Madison Irving, Pam Custer, Nelson & Wanda Dechant, Jacqueline Deegan, Bernie Diebolt, Ganesh Doluweerawatta, Deanna Downton-Jullyan, Michael Doyle, Gwen Draude Woolverton, Sviatoslav Dubinin, Barb Eagles, Dan Edwards, Judy Elliott, Brian & Sheryl Farewell, Maureen & Connor Farrell, Kris Fernet, Leon Fisher, Doreen Fulton, Charles & Renee Gallant, Jodi Garvin, Nicole Gaskell, JP Gaston, Joe Gerritsen, Janet Gill, Rebecca Gillhespy, Gail Goldsmith, Ainsley Grant, Rhonda Greenaway, Phil Greer, Mauro Guzman, Carol Hachey, Heather Hamby, Laura Hampson, Joanne Hatch, Barry Hertz, Bill Hiebert, Larry Hobson, Laurie & Gail Hodson, Emmett Hogan, Kim Hooper, Wayne Hortensius, Peter Hoyer, Karin Huehold, Lori Huntley, Tom Jackman, Trudi Jamesen, Carl & Liz Johnson, Jason Kang, Allison, Heather and Jennifer Keizer, Linda Keller, Alex Kent, Blair Kirkpatrick, Hugh Klaassen, Sue Konopnicki, Marla Kosinec, John Kubinski, Gary Kurtz, Hetty Laidlaw, Bev Lane, Ann Lawson, Bob Lefebvre, Donna Leonard, Tom Linahan, Richard Link, Drew McKibben, Rob McWilliam, Wayne Meikle, Scott Merrithew, Bob & Bev Meyers, Dianne Michalak, Debbie.lee Miszaniec, Lori Mitchell, David Mitchell, Carol Moore, Bob Morrin, Richard & Diana Mowry, Steve Mulholland, Michelle Mueller, Sean & Margaret Murphy, Masao Nagao, Murielle & Chester Nagy, Gordon & Lynda Needham, Marie Nelson, Joanne Nemeth, Larry & Helen Newel, Ron Ostrander, Shirley Otway, Rose Painter, Naomi Parker, Ralph Parks, Chelsea Pasutto, Shelley Pezoulas, Tracy Pocherewny, Natasha Popowicz, Jack Pound, Pat Prevey, Sylvia Prochownik, David Pugh, Susan Rahal, Ken Rathje, Will, Rose, Karen & Michael Ratliffe, Dave Reid, Mike Risely, Joyce Ritsco, Rick Robb, Libby Roth, Neil Rubeniuk, Elizabeth Schach, Sheila Schaetzle, Stewart Scott, Kathy & Paul Seaman, Bryan Simpson, Bill Skinner, Doreen Smale, Joanne & Ryan Smart, Phil Smith, Theresa Smith, Richard Sullivan & Liz Smith, Henny & Lars Smit-Nielsen, Jennifer Solem, Dann Soloman, Ginette Soos, Barbara & Peter Spear, Stephen & Dorothy Spring, Nicole St. Arnaud, Carole Steeves, John Stegeman, Don Stiles, Dianne Stinson, Emma Stroud, Anne & Gene Swain, Marian Swatschina, David Switulavich, James Taylor, David & Martha Taylor, Sally Beetham Tilley, Tony Timmons, Jesse Trerice, Paul Turbitt, Lesley Turner, Tony Turner, Krista & Ryan Tweed, Reka Vasarhely, Leao Vermeylen, David Vernon, Henry Villanueva, Joan & Wayne Walker, Shelly Weins, CJ Wessely, Margie Wheeler, Larry & Mary White, Esther Wiebe, Terry & Norma Wilson, Stephanie Winton, Jeff Wisby, Deb Wood-Zybutz & Len Zybutz, Rob Worona, Gus Yaki & Aileen Pelzer, Tammy Yee, Don Yuen, Syl & Mary Zacher, Jose Zapote, Jasmin Zenchyson-Smith and Ruth Zinck.

