

OSPS NEWSLETTER

OKANAGAN SIMILKAMEEN PARKS SOCIETY

Winter
2010

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What's In This Newsletter?

What is a park society? Where does it come from? Who does it serve? When does it serve? Why does it exist? And How will it go on from here? If this were a typical newspaper article these questions would likely be answered in a few paragraphs above the editor's line, drawn to conserve space for other items of import and interest. However, with the Okanagan Similkameen Parks Society, these are questions that have been asked and asked again throughout the long history of the organization.

It appears that these questions can only be answered for a given period and for a given location as interests, visions and requirements adapt and change in the world in which we live. So the intent of this newsletter is to

provide you with information about 'our world' for the winter of 2010 – 2011.

The society, as ever, will be observing the development of roads, trails and other intrusions into the public lands of our region. While the snows fly industry does not necessarily shut down. It is important to our society, and to many of our partner groups, that a curious eye be kept on the activities that occur in areas that could become parks and / or are projected to remain wilderness.

There has been a lot of information coming out recently on water and the importance of preserving water for the use of communities, individuals and nature. The society will continue to follow reports over the winter with

the purpose of providing information to our members. Water is an important aspect of our environment regardless of its designation as a park, a community or another area. Being a part of the grand cycle water, regardless of its location, is in the purview of our Parks Society.

In this issue you will also meet more of the directors that skillfully guide the society in its endeavours. Sheila and Bert White have been with the society, and served on its executive committee, for a number of years in a variety of roles.

So curl up by the stove or fireplace with a nice cup of your favourite hot beverage, and have a look through our winter newsletter. While it may be dark out of doors we hope that this newsletter may spread some light on some serious and emerging issues of interest to you and your Parks Society.

Trail Planned For North of Osoyoos

A new trail along Highway 97 is in the works to ensure pedestrians and cyclists enjoy a safer and more scenic travel environment.

"By separating the hike and bike trail from the highway, outdoor enthusiasts can better enjoy the scenery and heritage that the Okanagan is known for," said Boundary-Similkameen MLA John Slater. "Having these types of hike and bike trails also promotes tourism for our region."

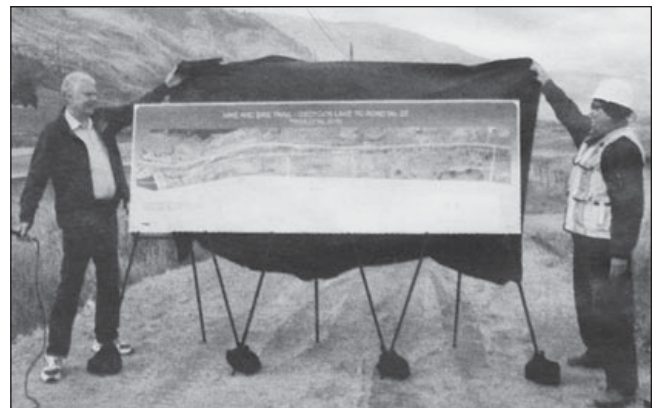
The \$1 million project is located on the east side of Highway 97, 10 kilometers north of Osoyoos. The new trail will connect to Road #22 on the north side and 204th Road on the

south side.

The project involves construction of a three-metre-wide, two-kilometre-long gravel surface trail parallel to the newly constructed Highway 97 and includes five culvert crossings under the trail for amphibians and small animals.

Construction is expected to begin in spring 2011 and be completed by summer 2011.

Since 2001, the province has invested \$1.6 billion in transportation and community



Boundary-Similkameen MLA John Slater along with Rampaul Dulay, senior project manager, unveil plans for the new hike and bike trail along Highway 97 north of Osoyoos.

infrastructure in the Thompson-Okanagan region.

