

OSPS NEWSLETTER

OKANAGAN SIMILKAMEEN PARKS SOCIETY

Spring
2012

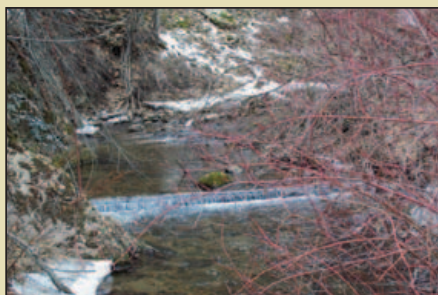
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47th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the OKANAGAN SIMILKAMEEN PARKS SOCIETY

Discover Our Ecological Reserves

with special guest presenters

*Wardens Don Gilles, Laurie Rockwell,
Eva Durance & others*



AGENDA

- ✓ Election of Directors
- ✓ Financial Report
- ✓ Discussion

CENTRE STAGE THEATRE
Rosedale Road, Summerland
April 13, 2012 • 7pm

ALL WELCOME Refreshments NO CHARGE Donations Welcome

EDITORIAL ON NATIONAL PARK

It appears that our provincial minister responsible for parks and recreation, the honourable Terry Lake, has let it be known that his government is not interested in supporting a plan for a National Park in the South Okanagan Similkameen, an area right on the path to the Pacific Gateway located in the province 'where Canada begins'. Aside from the economic, environmental and tourism costs that will result, what makes this decision interesting is the expressed reasoning behind it. Mr. Lake indicated that he believed there was no support displayed for the plan to protect a unique and diminishing ecosystem and as such he did not have the appetite to work with the federal government to see a National Park established.

Well we are here to inform Minister Lake, and anyone else with a similar erroneous understanding, that there indeed was, and continues to be, public support, both local and wider ranging, for a National Park located in the special area that is the South Okanagan and Similkameen.

Support for the project has continued to expand since the first inception of the concept. The planners have listened to the public and attempted to adapt ideas to meet the needs of the local communities. As an example, the original size of the proposed park has undergone reduction as a result of such dialogue.

As of today, in spite of Parks Canada's decision to curtail their planning process, the majority of ranchers with grazing rights in the proposed area, after discussing their concerns with representatives of Parks Canada,

continued on next page...

Please use the enclosed membership form on the back page to help us carry out our mission.



Harold King: Former Chair of O.S.P.S.

He will be missed!

The winter of 2011/12 has been a sad one for the OSPS, naturalists and environmentalists throughout the southern interior of B.C. Harold King, chair of the Okanagan Similkameen Parks Society, passed away on December 25, 2011, in Kelowna.

Harold was a resident of the South Okanagan for 80 years. He served in various capacities with many groups including director, vice president, president and corresponding secretary among others. He became a member of the Oliver-Osoyoos Naturalist Club in 1978 and was a volunteer warden of Haynes Lease Ecological Reserve since 1980. He spent the past 20 years acting as director of the Okanagan Similkameen Parks society.

Harold, and his late wife Joan, coordinated the Christmas Bird Count for more than 10 years in the Okanagan. Harold served

as board director for BC Nature for more than 20 years. He was also BC Nature's rep at the Okanagan Shuswap Land Resource Management Plan as well as the follow-up monitoring committee for 13 years. Though running the family orchard and being an active member of his church and community, Harold was also involved with the Smart Growth Community planning movement, with Scouting and with a restoration oxbow project near Road 22 on the Okanagan River. Meanwhile he was also an environmental representative on the West Kootenay Power Committee and a director and interpretive guide for the Osoyoos Desert Society.

Harold credited Joan with providing the support that made his conservation work possible. For that tireless work on behalf of our environment he was awarded a FBCN club service award in 2000, B.C. Nature's prestigious Elton Anderson award in 2010

and a public dedication to him in Haynes Point Park, following his passing.

As an environmental leader Harold made knowledge and protection of nature a way of life that he willingly passed on to others. As an aspect of his modelling for others he faithfully attended hundreds of hours of local, regional and provincial meetings where his contributions guided a strong course for naturalists. Harold contributed his expertise on many issues through email discussions, where his unique CAPITALIZED words certainly added emphasis!

The Okanagan Similkameen Parks society is grateful for Harold's contributions, his gentle nature, his knowledge and passion. We extend our condolences to his three children and extended family. We will miss him.

