



# FOY'S TO BLACKTAIL TRAILS

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Foy's to Blacktail Trails | PO Box 81 | Kalispell, MT 59903 | [www.foystoblacktailtrails.org](http://www.foystoblacktailtrails.org)

## FROM THE CHAIR

### *Greetings Foy's to Blacktail Enthusiasts!*

We've been busy since July 2010, when our last newsletter was distributed. Over the past eight months, our board, committee members, volunteers and donors have been diligent in their pursuit of our mission. As you'll soon read, our efforts are paying off in significant ways and we have high expectations for further accomplishments in 2011.

Thanks to a strong effort on many fronts we were able to close in December on the purchase of Phase 1, one of eight approximately 40-acre parcels we plan to acquire. We are proud to have made this addition to Herron Park, and have set the precedent for carrying out our plan to ensure that future generations continue to enjoy these trails. With your support, we will soon be in position to add Phases 2 and 3.

In January, the board convened for the purpose of strategic planning. Both the process and the results were valuable, and we look forward to improving our systems. Please get in contact if you would like a copy of our revised objectives for 2011 and beyond.

Near the first of the year, we were informed that FTBT will be the recipient of another \$70,000\* from Montana State Parks' Recreational Trails Grant program. This marks the second year in a row that our project has been awarded this considerable amount, and demonstrates that the State recognizes the value of our work. Also this winter, FTBT was awarded grants from the Sustainability Fund and Flathead Community Foundation that will allow for improved operations and administration.

With the help of Flathead County Parks, one of our key partners, and local volunteers, FTBT groomed close to 15 km of routes in the Herron Park system this winter. The FTBT trails see an average of 100 trail users per day, a considerable increase from years previous, which tells us we're succeeding at improving your outdoor trails experience.

Thanks to a Montana State Parks grant award of \$12,000\* to Flathead County Parks, we will build just over a mile of new trail in the Phase 1 parcel, as well as improving several existing trails this spring and summer. We're excited to roll out our first-ever trail map (with support from the FEC's Round Up for Safety program); pick it up at local businesses or get in touch with us for a copy.

Our grants committee remains hard at work researching, applying for and managing grant dollars, but our project's success relies on the continued generosity of our donors. If you've been involved with FTBT, thank you for your support and I invite you to revel in the progress we're making, together.

If you've yet to pitch in, either with your dollars or your time and energy, please join us as we strive to reach our goal. Be on the lookout for upcoming events and opportunities, and please make a donation today to help secure and improve these beautiful forested trails so close to home.

See you out there,  
Clifford Kipp  
*Board Chairman*

\* The actual amount awarded is contingent on finalization of the U.S. Congressional budget.



Official Closing on Phase 1, December 2010



Spring View from the Overlook

## HOW WE GOT HERE, AND WHERE WE'RE HEADED NOW

It's hard to believe Foy's to Blacktail Trails (FTBT) has been an incorporated non-profit since 2004. Given that, you might think we have been actively fundraising since then to acquire the 320 acres above Herron Park. Well, that's not the case, and we would like to offer some updates, clarifications and general notes on our project so everyone can better understand where we came from, and more importantly, where we are going.

The organization actually began in 2001 with the goal of securing historic access to trails and lands connecting the Foy's Lake area to the forest lands at Blacktail Mountain. A key to this goal was securing access through the privately-owned 320 acres next to Herron Park. Sale and development of that parcel would end the enjoyment of the trails that wind throughout it, and make the long-term goal of a trail to Blacktail Mountain impossible. In 2007, the owner of this land decided to sell it, and FTBT was able to interest a national non-profit, The Conservation Fund, to act as a bridge buyer to purchase the land in trust, and allow us a certain amount of time to "buy back" this beautiful land that over a hundred people (on average) are enjoying every day. Our deadline to complete the purchase is September 2012.

FTBT's fundraising and trails team came up with the concept of "Phased Purchasing" for the land. This allows us to purchase chunks of land as we get the dollars. We divided the project into eight phases of roughly 40 acres each.