Penticton Western News, November 17, 2010

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

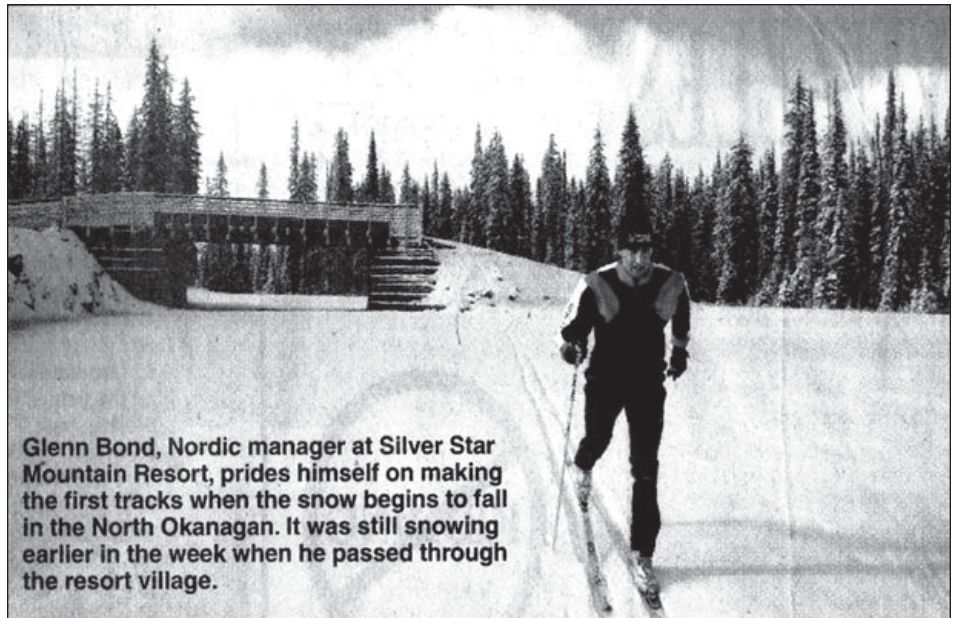
Nickel Plate Ski Club

J.P.SQUIRE "MAKING TRACKS"
Okanagan Saturday, October 30, 2010

In the South Okanagan, last weekend's annual Nickel Plate Cross-Country Ski Club swap was again successful. The line-up to get into the swap ran from Peach City Runners to the Starbucks at the corner of Main and Westminster. Many of those attending were successful in finding new and used gear that they can hardly wait to try out on the snow.

Jack Ambler, the club's operations guru, is predicting the start of the season will be next Saturday, La Nina willing. Silver Star and Sovereign Lake share his hopes for that start date.

Local cross-country ski experts Frank Perrier and Chris Harmata were on hand along with others to help fit new or used ski equipment to the needs of skiers young and old. Twenty percent of the proceeds went to this



Glenn Bond, Nordic manager at Silver Star Mountain Resort, prides himself on making the first tracks when the snow begins to fall in the North Okanagan. It was still snowing earlier in the week when he passed through the resort village.

non-profit club dedicated to maintenance of 60-plus kilometres of trails and offering ski programs for all ages at the Nickel Plate Nordic Centre.

The club offers lessons, snowshoe trails, a children's terrain park and "lots of great camaraderie," said club spokeswoman Gwen

Marsh. "Members and visitors can take part in moonlight skis or snowshoe events, barbecues and the annual loppet, a cross-country ski race."

For more information on the programs offered at Nickel Plate Nordic centre, check out the website at nickelplatenordic.org.

Kalamalka Park offers great sights

J.P.SQUIRE "MAKING TRACKS"
Okanagan Saturday, June 12, 2010

For those who have never explored Kalamalka Lake Provincial Park in Coldstream, it's a gem. Not only do you get incredible views of Kalamalka Lake—named by National Geographic as one of the 10 most beautiful lakes in the world—but there are numerous trails over its undulating landscape. Trail maps are available from park access points. A word of caution: some of the Kalamalka trail junctions could use more signs.

We hiked in from Cosens Bay, but instead of descending to the bay, we stayed on the Sidewinder Trail, then the Corral, Grassland, and Creat trails to Rattlesnake Point and Turtle's Head Point on the southern tip of the park. The two points offer those prom-

ised views of the lake. We followed the Juniper Trail to a beautiful picnic area on Twin Bays.

When you add the protected area, Kalamalka Lake Provincial Park offers 4,200 hectares of potential exploration. One trip is never enough.

A faster way of exploring is by mountain bike, as experienced by Okanagan Saturday managing editor Jon Manchester.

Water Projects Tap into Funding

THE WESTERN NEWS STAFF

Water conservation projects in the South Okanagan received financial backing from the Okanagan Basin Water Board.

In the South Okanagan, projects received a total of \$65,000 of the \$300,000 available in funding. Three of the more costly projects for the region include the City of Penticton's environmental audit project that will look at commercial, industrial, and institutional customers to find ways to reduce water consumption, the RDOS aquifer vulnerability mapping, and Okanagan Falls Irrigation District will complete a drinking water source protection plan.