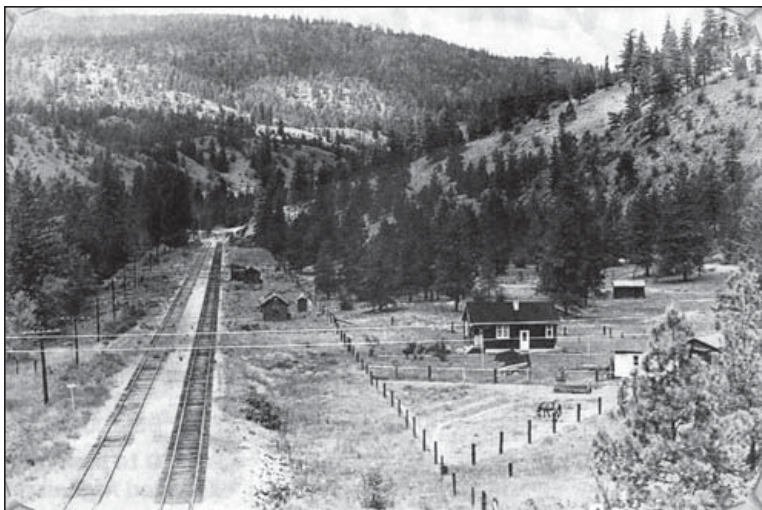
...EDITORIAL continued from front page

support the project. Likewise First Nations were engaged in communications with Parks Canada concerning various issues including the prospect of co-management of the park. The Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association, and their members, included the concept of a National Park in their five-year plan, to take advantage of the additional economic opportunities that a National Park would have provided to the region.

We are hard pressed to understand where, or

in what manner, Minister Lake received his information on this issue. There has only ever been one truly scientific poll conducted in the area and it indicated strong support for the concept of a National Park in the area. People all over the region and elsewhere recognize that the proposed park local had a very high rating of species richness, rarity, risk and resilience, which made it an ideal location for study, conservation and education. These are strong reasons for reconsidering the concept of the National Park with the intent of conserving it as a representative of B.C.'s dry interior plateau and a national treasure of biodiversity.

The Okanagan Similkameen Parks Society, one of many groups that supported (and are supporting) the establishment of a National Park in the South Okanagan Similkameen, will be more than happy to debate the merit of specific requirements, recommendations or timelines concerning a National Park. Indeed we can even address the establishment of a park itself. However, please give us credit for recognizing that a vaguely identified and erroneously reported lack of public support is definitely not a legitimate justification for opting out of the establishment of this vital project.



Shadow Catcher

Penticton Herald, Friday September 19, 2003

Photo courtesy of Penticton Museum and B.C. Arts Council

This picture of Faulder was taken in the mid-1960s. The house at right was a former CPR section house converted by the Knott family for personal use. The Kettle Valley Railway Steam Train will resume trips this weekend after being halted by the recent high fire hazard. Operators hope the train might some say go as far as Faulder, and if it does, it will travel on the tracks to the right.

REFERENCE: 140396

December 21, 2011

Doreen Olson

South Okanagan Similkameen National
Park Network – Citizen's Committee

Email: threegates@telus.net

Dear Ms. Olson:

Thank you for your email and letter of April 29, 2011, which was also addressed to my colleague, the Honourable Steve Thomson, Minister of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations, regarding the proposal to establish a national park in British Columbia's South Okanagan-Similkameen region. As Minister of Environment, I am pleased to respond on behalf of my colleague. I apologize for the delay in doing so.

The Province recognizes the important conservation values in the South Okanagan area, including some of the most ecologically valuable grasslands in British Columbia. The federal government, with support from the Province, completed a feasibility study that included consultations with the public, First Nations, local and regional governments and stakeholder groups. While the feasibility study determined a national park reserve was feasible and there was some support, it also recognized there was a large contingent of people opposed to the initiative.

As with other national protected area initiative involving Crown lands, the

Province considers local and regional government, First Nation, stakeholder and public support as critical towards supporting the transfer of lands and eventual designation for federal protected area purposes. In this case, the Province is not convinced there is enough local support to move forward with this proposal at this time.

Thank you again for taking the time to write.

