



Nose Hill

News and Views
fonhs.org



Number 67

The Friends of Nose Hill Newsletter

Fall 2022

President's Message

by Anne Burke

As we were producing this newsletter, the Board had the opportunity of meeting with Mike Delves, Zone 2 Superintendent, Parks-North Region. The purpose was to talk about the issues pertaining to trail use on Nose Hill. A City-Wide solution is required. There are designated trails on the escarpment (the slopes). We recognize that but the scattered approach is not working. Mike invited Andrew Phelps, Environmental Compliance Specialist at the City of Calgary, and Kristen Dobson, who is in zone 3 Foreman 5. The City believes the Management Plan is outdated, they will ask for input from all users as to what should be the priority in a natural area. Urban Conservation concerns itself with Biodiversity and the Advisory Committee no longer posts minutes. We support restoration and habitat rehabilitation. Steven Snell was the Conservation Policy Team Lead. He will be tasked with forming a working group to decide the next steps and achieve a new plan. Friends of Nose Hill would be invited as a stewardship group. We suggested it should be a "review" of the current management plan. However, we learned the existing documents, such as the Biophysical and Land Use Inventory of Nose Hill Park, are not generally known, and we recommended that the research be digitized.

Guidelines for users, especially bikers, should be updated since the technology



Photo by Anne Katzenberg

has advanced. Motorized vehicles are cited in the Parks and Pathways Bylaw based on speed, which is difficult to monitor. Entrance signs may not be clear enough, while trail markers are only for dog users. Kristen said that most 311 calls are about litter or garbage and dogs. However, an education piece for bikers is possible and should be added to the website.

Park users can use more information. Multi-use is challenging, especially if the City is looking at Nose Hill as a Recreation Park. We pointed out that the City takes pride in Nose Hill and its natural environment, such as fescue. Provincial Fish & Wildlife are concerned with fauna, while the Federal Government deals with migratory birds. The meeting ended well with a promise to set up future meetings.

Please plan to renew your membership and indicate how you would like to receive the newsletters (by email or in print). We always appreciate hearing from you. Thank you to our members and supporters who contribute to the welfare of Nose Hill. The Executive deserve our gratitude for their perseverance and commitment. Our website was updated when news warranted (which is often) and our Facebook Friends now number 354!

In this issue we will feature more correspondence. Keep those letters (and emails) coming. I was asked to contact City Council (their group email is: councillorweb@calgary.ca) and the Mayor has her own moniker: TheMayor@calgary.ca. I was able to cc: Kyle Ripley, Director of Parks, who promptly set up a meeting of the Executive with the Parks Superintendent for Nose Hill. Thank you to The City Clerk, who assisted me.

The 2022 City Nature YYC Challenge began with taking photos of wild plants and animals (April 29 to May 2) and then identifying what was found (May 3 to May 8). This annual event was free and open to all ages. Although we wish all the contestants well, the City of Calgary has adopted an official bird representative. The species which received the most votes is: **the black-capped chickadee**. Other nominated birds were: magpies, blue jays, red-breasted nuthatches, and northern flickers.



Migratory Bird Day was in May, and sadly now avian flu. The Park is a solace for humans too when faced with social isolation for medical reasons. Our thoughts are of family and friends.

The Annual May Plants in Bloom Count was May 25-31. Our outreach program continues to educate, due to Great News Publishing, with monthly "News from the Friends of Nose Hill" about the Park and the message about conserving our natural environment.

I have found comfort in the Nose Hill Park Natural Management Plan, which will not remain static, but the natural area will be conserved now for future use by all Calgarians. Thank you to the many volunteers, residents, and others who continue to make that happen.

Here are two options which we should seriously consider:

- Nose Hill should be treated as a prairie reserve, with the remaining portions of native grassland regarded as a living museum of flora (plants) and fauna (animals);
- as a field laboratory where scientific observations and experiments are done so as not to injure the area.

In more general terms, the goal of Nose Hill Park is to perpetuate the natural character of Nose Hill landscape, its environmental features and cultural resources, while providing compatible, quality recreational opportunities.