Other projects in the area include creating a watershed report card template in Osoyoos, the Okanagan Nation Alliance water quality assurance initiative and the West Bench Irrigation District large lot xeriscape manual.

Funding for the WCQI grants is split between the three Okanagan regional districts, based on their contributions to the program.

Policy, Standards and Communication Contribute to the Bike and Hike Path

BY BILL JOHNSTON

O.S.P.S., Trails and Wilderness Committee

I have been asked to provide some background to the announcement of a separated hike and bike trail from the north end of Osoyoos Lake to Road 22, parallel to the four-lane highway construction now underway in this area.

Originally there were only plans for a two metre wide walking path to replace the K.V.R. rail / trail bed at that location

The Regional District of Okanagan Similkameen raised concerns in late April about the inadequacy of this plan for such a narrow trail that had no provision for two way hike and bike traffic. A meeting in M.L.A. John Slater's office on June 4, 2010, provided R.D.O.S. representatives from the area, Osoyoos Mayor Wells, and Okanagan Similkameen Parks Society director John Bremmer (involved since 1985 with the International Hiking and Biking Society) and me the opportunity to put forward and discuss improvements to the original proposal for the path.

The O.S.P.S. Trails Committee file contains the Ministry of Transportation and Highways cycle guides from 1992 and 2000. These editions of the guide, which were shared with the meeting, indicate that it is ministry policy to provide hike and bike paths to accompany new highway construction. We were also able to inform those present of trail width references from the policy guide and from a 20-year-old standard established by the B.C. Bicycle Association. While these standards call for a minimum three metre wide for a trail or path, they suggest that an adequate width is four metres, in order to ensure that two-way traffic is accommodated on trails such as the one that was under discussion.

We would like to express our appreciation for the effort, and subsequent results, put forward by M.L.A. John Slater, in order to secure this hike and bike path.

John Bremmer and I see the application of the M.O.T.H. policy to this project as a precedent for future highway construction

projects. This policy, and the precedent of this path, should ensure that all future highway construction plans provide for hike and bike path construction at the time of highway construction.

In the near term concerted efforts will be made to connect Road 22 with Road 9 with a two-way hike and bike path. Road 9 is located at the south end of the paved path on either side of Oliver. This wonderful, paved path was a project of the International Hiking and Biking Society. Mid-term efforts will be directed at connecting Oliver with Penticton using the Kettle Valley Railway right-of-way between these two points.

One longer, term proposal calls for a circle route for hiking and biking, connecting Osoyoos, Oliver and Penticton with Myra Canyon and Midway. The circle would be completed with a Midway back to Osoyoos leg. This path would likely mostly be via the existing railway right-of-way.



While government has in fact shrunk the base budget for parks at cost of park rangers and interpretation programmes, it is wrong to suggest they underfunded parks. Instead, they provided extra millions for KVR trestles, bark beetle cleanup and critical links in the TransCanada Trail. Over 200 million dollars was made available for parkland acquisitions. This same government has added over 1.5 million hectares to the park system. And recently to our surprise they committed to protect the Flathead Valley.

Another recent positive feature is that in contrast to the confrontation of the 1980s and 90s, it has been an era of co-operation. First with land trusts to acquire millions of dollars of land and second were numerous co-management agreements with First Nations with respect to park designations, most notably for the Great Bear Rainforest. This is a commendable legacy from which to end the first 100 years.

I do acknowledge a huge mistake with regards to the WFP lands.

At this point in time it is easy to find fault and to get picky about irritants to visiting our parks. Instead, while I recognize need to retain public oversight, I use the occasion of parks' 100th Anniversary to celebrate our amazing accomplishment of protecting over 14% of our land base.

JAMES ANDERSON, VICTORIA, BC
Watershed Sentinel, September-October 2010

Supper trail for bike/hikes

Iwant to let James and Andi Naude know that I support them 101 per cent in their efforts to turn the KVR into a bike-hike trail (Herald, Aug. 6).

My granddad was the founder of a famous national ski park in Africa, and I feel that the Naudes are blessed with the same pioneering spirit!

JOHN C. PAPENFUS, PENTICTON
Penticton Herald, August 10, 2010

Water a vital consideration for planning

A meeting of residents drawing water from and living on or near Twin Lakes Aquifer was held on Oct. 21 at the Kaleden Community Hall.