Sincerely,
Terry Lake
Minister of Environment

*cc: Honourable Steve Thomson, Minister of
Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations*

I've just sent a letter to Premier Christy Clark (copied to appropriate ministers, MLAs, MPs, and mayors) regarding the recent decision of the BC government to withdraw their support of the National Park proposal in the south Okanagan. We need a flood of these letters to reach Victoria fast, so I've posted my version at <http://dickcannings.com/2012/01/17/an-open-letter-to-premier-christy-clark-regarding-a-national-park-in-the-okanagan-valley>. You can copy and adapt the letter and email or mail it to the premier and other appropriate recipients. Please pass this message on to anyone you feel may be interested in supporting this important initiative.

Regards, D. Canning



THE EARLY YEARS

Steaming Ahead

While it looks like an interesting vantage point, it's not the safest place to be. This fellow is in danger of losing more than his hat in this picture taken circa 1940. When the Trout Creek Trestle was built in 1913 it was the third largest steel girder bridge in North America at 619 feet long and 238 feet high. Viewing is best done from inside the train.



Clusters of Power Projects Threaten Pristine Creeks in the Columbia Valley

BY JAMES KNOOP

The town of Golden may seem to be a backwater place in the middle of nowhere, but when it comes to the environment, and in particular to the rampant push for independent power producer (IPP) projects, we've had to face our battles just as much as anywhere else.

It is not a story that is well known, and this account will give you insight into the potential long-term environmental consequences for the Upper Columbia Valley. This story also signifies what is happening in small towns all over British Columbia.

It begins with a pristine creek in an out-of-the-way river drainage called Ventego Creek. Even in our area, where backcountry pursuits are a way of life, few have heard of this place, and fewer still would ever dream of traveling into this treacherous valley. Yet, with helicopters and dynamite, and dreams of entering the "green" economy, a Nelson-based company called Selkirk Power has imposed itself on this remote wilderness. Thus, one aspect of this story is about the disastrous consequences of this project should it go forward. This company has already embarked on a ruinous fish translocation project within a unique sub-alpine wetland area. In the future, half of the drainage will be blasted open to accommodate new infrastructure. This is not a suitable location for a run-of-river project.

This story is also about IPP development in the region, and the province at large. It appears that entire regions are put up for sale on the auction block, especially when the region is sparsely populated. In our locale, a geographical area from Kinbasket Reservoir to Revelstoke Reservoir is threatened by multiple IPP projects. Should the first project be allowed to proceed, several other projects are highly likely to follow quickly on its heels. That is why it is so important to halt Selkirk Power and its project at Ventego Creek before it starts.

A GOLDEN BATTLE

To date, the residents of Golden – an active

and educated bunch – have managed to ward off several proposed projects that threatened to proceed without a local approval process. Two smaller run-of-river projects were particularly contentious between 2006 and 2008. Next, there was the company AXOR with a much larger 99 MW proposal on Glacier/Howser. This drew busloads of residents out of their homes to show opposition. Over 1100 people went to the public meeting in Kaslo, more than the entire population of that small Kootenay community! In November 2012, it holds an Energy Purchase Agreement (EPA) with BC Hydro for the controversial Glacier/Howser IPP project. This should significantly slow this project moving forward.

After that, there was Atla Energy, a company with three proposals on the wild and untamed Upper Wood River. This area is so remote that simply traveling there is an all-day affair that involves several hours of driving, arranging a special ferry and significant bushwhacking to access the river. To counter this illogical proposal, the Golden chapter of the environmental organization Wildsight, assisted by the Council of Canadians, created a documentary video and distributed it widely. Our little ol' town of Golden has a long history of success where these projects are concerned.

Each project, in one way or another, was stopped dead in its tracks. Each case is different and each project lies dormant to different degrees, for not at least. But this doesn't mean the battle is over, far from it is fact. The next proposal has emerged.

BIGGEST REGIONAL IPP THREAT: SELKIRK POWER AT VENTEGO CREEK

The proposal on Ventego Creek is the next big environmental threat in terms of IPPs in this region. The proponent, Selkirk Power, has gained its EPA and hopes to begin construction next spring on a single project that involves developing two adjacent river drainages for a combined 44 MW project. One drainage, Ventego Creek, is of particular

importance given its high wilderness, ecological and biodiversity values.

Ventego Creek meanders through a long pristine watershed that extends for about 18 km and is located in the northern Selkirk Mountain range. The glaciers that feed Ventego sit on top of tall mountain peaks, which form the border with Glacier National Park. At the back of the drainage there sits a high alpine lake, which plunges into a spectacular and dramatic waterfall to start the creek. Ventego Creek is fed by 19 additional tributaries as you go down the valley, some of which contain spectacular waterfalls of their own. The valley is steep and the high velocity of the water flow makes it desirable for hydropower production.