### DID YOU KNOW YOU CAN PURCHASE AN ACRE FOR \$7,000?

Once we purchase the acreage, we transfer the land to Flathead County Parks and Recreation for management. And we are pleased to announce, we transferred our first 40 acres in December 2010! Because we have such a large and committed volunteer base, FTBT helps Flathead County Parks with weed management, recreational trails grants, trail building, and trail maintenance.

If you're thinking, "Only ONE phase of EIGHT has been purchased?!" Well, we technically have the dollars to purchase Phase Two and we're working on Phase Three (together, these amount to 90 acres). We are temporarily holding on to these funds as local match for grants to generate even more money (grant lingo for "Trust us, there's money in the bank!").

***But we need much more to purchase the remaining land—\$1.7 million to be exact.***

Our fundraising team has developed a great plan for the next 17 months and we need your support to fulfill it. Please contribute as generously as you can today—a donation envelope is enclosed for your convenience. If you know of someone else who may be interested in donating, help us reach out to them. We also need volunteers for a variety of tasks, from fundraising to trail building.

Every dollar FTBT raises goes directly to the purchase of land, and so far, donations have been matched 1:1 by grants, effectively doubling your investment. Our part time Administrative Coordinator is paid by a grant from The Sustainability Fund, and we are fortunate to have many services donated by generous community members.

We live in an amazing place. On any given weekend we can hike in Glacier Park, summit a mountain in the Swans, run the South Fork in the Bob Marshall Wilderness. But during the week, we need a place we can quickly and easily feed our soul (and train our legs!). Foy's to Blacktail Trails is that place. Out your Front Door and on to the trails! See you there.

Clifford Kipp, John Chase and Dave Landstrom celebrate an RTP grand award from MT State Parks.





## MORE NEW TRAILS PLANNED FOR 2011

With the addition of Phase 1 (40 acres) to the northwest corner of Herron Park in December 2010, we are excited to add some new trails on completely new terrain this coming summer (see our new Trail Map). In total we will build about 1.5-2 miles of "bench cut trail" on the newly added land. We also plan on "booting in" about another mile of trail (on The Conservation Fund land) which will connect the new single-track with the Overlook Trail. Our long-term goal is to improve this "booted in" trail once we have fund-raised and purchased the land beneath it.



If this seems confusing, don't worry. Just clean up your boots and strengthen your legs and lungs in preparation for a spectacular 2011. These new trails will meander in and out of forest cover and will offer spectacular views in numerous places.

We'll create several new loop opportunities and the new trails will help to further disperse use (Phase 1 effectively doubled the size of the western and northern boundaries of Herron Park). They will consistently gain elevation, but in a fun manner. We think the new trails will be popular with all user groups, especially cyclists and hikers/trail runners who want a more solitary experience. However, like all of the FTBT system, the new trails will be open to everyone.

In addition, we plan on formally designating a trail route from the parking lot, across the meadow, to the Incline Trail. And, we hope to construct a disability and family friendly route from the parking lot to the pavilion and Family Trail. Several other trail segments will receive yearly maintenance and/or subtle refinements.

As in years past, we will be able to utilize volunteers while Montana Conservation Corps members are on site to provide supervision. Volunteers are invaluable! We'll be working Monday thru Friday for approximately three weeks from mid April thru early May. Another opportunity to help will be Saturday June 4th, which is National Trails Day. If you would like to add some sweat equity to the effort send an inquiry to [matt.ftbt@gmail.com](mailto:matt.ftbt@gmail.com), or phone 406-250-5958.

## FREE GUIDED HIKES *Come Check Us Out!*

As this issue goes to print, the snow is melting, birds are returning and the mud will soon firm up for some serious hiking! Think glacier lilies, shooting stars and later, lupine, wild geraniums, and wild roses.