Factual information from the May 2010 Twin Lakes Aquifer Capacity Study was given. There was an opportunity to comment and present concerns. More information on the Aquifer Capacity Study can be obtained from www.rdos.bc.ca and from www.twinlakenews.com or Google Lower Nipit Improvement District.

I have been an area resident for over 13 years and I consider that I'm fortunate to be able to say I live on a little lake in the mountains, but we all need water. According to the Hydrogeology Twin Lakes water in this area has already been over-allocated by the old irrigation and domestic water licences. This does not take into consideration all of the wells/ground water being used. The summit study states that sustainable water may not be possible with the proposed large golf course development.

We 165 taxpayers/dwellings, or about 220 people, are in Area D of the Regional District of the Okanagan Similkameen and our area director Bill Schwarz, (bschwarz@rdos.bc.ca). Dan Ashton (daston@rdos.bc.ca) is the RDOS chair for this term. Communicating any concerns is advisable.

On Nov. 18 the golf course will be presenting a further water study to an open meeting of the RDOS board of directors. Please consider attending this meeting and check the RDOS website for a time, any update or possible schedule change of Twin Lakes Golf Course presentation. The 256-unit golf course housing development is being held up for "proof of water".

The lake I reside at is Trout Lake which is along Highway 3A. I have learned that aquifers work hydraulically, and that surface water and ground water are connected – one in the

same and one influences the other. I have seen the population rise by over 25 per cent and the water level at Trout Lake lower by over five feet in the time I have lived here. This lake level drop is for a lake of approximately 35 acres of surface size. Twin Lakes during this time fell about 14 feet over its normal 88 acres of surface area.

The capture rate for the Twin Lakes aquifer does not consider the many allotted surface water licences- there has been no ranch irrigation for the past 20 years, but the water licences are still active and can by law be used. Irrigation has a known water loss of 30 per cent and domestic water use has a 10 per cent loss. If there is irrigation during midday on hot days, the loss would be greater, and thus golf courses in dry climates are asked to water only during the evening, night and early morning.

The fact that we are a water-limited area must not be buried under mountains of glossy photos of a lifestyle that can more easily be sold than delivered.

Available water is a vital consideration for planning of developments, and recently the carbon footprint has become an issue. The more carbon emitted the more the temperature/climate is affected. Higher temperatures require more water as losses are greater. Remember that Twin Lakes is 28 kilometers from Penticton. Is large development in a rural water limited area good planning?

I found myself raising my hand at the conclusion of this information session and asking the question, "How can I help?" Please let us know if you would like to help as well, or if you have not yet signed as a concerned resident, or if you require more information. We can keep you informed if we have an email address.

STEVE BROWNSHAIR
*Twin Lakes Aquifer Group
Penticton Western News, November 12, 2010*

Sheila White - Secretary / Membership

Summerland, B.C.

BACKGROUND: Have always enjoyed outdoor activities and time with Varsity Outdoor Club at U.B.C. (Participated for over 9 years). Care of the land and nature has been a part of my life since childhood.

AREAS OF INTEREST: None in particular; all in general. I'm concerned with motorized traffic on trails and everywhere else. I also have a concern with ministry staffing of maintenance and for the best uses of our present parks.

WISHES FOR THE SOCIETY: That the O.S.P.S. build on its many accomplishments of the past and continue to work for the environment, as O.S.P.S. members did for 10 years at the L.R.M.P. meetings. I hope that O.S.P.S. can be successful in realizing legislation with reference to A.T.V. / O.H.V. use such as insurance, licensing, and sufficient staff support to provide rule enforcement for all such vehicles.

WORDS OF ADVICE: Do not give up our plans, which are good for plants, animals and the land itself. Continue to participate and speak up.



Robert 'Bert' White - Treasurer

Summerland, B.C.

BACKGROUND: Teacher of Business Procedures, Typing, Bookkeeping, etc. Always enjoyed hiking and camping and spending summers with the Geological Survey of Canada.

AREAS OF INTEREST: To handle the finances of O.S.P.S. to the best advantage of the society within the limitations of society regulations.

WISHES FOR THE SOCIETY: That the provincial government would have more consultation with groups such as the O.S.P.S. Believe in cooperation on projects, plans for trails, protected areas, etc., many go ahead with minimum of delay.