The Ventego Creek proposal is of special concern for a variety of reasons.

First, the Ventego drainage has never seen the human hand of development. There are no roads or even any recreational trails; the foliage is incredibly thick. There are also numerous avalanche paths in this valley, which makes it prime bear habitat. Additionally, there has never been a credible scientific wildlife or plant survey conducted in the Ventego Creek drainage, so we don't know the significance of the biodiversity that would be lost were this project to move forward.

In July 2010, a small group of us set out to hike the Ventego Creek drainage in order to document the area with photographs and raise awareness about these run-of-river projects. Because of the harsh conditions, the trip nearly became a deadly survival scenario, with myself on the receiving end! But that is another story altogether. Along the way, we conducted an informal wildlife survey of sorts, simply documenting what we found. We encountered bear daybeds, a bear rub tree and extensive bear scat. We traveled along multiple game trails, and were even forced to sleep on one due to the extreme steepness of the surrounding terrain. We also saw

extensive moose and other ungulate scat, Columbia spotted frogs, osprey, waterfowl, varied thrush, marsh wren, and many other species of bird that we were unable to identify. There have also been unconfirmed reports of Black Wolves spotted in the wintertime, and even the endangered Mountain Caribou. Clearly, the valley belongs to someone.

Second, in the middle of the river drainage there lies a 5.6 km stretch of unique sub-alpine wetland that has remained unchanged since the last ice age. Selkirk Power has begun a controversial fish translocation project in the Ventego Wetlands. In order to compensate for the loss of habitat on neighbouring Cupola Creek, the company began introducing blue-listed westslope cutthroat trout into this unique amphibian-filled ecosystem, where previously predatory fish did not exist. The project was to gradually introduce more and more fish, but significant opposition to the project emerged. Wildsight and the Ktunaxa First Nation have both taken a stand against it. The fish translocation has since been halted, an event that was big news for the environmental community in these parts. Somehow, the provincial Ministry of Environment and the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans approved the idea of a fish translocation into a pristine wetland. This is a clear example of how these projects can go wrong, despite a rigorous application process.

Third, the project offers no public benefit, while the local community inherits a laundry list of associated problems. The plans for this project call for a new 8.8km road extending halfway into Ventego to the edge of the wetlands, increasing its vulnerability. Blasting for construction of the road and the intake pipe will be extensive given the rugged terrain, further disturbing sensitive animal habitat. Despite assurances from the proponent, recreational vehicles may begin accessing the drainage through new road infrastructure, which also increases the potential to introduce invasive plant species that travel on their tires. The plans also call for 40 km of associated transmission lines to connect with the nearest substation at Golden. Aside from compromised aesthetic values, in an area that is surrounded by four National Parks, other proponents will piggy-back on the infrastructure resulting in more projects down the road. Thus, while private power producers gain profits through the sale of electricity to BC

Hydro on public land, residents of the local area are left to deal with the mess.

A STORY WITH A TWIST: TRANSMISSION LINES AND IPPS

This is the first of a series of proposals within a geographic locale that is slated for IPP development. The area where Ventego Creek is located is known to BC Hydro as the Beaver River "cluster." Selkirk Power holds proposals on two creeks within the cluster, further north there are another five proposals held by Trans-Alta, a large Albertan energy company. Already these creeks are being monitored with flow measuring equipment and they are waiting on BC Hydro's next Clean Power Call. One of the five proposals within the Beaver River cluster also lies in a pristine river drainage, Palmer Creek. Should the first project be approved, it would greatly facilitate the remaining projects within the cluster.

That the IPPs located within the Beaver River cluster will be developed in tandem with each other was discovered earlier this year when BC Transmission Corporation (now BC Hydro) sought approval from the BC Utilities Corporation to build a transmission line. This summer, BC Hydro approved the construction of a 112 km Columbia Valley Transmission line (CVT line) from Invermere to Golden. Contained within the application for the transmission line, was an economic study conducted to estimate the profits that would be gained through interconnection fees of up to 24 run-of-river projects in two "clusters" areas known as Beaver River and Goldstream River. At the present time, the cluster on Goldstream River is not moving forward, but the Beaver River cluster begins with Selkirk Power.