The Park is now an island habitat, surrounded by residential housing with no natural corridors leading in or out. As an urban park, Nose Hill must be managed to support high levels of visitor use. It is more difficult to prevent or slow the spread of non-native species (weeds) into and within the park, as well as to control wildlife diversity.

Happily, Nose Hill will continue to be a place where people can relax; escape from the pressures of city life and commune with nature; and pursue appropriate outdoor recreation and leisure activities. Any changes should have minimal impact, with environmental protection and reasonable levels of access and safety for all Calgarians.

Abandoned Pets

Another recent concern is the unwise practice of those who "release" pet fish into the City's streams, rivers, and other waterways. The problem is compounded by the fact that some types can live up to twenty years or more. There are also some serious diseases involved with the negative impact of invasive species on the local population. I have been told that some people who purchased pets during the Covid-19 lockdowns have decided to leave them and let nature take its course. This is decidedly unkind behaviour and must be discouraged, wherever it takes place.

Facebook

Our Facebook Account contains postings on pet rabbits which have been abandoned by their owners. This sad story results in feral rabbit populations succumbing to a lethal rabbit hemorrhagic disease (RHD) because they have not been vaccinated. The strain can be transmitted between feral, domestic, and native rabbit and hare species (with some risk to jackrabbits, cottontails, and snowshoe hares). It is unwise to expose indoor pet rabbits due to how contagious it can be.



Photo by Anne Katzenberg

**Letter to The Mayor and City Councillors
cc: Kyle Ripley, Director of Parks City of
Calgary, 4 July 2022**

The Friends of Nose Hill Society is dedicated to the protection of the Park for the benefit of all Calgarians. The objectives of the Society are to:

- advocate for the preservation of Nose Hill Natural Environment Park in its natural state;
- provide information, awareness and education for the preservation of the Park;
- organize and encourage volunteer participation in the Park;
- liaise with special interest groups concerned with the Park.

The overall management goal for bike use on Nose Hill is to provide an area where recreational biking can occur alongside natural resource protection and the minimization of negative encounters with other users.

ZONES

The Nose Hill Park Natural Area Management Plan provides that mountain and street bikes will be restricted to non-dirt formalized areas on all sloped areas to minimize erosion hazard and disturbance of wildlife in Nose Hill Park. The majority of the top of Nose Hill will be a bike zone with no restrictions on travel. Surprise encounters should be easily avoided as both bikers and hikers will have a longer line of vision.

Street bikes will be encouraged not to leave non-dirt formalized trails in order to ensure user safety and prevent damage resulting in trail degradation.

Bike use will occasionally be restricted in areas of restoration or experimentation on the top of Nose Hill. The gravel pit will be restriction-free, but mountain bike damage should be closely monitored by the Natural Areas Management Coordinator.

EDUCATION and ENFORCEMENT

Bike zones will be enforced primarily through signage. Zonage signs will be placed at major trailheads into the park.

In keeping with the Master Plan, public education through interpretive materials and presentations will be used to emphasize bicycle users' responsibility to adhere to zoning rules and avoid conflicts with wildlife and other users.

We have attached a map from the Nose Hill Trail and Pathway Plan, with authorized routes for bike users, as well as (for comparison purposes) online documentation of unauthorized trail forks promoted by bikers. In addition, there are a few photos to document just some of the ongoing damage to the Park, due to unrestricted bike use.

Yours truly,

Anne Burke
President
Friends of Nose Hill Society

Reply

**Kyle Ripley, Director, Parks & Open
Spaces, The City of Calgary, Operational
Services**

Hello Anne,

Thank you for the letter, I have shared it with our Operations for Nose Hill, Urban Conservation, and Pathways & Trails groups in the Parks Department so they are aware of the issues you've outlined. Bike trails can be a great amenity for one group, but we do recognize they can lead to conflict with other users and unfortunately at times can have an adverse impact on the flora and fauna in the area. Thank you as always for your passion for Nose Hill Park.