WORDS OF ADVICE: Keep working and participating – 'environmental' groups, such as the O.S.P.S. are truly invaluable. Plan to attract new members, especially young people.

Harold Baumbrough - Director

Naramata, B.C.

h_baumbrough@telus.net

BACKGROUND: Harold was born in Vernon, B.C. where he received his elementary and secondary education. After graduating from U.B.C., he taught general science and biology in a Vancouver secondary school. In 1964, he and his wife, Lydia, moved to Penticton and for the next 31 years he taught biology in Penticton Secondary School. He always enjoyed outdoor activities and time with Varsity Outdoor Club at U.B.C. (Participated for over 9 years). Care of the land and nature has been a part of my life since childhood.

AREAS OF INTEREST: From the time he was a youngster in Vernon, Harold has been interested in the flora and fauna of the Okanagan. In particular Harold has photographed many of the local flowers as well as those in a number of other countries.

The Okanagan Mountain Fire of 2003 provided Harold with the opportunity to record, virtually in his backyard in Naramata, the regrowth and restoration that was certain to take place. Beginning in the fall of 2003 and carrying on through 2004 – 2009, he has made over 125 trips to an area on the eastern edge of Okanagan Mountain Park. Here, documenting through journals and photography, Harold has recorded this incredible renewal process, known more formally as biological succession. Harold presented his findings to the 2010 Annual General Meeting last February. Throughout 2010 he has continued to add to his records.

LETTERS FROM HERE AND THERE - CONTINUED

Best dam way to power up

The run-of-river hydro projects that people have been talking about with increasing frequency in recent years should really be called "free-run-hydro" because they do not require the construction of a dam the way most existing hydroelectric sources in British Columbia do.

Free-run-hydro lets rivers flow naturally rather than backing water up into a large reservoir.

Whenever there is excess water surging through a river, which is very often the case in British Columbia, some of it is channeled

into a pipe (usually above a waterfall or rapids that fish cannot pass) and then passed through a generator.

Immediately afterward the water is returned to the river unaltered and undiminished.

The big advantage that free-run-hydro has over big hydro dams and large reservoirs is the incredibly small physical and environmental footprint they have and the negligible disruption they cause to the environment and local ecology.

After initial construction there is actually very little to see in a free-run-hydro project because most of it is buried and hidden from sight and re-vegetated.

Free-run-hydro has been used for decades all over the world, as well as here in B.C., and with great success.

The Hupacasath First Nation's Upnit project in the Alberni Valley on Vancouver Island is a great example and so is the recently completed Ashlu project near Squamish.

And with most of the best big hydro dam sites in B.C. already taken, free-run-hydro offers us a way to access new hydro generated electricity with minimal intrusion into nature.

FRED REMMEYER, COQUITLAM
Penticton Herald, October 6, 2010

Long Winter Eve

BY IAN GRAHAM

As the shorter, and often greyer, days unfold during the longer winter months we must seize the opportunity to reflect on the 'nature' and 'value' of the parks, in all of their shapes and forms, that we seek to steward. Further, this contemplation permits us, individually and in groups, to define a 'vision' of what we regard as the appropriate state of our parks in the near and distant future.

One could view parks from the point of view of their qualities that are deemed as positive for the economic, emotional and physical well being of the people that populate the vicinities, locally or further removed from, the actual physical location of a particular park. A litany of benefits can be brainstormed and listed in this regard. One of the industries that have arisen over the past decade is that of 'eco-tourism', from the day-trips on bicycles over paths and trails to camps and retreats found on mountaintops or on rivers. Certainly, well thought out niche industries can coexist, compatibly or augmentatively, with parks and recreation areas important to the areas' population.

From an emotional perspective, parks, nature and pristine environments of all descriptions hold the promise of a 'get away' for people living with a myriad of responsibilities, be they self imposed or as a form of obligation which they must meet. Whether relaxing and partaking of the qualities that parks have to calm and slow thoughts and emotions, or participating in a strenuous activity for which the smells, feelings, sights and sounds of a park provide a backdrop, research indicates that individuals and groups benefit from having nature, in multiple forms, near to hand to enjoy. Indeed for some of us it may be enough just to know that parks are protected and available during times that we

are unable to actually visit them.