Widespread opposition exists both to the transmission line and the IPP project on Ventego Creek. Wildsight vehemently opposed the construction of the CVT line through a written hearing process. The group made the argument that BCTC failed to inform the communities of Golden and Invermere of one of the primary functions of the CVT line – the fact that it would be used to transport power from the two cluster areas south into the valley. According to the application for the transmission line, the development would enable cross-border energy trade. Furthermore, the Council of Canadians (Golden) has a petition with over 500 signatures opposing the project

on Ventego and Cupola Creeks. With the provincial government in a state of upheaval, and with Minister portfolios changing at alarming frequency, it is important that Ventego Creek not be left by the wayside.

TAKE ACTION NOW!

As Selkirk Power is hopeful to begin construction on the project at Ventego Creek next spring, it is important that we as environmentally-minded communities come together to take action now. This IPP project is particularly important to stop because it threatens a pristine river drainage, an increasingly rare piece of real estate in these times.

However, there are larger reasons for stopping this project. We cannot sit idly by as the government apportions large tracts of remote wilderness for sale on the energy market. The Upper Columbia region is not the only area in the province where transmission lines are being used to activate large clusters of IPPs within a confined geographic locale. These projects need to be proven to be in the public interest, and when pristine areas are threatened, it is very difficult to make the case that they are.

To learn more about Selkirk Power's projects, visit: www.wildsight.ca/ventegocupola-creeks-selkirk-power

James Knoop is a recent university graduate who lives in Golden, BC. He is the editor of an online news publication called the The Golden Scoop.



City begins design work on Campbell Mountain Trail

Bruce Walkinshaw – Western News Staff – June 2011

The City of Penticton will begin designing and costing out a trail route from near the Penticton Creek Reservoir up into Campbell Mountain, although where the funding to pay for the entire cost of the pathway will come from is still uncertain.

Council voted 5-1 in June to set city staff to work on the project utilizing \$24,000 it received from developer Victor Durman in exchange for rezoning changes to build a 68-lot bare strata development at 1701 Penticton Avenue.

The reservoir-route that staff will now pursue is one of two paths mapped out by Penticton and Area Cycling Association president Andrew Drouin which will take users from the city to the mountain without having to cross over the Pleasant Valley Mobile Home Park.

According to Drouin, a rudimentary wildlife trail already exists there that would need to be widened, sloped and packed.

The route seems to be the preferred option of many outdoor enthusiasts and trail user-groups. However, the total bill for the designing costs, trail work and walking bridge over Penticton Creek – there is a potential the bridge might be donated – is expected to exceed \$24,000, according to the city's manager of planning Anthony Haddad.

Garden Showcase Area's Habitat

PENTICTON WESTERN NEWS – MAY 2011

During the late 1980s Okanagan College instructor and naturalist Ruth St John was concerned about the disappearing natural habitat in the immediate environs of Penticton, but unlike some people who worry about things but take no action, Ruth got busy.

As a result of her vision, dedication and plain hard work the South Okanagan Habitat Garden sprang into being on the campus of Okanagan College. Actually "sprang into being" is not quite right – it grew slowly as labours of love often do. And before it was officially opened Ruth was involved in a tragic and fatal accident on the Okanagan River. Her friends at OC and at the South Okanagan Naturalists' Club, however, kept her dream alive, and in May 2000 the garden was officially opened after 10 years of hard work.

The Penticton area has some very nice gardens open to the public including of course the Summerland Ornamental Gardens, the Penticton Rose Garden and Linden Gardens in Kaleden.

In concept, The Habitat Garden is different from all of these other gardens – it is meant to recreate habitat types found in the South Okanagan. Only plants native to the South Okanagan are planted in the Habitat Garden – some of which are very rare. The western blue flag iris missouriensis was last found in the wild in the South Okanagan in 1988 in the marches along Highway 97 where Red Wing Resort is now located. Specimens were obtained from a nursery and planted in the Habitat Garden in 1998 where they first bloomed in spring of 2000. Other plants

include "chocolate tips", lupine, sage but-tercup and arrowleaf balsam root. The very rare grass, blue gramma, more common in the Kootenays, mysteriously appeared one year but unfortunately has not persisted. Interpretative signs on site help visitors enjoy the garden.

Somehow in the hustle and bustle of life we managed to overlook the 20th anniversary of the habitat Garden in 2010. Such things occasionally happen in volunteer organizations. So to help celebrate the garden's 21st anniversary, OC and the Naturalists' Club invite you to stop by and see a small piece of South Okanagan habitats here in the city. The garden is at its most colourful in the spring but is a true replica of our local habitats year round.