2014/15 COMMUNITY PARTNERS

The Friends of Fish Creek would like to acknowledge the following individuals and organizations for their support and involvement over the past year.

Alberta Parks and Fish Creek Provincial Park Staff

AB Beverage Container Recycling Corp, AB Conservation Assoc, AB Culture & Tourism, AB Environment & Sustainable Resource Dev, AB Geological Survey, AB Invasive Species Council, AB Lake Mgmt Society, AB Native Plant Council, AB Riparian Habitat Mgmt Society (Cows and Fish), AB Wilderness Assoc, Amalgamated Transit Union, ATCO Power, Avenue, Birds of a Feather, Alex Boisselle, Bow Habitat Station, Bow River Basin Council, Bow Valley Ranche Restaurant, Bow Waters Canoe Club, Braeside Com Assoc, Calgary Blue Dot Movement, Calgary Bridge Foundation for Youth, Calgary Co-op Deer Valley, The Calgary Foundation, Calgary Horticultural Society, Calgary Mountain Bike Alliance, Calgary Public Library, Calgary River Valleys, Calgary's Child, Canada Helps, Canadian Online Giving Foundation, Canadian Parks & Wilderness Society, Canmore Nordic Centre, Canyon Meadows Com Assoc, Capture the Flag, Carnivals for Kids at Heart, Cascade Water Resources, CBC, Cenovus, Centennial High School, The City of Calgary, CH2M Hill, Chinook Arch Meadery, Chinook Country Historical Society, CJSW, Cornerstone Music, Country Pleasures Fly Fishing, Coyote Kids Theatre, CTV Calgary, Deer Park United Church, Deer Run Com Assoc, Deloitte, Councillor Peter Demong, Donate a Car Canada, Ducks Ultd, Eau Claire Distillery, Elemental Wellness, Enterprise Holdings Foundation, Evergreen Com Assoc, Evergreen Theatre, FLC Seniors Outdoor Club, First Calgary Financial, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Friends of Kananaskis Country, Full Circle Adventures, Doreen Fulton, Glenbow Ranch Park Foundation, Richard Gotfried MLA, Global Calgary, Great Events Catering, Green Calgary, Harry and Martha Cohen Foundation, Healing the Heart, Karin Huehold, HSBC Canada, Intact Insurance, Jane's Walk, Janet Horbacio Photography, Kensington Art Supply, Lafarge Canada, Lake Bonavista Com Assoc, Land Stewardship Centre, Last Best Brewing Company, Little Rock, McInnis & Holloway, McLeod Law LLP, MidSun Com Assoc, Mount Royal University, One Life Fine Art, MEC, Nature Calgary, Nickle Family Foundation, Open Door Coms, Parkland Com Assoc, Pedalhead / Skiworks, Peter Puffin's Whale Tales, Sylvia Prochownik, Propellus, PwC, Prospect Human Services, Pumphouse Theatre, Ranche at Fish Creek Restoration Society, RBC, Riverwatch, Robin Read, Dave Rodney MLA, Rotary Club of Calgary, Royal Astronomical Society of Canada, Scotiabank, Shaw TV, Shaw Charity Classic, Sheila Shaetzle, Six Corners Brew Works, Ginette Soos, Southland Leisure Centre, South Fish Creek Recreation Centre, Spirit Hills Honey Winery, St. Mary's University, Stantec, Starbucks, Strobepro, Graham Sucha MLA, Sustain Environmental Solutions Inc, TD Canada Trust-Deer Valley, TD Friends of the Environment Foundation, Telus, Tim Horton's Deer Valley, Tool Shed Brewing Company, Ted Tomanik (Boston Pizza,) Trout Unlimited Canada, Truist Foundation, United Active Living, U of C, The Venturers Society, Vistek, Volunteer AB, Wild Bird Store, Wild Rose Brewery, Woodcreek Seniors Group, Youth Central and Sheldon Zandboer.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Phil Greer, Treasurer, Friends of Fish Creek

For the fiscal year ended September 30, 2015, the Friends of Fish Creek Provincial Society reported a net loss (excess of expenses over revenues) of \$24,473 compared to a net loss of \$43,149 in 2014.