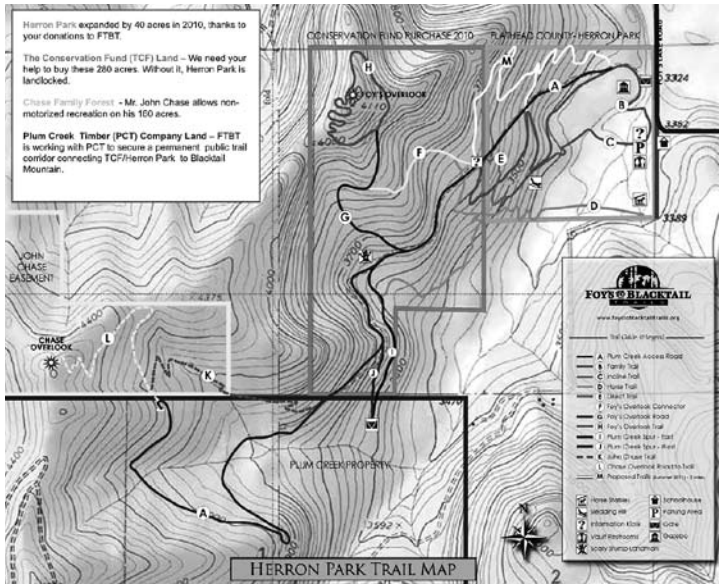
In addition to our monthly guided Community Hikes (see our website for details) we are planning a series of "Neighborhood Hikes" in June. The emphasis of these hikes is to get the folks in the neighborhoods closest to FTBT out their front door and experiencing the awesomeness that is so close.

But we don't want to leave anyone out. So, if you are part of a neighborhood anywhere in the valley, or even a group of friends who would like to come on an organized hike with a knowledgeable, entertaining and possibly movie-star quality leader, please send us an e-mail and we will arrange it. Think mornings or evenings on the weekdays, as the point of these hikes is to show folks (young, old, or in-between) how accessible these trails are to us on a daily basis.

Please e-mail Sara Busse at [bussess@yahoo.com](mailto:bussess@yahoo.com) or call 755-4648.

Many thanks to our Community Hike sponsors for February, March, April and May: Western States Insurance, Kalispell Regional Medical Center, Insurance Coordinators, and Montana Academy.





## MAP OF FOY'S TO BLACKTAIL TRAIL SYSTEM NOW AVAILABLE!

Many of you have asked for an accurate, user-friendly map of the FTBT Trails in Herron Park, The Conservation Fund land and John Chase properties. That map is now available! Volunteer Shannon Freix created this beautiful map with assistance from Flathead County GIS. A generous grant from Flathead Electric Coop's Round-up for Safety program paid for publication costs. This comprehensive 11" x 17" folding map features trail names, landmarks, and distances, as well as tips for safely enjoying the trails.

The map is available free of charge at Rocky Mountain Outfitter, the Kalispell Chamber of Commerce, and at the FTBT information kiosk next to the parking lot at Herron Park. Pick up a copy soon and use it to plan your next outing. You may also download it from our website at [FoystoBlacktailTrails.org](http://FoystoBlacktailTrails.org)

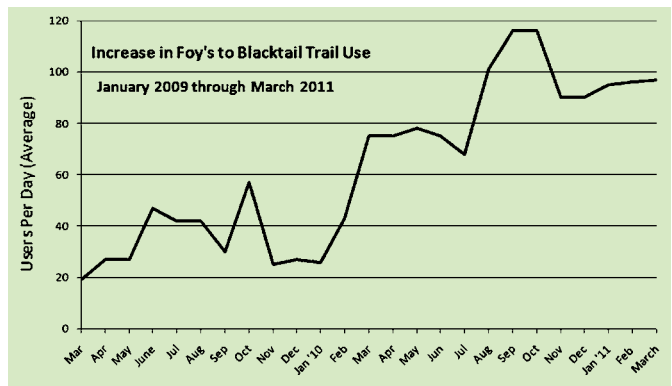
## HUGE INCREASE IN USE OF FOY'S TO BLACKTAIL SYSTEM

On average, nearly four times as many people use the FTBT trails daily, compared to just two years ago. Improved trails, public awareness, winter trail grooming and the desire for no-cost, easy-access recreation close to town have all contributed to the rise in trail use.