Driving along Highway 97 through Penticton you are bound to see irrigation underway on the Penticton Golf & Country Club grounds and you may even have thought to yourself that seems like a lot of expensive water being sprayed about just so some folks can chase a ball around a nice green course. But not so – the water being used on the Penticton Golf & Country Club course is all waste effluent from the Penticton waste treatment plant. Not only does this save on the use of clean, treated water but the waste water soaks through the soil to it gets further 'treatment' by the soil before it percolates into the Okanagan River. A win for the city, a win for the golf club and a win for the environment.

Robert Handfield is the past-president of the South Okanagan Naturalists' Club.

Mudboggers Fined

By Judie Steeves - Kelowna Capital News
Published: September 30, 2011 2:00 AM

Two young Kelowna-area men were fined Sept. 11 after they were discovered driving all-terrain vehicles through a wetland in the Chute Lake area.

Each was fined \$575 under the Forest and Range Practices Act for damaging the environment.

Conservation Officer Ed Seitz said they were doing a routine patrol in the area when they saw the pair and, although they fled, they were found at their camp at Chute Lake.

"We don't need that kind of activity in sensitive natural areas around here," said Seitz.

New legislation against what is called 'mud-bogging' and other activities that tear up the natural environment was enacted by the province of B.C. in 2007 with the intent of providing tools for authorities to crack down on such activities.

Myth of Abundance

PENTICTON HERALD, FRIDAY, APRIL 15, 2011

Last weekend I previewed a DVD, directed by Canadian Liz Marshall, that follows the work of Maude Barlow. This award winning documentary, "Water on the Table" examines the question: should clean, potable water be declared a human right, or should it be a marketable commodity like lumber, grain or oil?

A number of people, both Canadians and Americans, are interviewed at various times throughout the documentary: some with views similar to Ms. Barlow's other with opposing thoughts.

At one point during the DVD, Ms. Barlow states there is a "myth of Abundance" when it comes to Canadian water resources. In other words people, including Canadians (perhaps especially Canadians), believe we have an abundant supply of clean water.

We don't.

In 2006, a number of groups collaborated and produced a poster called "Okanagan Basin Waterscape". The poster, available through the Geological Survey of Canada (Natural Resources Canada), is subtitled: "Water – the myth of abundance".

Sound familiar?

The Okanagan Basin Waterscape poster has 'an abundance' of good information specifically directed to the Okanagan Valley.

It's not just human water needs, conveyed primarily by Okanagan municipalities, to take into account when considering the need for water.

Aquatic life and wildlife need healthy streams. Recreation and industry need water. The Okanagan produces 25 per cent of the total value of British Columbia's agricultural products, so this sector needs its share of water as well.

With the yearly watering restrictions placed on Okanagan residents each year, we do have enough water resources to meet the many demands. Today. What about 10 to 15 years from now?

While the net amount of water remains relatively constant, demands on the resource are increasing.

The two principle areas of rising demand lie in population growth and climate change.

According to Collier International's report "economic Overview and Population Stats", average population growth of just over 1.6 per cent over each of the next 15 years is forecasted for Kelowna.

If this growth means additional 'sprawl' with lots of roofs and roads that direct runoff flows directly to sewers and then into streams, population growth exacerbates the issue.

However, if the development is compact and runoff is captured and filtered naturally before it flows into ground water, population growth can be sustained.

Climate change affects water demand more subtly. Longer, warmer and drier summers increase outdoor water demand and more water evaporated from Okanagan Lake; a longer growing season leads to an increased demand for irrigation and our forests dry out more quickly, increasing the potential for forest fires.

Fortunately, Okanagan residents have two ways to counter the inevitability of population growth and climate change. One, capture rainwater and allow it to slowly infiltrate the soil, and two, remove or reduce lawn areas and select low water plants for the landscape.

Both of these solutions are 'doable' and they both dramatically reduce the amount of water used out-of-doors.

For our sake and for the sake of future generations, I encourage you to think seriously about how you can reduce your outdoor water use.

