

Friends of Black Mountain

Annual Report for 2021

The past year has continued to pose major challenges for our community and the entire world, with the pandemic raging for a second straight year and climate change wreaking havoc around the planet. Here in BC, we endured unprecedented fires in the Okanagan and catastrophic floods across the lower mainland.

Predictably, the challenges of 2021 hampered the capacity of the Regional District of Central Okanagan (RDCO) and Friends of Black Mountain (FoBM) to carry out various planned trail expansions and facility-building projects in the Park. Still, some progress can be reported: Construction of a new parking lot at the Joe Rich park entrance is underway, and a new trail, called the Flume, is being built to connect that entrance to the main Swainson service road.

Despite the hot weather and smoke, Friends of Black Mountain's dedicated volunteers racked up more than 100 hours of sweat equity in support of the Park. Volunteers continued the very important years-long monitoring of the Park's blue bird populations, and carried out extensive trail-maintenance activities in the spring and fall.

Several FoBM trail-maintenance volunteers received training in the use of electric weeders, which we hope to use in the upcoming season to significantly speed up work that until now could only be done manually.

FoBM volunteers also received special training in fence-repair techniques, which will enable us to contribute to the ongoing challenge of fixing vandalized fences. Damaged fences have, for many years, allowed cattle to roam unimpeded across the Park's delicate ecosystem; we fervently hope that this annual invasion will finally be controlled in 2022.

On the communications front, we gave our website, friendsofblackmountain.com, a wholesale facelift, and developed an attractive new logo. We always welcome new stories and photographs.

For 2022, we plan to continue our Blue Bird Monitoring program, and keep our FoBM-built trails free of weeds and in tiptop shape. We also plan to build an accessible new trail of the same quality to connect the Swainson Road parking lot with the start of the Ephemeral and Coyote trails.

See you all in the Park!