Our revenues for financial reporting purposes were \$264,549 in 2015 compared to \$246,334 in 2014. This increase is primarily due to increased program revenues, fundraising revenues, and donations offset by lower sales of dedication benches. Our Casino held in June provided us with \$72,000 of cash proceeds of which \$57,407 was used in 2015. Our Learning Naturally education program is primarily funded through an agreement with TD Friends of the Environment Foundation, which is providing an annual grant of \$40,000 per year for the years 2014 to 2017.

We incurred expenses for financial reporting purposes in 2015 of \$289,022, which is consistent with the \$289,483 in expenses incurred in 2014. The most significant individual cash expense is salaries. Our total cash position including term deposits was \$260,409 at September 30, 2015, compared to \$177,080 at September 30, 2014. This cash balance provides us with a strong opening cash balance to fund our operations in the 2015-2016 fiscal year.

The Board of Directors authorized the transfer of \$20,000 from the Society's restricted "rainy day reserve" to fund ongoing operations, which compares to the \$20,000 transferred from the Fund last year. The Fund now totals \$27,500.

To fund our future operations, we continue to apply for grants and sponsorships but Casinos continue to be a significant source of our funding. Use of these funds is restricted per our gaming license but a significant portion can be used for our staff's salaries and benefits. Our next casino is scheduled for 2017. We also continue to see growth in our revenues from our programs and donations.

The Board and Management are continually seeking funding opportunities, particularly sources of unrestricted funds. These initiatives include targeting large Calgary based corporations, foundations, and known supporters of Fish Creek Provincial Park. We are also focusing on our planned giving program to facilitate donations through wills and estates as well as recurring donations through automatic bank withdrawals.

The Board has approved a Budget for the 2015/2016 fiscal year that allows the Society to operate a full complement of programs and maintain its current staffing levels.

We have again engaged independent auditors to report on our 2015 financial statements and copies of our audited financial statements are available by contacting the Society's office. (cont'd on next page)

TREASURER'S REPORT

(cont'd from previous page)

Summarized Financial Information (unaudited)

Revenues and expenses		Year ended September 30,			
		2015		2014	
Total revenues	\$	264,549	\$	246,334	
Member and education program expenses		209,721		210,599	
Administration expenses		79,301		78,884	
Total expenses		289,022		289,483	
Excess of expenses over revenues	\$	(24,473) \$	\$	(43,149)	
Financial Position					
Assets					
Unrestricted cash	\$	33,015	\$	19,291	
Restricted cash		192,877		123,698	
Restricted term deposits		34,517		34,091	
Total other assets		4,667		10,509	
	\$	265,076	\$	187,589	
Liabilities					
Deferred contributions	\$	197,014	\$	107,533	
Other liabilities		35,930		23,451	
		232,944		130,984	
Net assets					
Internally restricted		30,380		50,256	
Unrestricted		1,752		6,349	
		32,132		56,605	
	\$	265,076	\$	187,589	

THANK YOU 2014 - 2015 SUPPORTERS

Bobcat Level \$25,000 - \$49,999



TD Friends of the Environment Foundation



Owl Level \$15,000 - \$24,999





Deer Level \$5,000 - \$14,999



Watershed Stewardship Grant



Nickle Family Foundation

Beaver Level \$1,000 - \$4,999











Harry & Martha Cohen Foundation



HSBC Bank Canada

Aspen Level \$500 - \$749





Birch Level \$100 - \$499

Cenovus **Employee** Foundation



FLC Seniors Outdoor Club