Toni Boot is the founder and owner of Grasslands Nursery in Summerland, a nursery specializing in sustainable gardening. Comments and suggestions for future Water Wisdom columns may be directed to her at grassnursery@telus.net or through www.grasslandsnursery.ca

MESSAGE FROM THE FIELD

Hi, I'm Mike Ladd, Area Supervisor with BC Parks. I am planning a small vegetation restoration project in Haynes Point park, with the intention of removing invasive trees (Russian olive, Siberian elm, Lombardy poplar, tree of heaven) that are displacing indigenous species, like antelope brush, hawthorn, rose, willow, r.o. dogwood, etc. There are a couple small high priority areas of the park I plan to start on, hopefully early this summer. I also

plan to plant indigenous species after the invasives have been removed to meet Federal Fisheries riparian habitat mitigation requirements. Most of the invasives are hard to kill due to suckering, so my intention is to carefully paint the freshly cut stumps with glyphosate with the use of a certified applicator. This herbicide is approved under our Invasive Plant Pest Management Plan. I would like to inform residents on the project, explain my case for the use of herbicide and determine the potential level of opposition.

The use of herbicides in provincial parks is a common practice to deal with invasive plants. I wish to communicate my intentions with local residents, to evaluate concerns for the project. Could you forward me the contacts for groups that may have an interest in the project? Would you have any advice on how to proceed? I can discuss the project with you and your members should you desire. You can also contact me on my cell at 250-488-2752.

Cheers!

Lakeside Parks United

by Okanagan Sunday Staff – August 2011

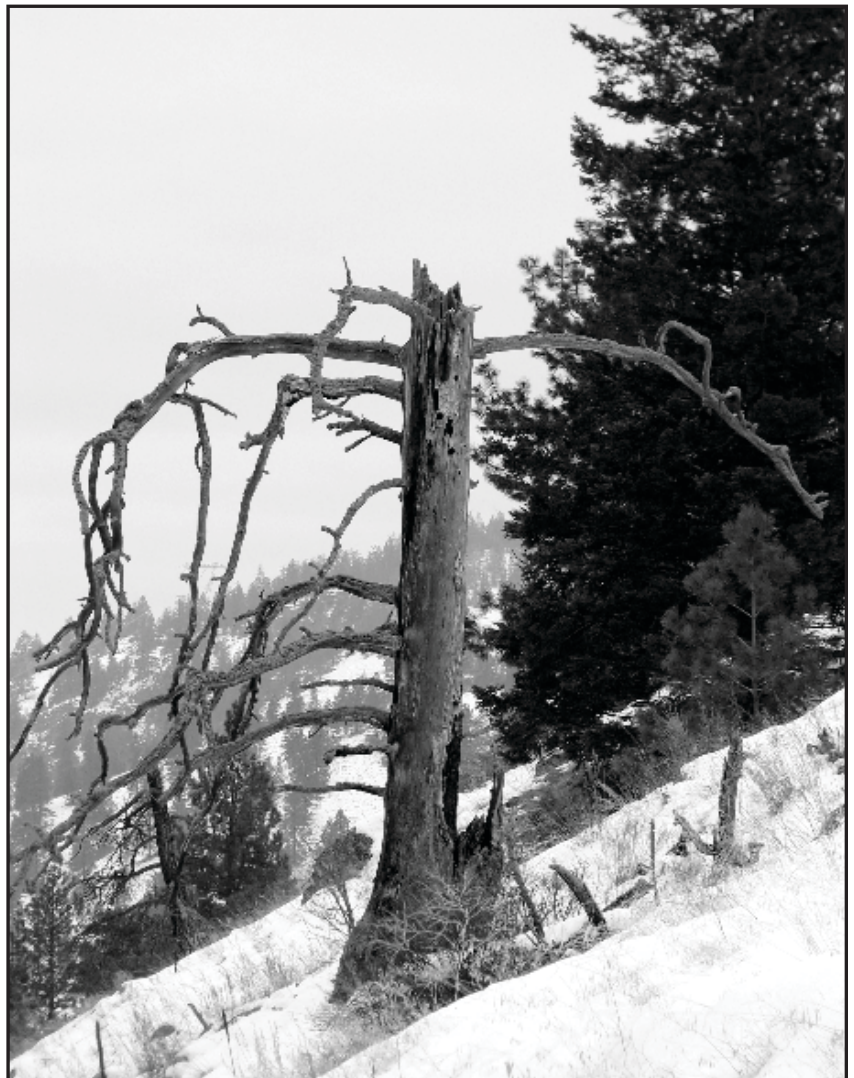
Purchase of property dividing Marjorie Pritchard Park 1st parkland acquisition by new municipality.