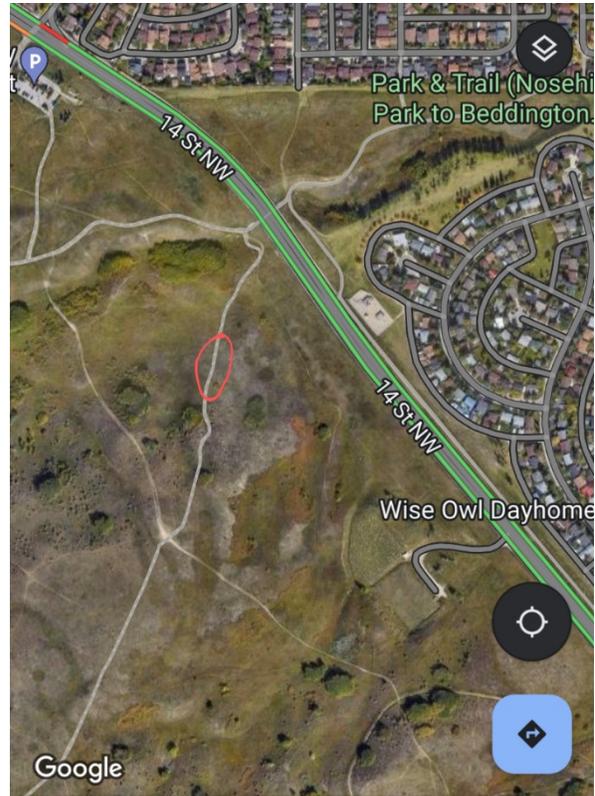
Washed Out Trail Requires Maintenance

Question: Hi, I tried to report the maintenance request through the 311 Calgary website but wasn't successful. The gravel trail is located on the left of the pedestrian tunnel by the Nose Hill Park & Trail to Beddington (see mark-up in RED on **map**). The gravel trail sections expose the honeycomb stabilizing substructure installed by the City. I hope the Parks Board team can have the gravel trail reinstated soon, so we can all enjoy.

Just want to have the team carry out necessary repairs (which they still haven't).

Thank you for your help.
Cheers

Answer: The Zone 2 superintendent for Parks North Region has referred the matter to Pathways for repair. Thanks for your support of Nose Hill.



Weed pull opportunity for [ArcGIS](#) a geographical information system (GIS) for building maps.

Q: Hello Friends of Nose Hill,

I work at the Friends of Fish Creek. I was also an intern with Canadian Wildlife Federation (CWF) through their Canadian Conservation Corps (CCC) program. I was looking to do a project to finish off the CCC program and thought that your organization might use my help. I was wondering what was currently being done about weeds on Nose Hill. I've seen several nodding thistle plants while on walks up there and what the current solution is for dealing with them. I've got a solution that works at Fish Creek park that includes tracking locations of weeds using [ArcGIS](#) and getting volunteers to remove them.

My focus in the park is just more on the ecology side so I know more about it. Because I'm looking to do a project for the CCC, I thought it would be a good idea to help other parks set up their own systems to track invasive species or park health. Anyways, let me know what you think. If you're interested in some collaboration on this or on other problems on Nose Hill, please let me know. I'd love to be a part of making the park a better place. Thanks for finding my email and getting back to me. It's a little late in the season to pull weeds honestly but if Parks will let you guys pull a few weeds next year, it could be good! Let me know what you find out!

A: We expect Parks would issue a permit in the form of a letter. This would authorize the weed pull which is otherwise prohibited by the Parks and Pathway Bylaw. Are you able to give us some information about your approach? Anything you would like to share?

Q: When it comes to methodology at Fish Creek we've sort of split it into two types of volunteer jobs or events. There's one group that can go out and map where the locations of the weeds are using the app on their phones and then, when we have the geo-positional data, we have an event to pull the weeds.

Usually, the events only target a single species to keep things simple. In subsequent years we can keep track of weed sightings to watch the progress we're making in the area and find out our impact. The data we generate is also used to inform bio-control releases and herbicide spraying in partnership with the City of Calgary and Alberta Environment and Parks.

Below is a photo of what the points and polygons look like in the software.