It comes as no surprise that parks provide a forum for honing physical well being and health. In fact, be it formal or informal trails, paths, roads or water ways and bodies, that are walked, hiked, biked, skated, run or paddled, the cardiovascular and muscle building fitness opportunities within our parks are phenomenal. However, we must also be sure to acknowledge that much of our fresh water supply is also connected in some manner to nature in general and in a lot of instances to the parkland that we conserve. The precipitation cycle that provides us with fresh water, be it ground or surface, must be protected through the maintenance of the regional ecosystems' natural vegetation and vigilance around opportunities for pollution.

Parks, akin to other areas left to nature's processes, complete with vegetation and animal life, are certainly part and parcel of the cycles and systems of the planet. Whether as carbon dioxide sinks, precipitation traps, soil anchors

or habitat for all manner of plants and animals, trees, for example, play a role important to areas much wider than their actual geographic locale. Weather systems ultimately rely on ecosystems and geography, which in turn can be traced to the particular flora and fauna that thrives in an area. Parklands play a great role in the protection, and regeneration, of the vegetation and critters that naturally have come to be in a particular setting. Obviously, these connections provide a number of qualities conducive to the greater good and health of our population.

The cursory nature of this reflection allows for additions to, and expansions of, the concepts and observations. It is for each of us to cobble together the vision of what parks could, and should, be. However, whatever the outcome of your deliberations and your particular beliefs as to their nature, it will be difficult to deny that parks have great value to our population and need to be carefully and persistently observed, nurtured, and protected.



U.S. was interested in Summerland

BY DAVID GREGORY – SPECIAL TO THE REVIEW

Summerland Review July 1, 2010

The annexation of Canada or portions of Canada by the United States has been a recurring issue throughout our country's history.

In British Columbia, annexation was especially important in the early 1860s.

The excitement of this province's Gold Rush of 1858 brought large numbers of gold seekers, mostly American, to the interior of the new Colony of British Columbia.

Annexation was frequently debated in this Colony's newspapers during the Gold Rush years. At the conclusion of the U.S. Civil War (1861-1865) Americans were angry with England and the Colonies for supporting Southern Confederacy.

They were especially angry that Britain provided warships to the southern states.

At the international level, the U.S. demanded compensation. One of the considered articles of compensation including "the ceding of all of Canada".

The U.S. completed the Alaska Purchase in 1867 and the acquisition of Canada or portions of Western Canada through annexation would provide full U.S. control of the Pacific west coast.

The world's first international arbitration, titled the Alabama Claims (named after the British warship) took place in 1872.

No annexation took place, but Britain was ordered to pay \$15.5 million in compensation to the United States.



ON THE MAP

This U.S. Government map, dating from 1860, includes Priest, at the site of present-day Summerland. In the early 1860s, annexation of British Columbia was often debated. Priest is marked near the top of the map.

In preparation for possible annexation of the Colony of British Columbia, the U.S. government surveyed the southern half of the colony in 1860.

The government produced several annexation maps, one of which showed Summerland, then called Priest.

The settlement of Priest was founded in 1845, prior to the creation of the Colony of B.C. and prior to the establishment of the U.S. border in 1846.

In the year 1845, the area was called the Territory of Oregon.

When the U.S. government surveyed the Okanagan Valley the only Okanagan settlement was Priest.

Although this annexation map is difficult to read, Priest can be found at the very top of the map. (Nicholas River is now named Aeneas Creek, Trout River is now Trout Creek.)

The municipal park named Priest Camp Historic Park was officially opened in February 1998 by B.C. historian Harley Hatfield.

This is Summerland's third largest park.

This park is not indicated on any municipal map or in any Parks and Recreation program guide.

No sign exists indicating a municipal park.

The Okanagan Similkameen Parks Society has assisted with the new signage for historic sites in the region. 'Priest Camp' and the 'Fur Brigade Trail' are sites located in Summerland's Garnett Valley. The society has put forth \$5 000.00 to help provide interpretive signs at these locations. There is nothing like a good hike while learning a little something about our history.

MEMBERSHIP FORM Okanagan Similkameen Parks Society • Box 787, Summerland, B.C. V0H 1Z0

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Sometimes we forget the vastness of the Okanagan Valley. members of the Penticton Adventures Club almost blended into the landscape when they recently checked out a trail to the top of Oliver Mountain in the South Okanagan. You can learn more about this hike at the Oliver Tourist Information Centre, exactly where club members found out about it