Two lakeside parks in west Kelowna has been joined together. Last summer the municipality has bought a private residence that's located in the middle of Marjorie Pritchard Park.

It's the first piece of property acquired for park purposes by the District of West Kelowna since it was incorporated in December 2007. Purchase price for the property, just under two-tenths of an acre, was \$1.5 million, below the listed price of \$1.7 million.

"This is a win-win situation for the municipality and its residents because now we have an idyllic piece of recreational, lakeside property that can be treasured and used for all time," Mayor Doug Findlater said.

District staff will consult with nearby residents on what use they'd like to see made of the site.



Wineries Support Conservation

PENTICTON HERALD – FRIDAY, JULY 2011

It's no surprise that wineries show an affinity to nature. Advertisements for South Okanagan wineries often feature vineyards set against a backdrop of rugged mountains, beautiful lakes and natural habitat.

Lake Breeze Winery in Naramata recently announced support for the South Okanagan Similkameen Conservation Program or SOSCP.

"The vineyard is the foundation of our business. We all see our local landscape changing and we hear about disappearing habitat and water issues. We felt it was important to support conservation in our area and donating our tasting fees is an easy way to do that," said Lake Breeze general manager Launa Maundrell.

SOSCP conservation program manager Bryn White was equally enthusiastic.

"The recent decision for Lake Breeze Winery to donate tastings proceeds to conservation through our partnership is fantastic," he said.

"The wine and conservation communities have common interests in thoughtful land management and protecting the quality of life we all enjoy in the Okanagan and Similkameen.

"Financial support for land conservation is one of the ways that wine companies can make a major difference in our sustainable future."

The Quail's Gate winery and the Stewart family have donated significant funds for the Nature Conservancy of Canada's work in the Okanagan.

Tony Stewart said that one of the reasons Quail's Gate chose to support The Nature Conservancy was, "They are a globally recognized science-based organization that has undertaken some very important work in the Okanagan.

"Our company and our family are proud to support them in their ongoing conserva-

tion and stewardship work, and through this partnership, we hop to raise awareness of sustainable practices in the wine industry."

There are many examples of wineries using inspiration from nature for their names, such as Quail's Gate, silver Sage, Black Widow, and of course Burrowing Owl.

Jim and Midge Wyse and their family at Burrowing Owl Estate Winery have provided many years of support for the Burrowing Owl Conservation Society.

As corporate sponsors they help the society with funding for owl captive breeding, field work and monitoring owls released into the wild.

Jim Wyse is now director of the Burrowing Owl Conservation Society. Their love affair with the owls began when they purchased a vineyard near Osoyoos and decided to name their vineyard after the endangered bird.

Nk'Mip Cellars has supported research on another species at risk – the Western Rattlesnake, through their support of a rattlesnake research project at Nk'Mip desert Cultural Centre.

This year, partial proceeds of specially tagged bottles are going to support habitat restoration and interpretation at the desert cultural centre.

Partnership between conservation organizations and wineries can involve donations or focus on environmental stewardship.

Kenn and Sandra Oldfield, owners of Tinhorn Creek Winery south of Oliver, have undertaken antelope-brush habitat restoration, snake fencing, and invasive weed management as Conservation Partners with the South Okanagan Stewardship Program managed by The Land conservancy.

"As farmers we are stewards of the land. This means the natural areas around our farms, as well as the vineyards that give us the wine," said Kenn.

Part of the attraction for tourist visiting this area is that wineries are situated in stunning settings, with opportunities for hiking, biking and bird watching as well as wine tasting.

The wine industry already markets the region's natural beauty. Supporting conservation is a way of celebrating and sustaining the unique wildlife and natural areas of this region – it's a natural partnership.

Margaret Holm works for OSCA, the Okanagan Similkameen Conservation Alliance, one of 50 organizations in the South Okanagan Similkameen Conservation Program.

I Saw the Sign

Susan McIvers/Special to the Herald

An interpretive sign has been installed at the Summerland Marsh on the lakeside of the Summerland Waterfront Resort thanks to the collaborative efforts of naturalist, parks and municipal groups and other friends of the marsh. Above Shelia white of the Okanagan Similkameen Parks Society and Bob Handfield, president of the south Okanagan Naturalist Club, read the sign. In the background Helen Ponselet chats with municipal



councilor Lloyd Christopherson.

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