FTBT has been collecting trail use data since 2008. Until recently, a single electronic device on loan from Montana State Parks recorded users entering and exiting the boundary between Herron Park and The Conservation Fund land near the upper FTBT Information Kiosk on the Plum Creek access road. In February, FTBT obtained two more electronic trail use counters, one thanks to a grant from

the Flathead Community Foundation, and the other on loan from Flathead County Parks. "These new trail counters will significantly improve our understanding of how many people use the trails, and which trails they use most", says FTBT Vice President Liz Makman. "When we had only one trail use counter, we were under-counting users because many people entered and/or left the trail system from points other than the one we were monitoring." More accurate trail use data will help secure grants for land purchase and trail building, and will help FTBT design better trails in the future, increasing user enjoyment and safety.

Abundant snow from November through March brought many skiers and snowshoers to the trails, and for the first time in many years, the trails were groomed for user enjoyment. Flathead County Parks groomed the Herron Park Meadow and Plum Creek road system, while an FTBT volunteer groomed the Family Trail and other single-track trails in the system. Our thanks to Plum Creek for permission to groom their road system.



## GET LUCKY WITH OUR 2011 RAFFLE

*Three Prizes, Three Winners*

Buy a raffle ticket (or a bunch of them!) and you may be the winner of a beautiful bronze sculpture (valued at \$3,500), Ashley Lake cabin getaway, or a \$250 gift certificate from Rocky Mountain Outfitter.

Just \$10 for 1 ticket- \$25 for 3- \$50 for 8 and \$100 for 20! Drawing to be held on November 15—you don't need be present to win.

Buy your tickets from any FTBT board member, or send your name, address, e-mail, phone number and payment for the number of tickets desired to FTBT, P.O. Box 81, Kalispell, MT 59903. We'll automatically enter you in the drawing. All ticket proceeds go to securing permanent access to the trails you love!



## THANK YOU!

These fine Flathead businesses contributed food to our First 40 Acres Celebration in February: The Naked Noodle, Super 1 Foods, Rosauers, and North Bay Grille. We appreciate your support, and the hard work of FTBT volunteers who made this enjoyable event happen.

Also, we thank Marilee Ramsell for laying out our new brochure, and Trippett's Printing for donating most of the printing costs. It's colorful and up to date, and we are grateful for your help.

Jordahl & Sliter generously donated accounting services and professional advice.

Robin Sorg donated her time and talent to design and layout of this newsletter.

## DO THE HUSTLE



Whether you're a serious runner or just out for a stroll, the annual Herron Hustle is a great way to spend a Saturday morning. Come join us on May 7 for this race on 5.5 unpaved miles of the Foy's to Blacktail Trails. This benefit event also features a one-mile race for kids. For more details or to register, visit [HerronHustle.com](http://HerronHustle.com).

Thanks to our sponsors: Ceres Bakery, Colter Coffee, CrossFit Flathead, Hammer Nutrition, Tamarack Brewing, and Wheatons.

## SPRING/SUMMER CALENDAR

*Details on all these events and more available on the [FoystoBlacktailTrails.org](http://FoystoBlacktailTrails.org) News and Events Page*

**Herron Hustle, Saturday May 7, 2011**

*This 5.5 mile trail run (or walk) is in its fourth year! Come join the fun.*

**Community Hike, Saturday, May 14, 2011**

Free guided hike suitable for all ages. Herron Park, 10 AM.

**National Trails Day, Saturday, June 4, 2011**

Grab a shovel and come help us work on the trails.

**Paddlethon, Sunday, July 31, 2011**

Paddle in Foy's lake, then bike and run on the trails. A unique race!



So long, Arthur. Happy Trails.

## SO LONG FRIENDS!

Bye Teddy. You are missed.