There is a fee for the software licence but you can have as many volunteers as you like using the same account, we haven't had any trouble with it. **Each differently coloured dot or polygon represents a different species** and you can track whatever information you want once you set it up. You could also use the software for other things as well. We also use it for gathering reports from volunteers concerning damage to the park (vandalism, fallen trees, etc.) and you can add photos too if you'd like.

Sage Picking on Nose Hill

Question: How does the Friends of Nose Hill deal with sage picking? I live across from the hill at the corner of Macewan Glen Drive and Macewan Park View NW. There are more people picking every year. I've informed Bylaw and have taken a photo and license. Seems like they feel it's their right to pick whatever on the hill. Thanks.

Answer: from **Mike Delves Zone 2 Superintendent, Parks-North Region:**

Groups who pick Sage in Nose hill should have permission from the Parks Director's office in the form of a letter. Bylaw should be contacted if you think someone picking Sage doesn't have a letter.

Research on Nose Hill

Question: Hello, I'm doing some research about Nose Hill and I was wondering about two items that I'm aware of but am not able to find any detailed information on them. In my searching online I have been given a hint that there may have been a gravel quarry located in Nose Hill park at some point before it became the park that it is. Also, the radio tower is on Nose Hill but there is hardly any info about when it was placed, why and it's past & current purpose that it serves. Would you have any information about these two items? Any information would be greatly appreciated. Thank you for your time and effort with this request, Regards,

Answer: I have attached some information about the Quarry from the Nose Hill Park Natural Area Management Plan. I don't have much about the history of the radio tower. However, there are some Guidelines for Nose Hill Utility company personnel and private individuals who also conduct maintenance activities. These include servicing power transmission lines and the Ham Radio Tower.

- Remove and rehabilitate the asphalt trail to the Ham Radio Tower when funds are available.
- Access by other than maintenance vehicles is illegal and unnecessary. The only exception to this guideline is access to the Ham Radio Tower.
- Individuals using private vehicles may occasionally access the tower to change batteries. Access to the tower for other reasons should be by foot. Vehicle access to the tower should take place via the gravel quarry.

To find the Medicine Wheel, first go to the tall radio tower (this should be easy to spot). Then walk south towards downtown. You should come upon the Medicine Wheel fairly quickly. The large boulders are located North and a bit to the East of the radio tower.. Thanks for your support of Nose Hill.

Question: Thank you so much for the information about the gravel quarry! It explains the depression on Nose Hill, the seasonal pond and the density of paths in that area as well. I wonder where I might be able to find a name and dates for it. Perhaps the Glenbow Museum could enlighten me on that. Thanks again for your help.

Answer: The Glenbow Archives has been moved to the University of Calgary. When you "google" the Archives it should take you to the link and you can make a research request.

Question: Great! I definitely will take a look at that. Thank you for your time & help.



Executive & Board 2022

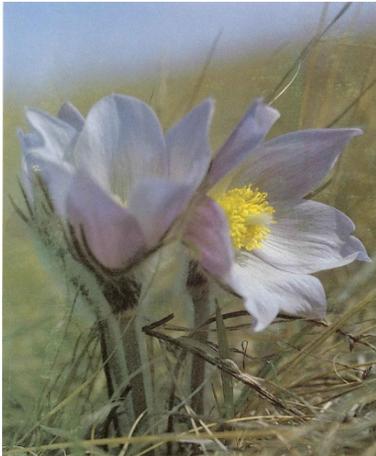
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The Friends of Nose Hill invite submissions of articles, poems, thoughts, drawings or photographs from members, visitors and others who have experienced the Hill. We will do our best to print all submissions, but because of space limitations, we reserve the right to edit as necessary.

Please include your name and phone number with submissions.

The views expressed are those of individuals and do not necessarily reflect those of the FONHS

The Friends on Facebook

The Friends of Nose Hill have a Facebook Group. If you are a Facebook member, check out the group: "Friends of Nose Hill Society". It has 358 members so far. Feel free to post your stories, photos, comments and questions about the Park.

Members who would like to receive future issues of the Friends of Nose Hill Newsletter by e-mail should send an e-mail message with their request to: ervan@ucalgary.ca

Friends of Nose Hill Society Membership Year: 2022-23 \$20.00

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