



FOY'S TO BLACKTAIL TRAILS

ISSUE 11

FALL 2013

Foy's to Blacktail Trails | PO Box 81 | Kalispell, MT 59903 | www.foystoblacktailtrails.org

PHASES 4 & 5
(110 more Acres)



FROM THE CHAIR

Greetings Foy's to Blacktail Enthusiasts!

It's been a year since our last newsletter, and in that time, a whole lot has happened to make Herron Park and the FTBT trail system a more valuable asset to the Flathead Valley. As you peruse the following updates, photos and articles, I invite you to consider the level of investment, dedication and achievement demonstrated by our organization. I am incredibly proud of the work being accomplished by our board and volunteers. Of course, that work is made possible by virtue of the considerable investments of our donors, grantors, and project partners.

For the second consecutive year we've made significant progress toward our land acquisition goals, transferring 160 acres to Flathead County for inclusion in Herron Park – the park is now 380 acres large, 220 acres of which will serve as a Community Forest managed for educating the public about forest health and management, while continuing to provide recreation opportunities and habitat.

Beyond improvements to Herron Park, FTBT has been working hard with the Flathead National Forest's Swan Lake Ranger District on the Foy's to Blacktail and Lakeside to Blacktail trails on the Island Unit.

Our trail system remains one of the most enjoyed year-round destinations in the valley for everyone from those seeking to hike, ride, run or ski, to those training for the next big event, to those simply looking to get their four-legged friends (and themselves) out in the fresh air. Our updated trail maps and signage have met with positive reviews and Herron Park has become an ideal venue for several annual sporting events, some nationally recognized, boasting challenging course designs, stiff competition with impressive local representation, and an accessible layout.

For our success in the past year we are especially grateful to our corporate sponsors: Applied Materials Foundation, D.A. Davidson,

Dean and Leiningner, Glacier Bank, Jordahl and Sliter, Montana Academy, Murphy Oil Company, Northwest Imaging, Pacific Steel and Recycling, Plum Creek Foundation, Three Rivers Bank, and Valley Bank. We have received major grant support via the U.S. Forest Service, Montana State Parks, Montana Fish & Wildlife Conservation Trust, Flathead Land Trust, The Steele-Reese Foundation, The Sustainability Fund, Cadeau Foundation, and Cinnabar Foundation. Special thanks to Flathead County Parks for their partnership (see



The Plum Creek Foundation presented \$2,500 to FTBT in July 2013. The money will be used to help construct a new informational kiosk at the Herron Park parking lot.

article inside). We're grateful to Run Flathead and Flathead Cycling, both of which recently held events generating significant donations to our land purchase and protection effort. Other businesses and individual donors, too numerous to list here, have also generously supported us and we deeply appreciate every gift.

With 60 acres left to secure and transfer, we still have work to do. We hope you'll consider joining our efforts, whether by making a financial donation, spreading the word about our work, showing up for park/trail improvement on National Public Lands Day (September 28), or learning more about participating on the board of directors.

Hope to see you out there!

Clifford Kipp,
Chairman of the Board, Foy's to Blacktail Trails

HERRON PARK: A HISTORY OF STEWARDSHIP AND PARTNERSHIPS

Fifty years ago, the Iven Herron family owned and cared for the beautiful rolling grasslands that now comprise the eastern part of Herron Park. In 1977, Flathead County Parks acquired this 120-acre property for use as a public park. Soon afterward, the Flathead Combined Training Association equestrian group added riding arenas, horse jumps, stables and other amenities. For more than 35 years, Flathead County Parks has maintained Herron Park, and popularity of the park continues to grow.

Foy's to Blacktail Trails (FTBT) is committed to long-term assistance with this expanding park. FTBT recognizes the importance of avoiding the use of tax dollars for maintaining lands it has added to Herron Park. FTBT thus organizes ongoing volunteer and grant-supported efforts to build and maintain trails, help control noxious weeds, produce maps and install signs to ensure trail safety and enjoyment.

The recent establishment of the Foy's Community Forest on 220 acres of the expanded Herron Park is an example of the partnership between FTBT and Flathead County Parks. FTBT, with the help of forestry experts, is helping the County develop a long term plan for management of the community forest, including recreation and education components.

Maintaining a top-notch trail system for generations to come also means ensuring that funds will be available as future needs arise. FTBT recently established a permanent "Foy's Herron Endowment Fund" at the Flathead Community Foundation. Interest dollars generated by this endowment will be used for maintaining the Foy's

to Blacktail Trails at Herron Park as well as the trail(s) we hope to establish southward toward Blacktail Mountain.

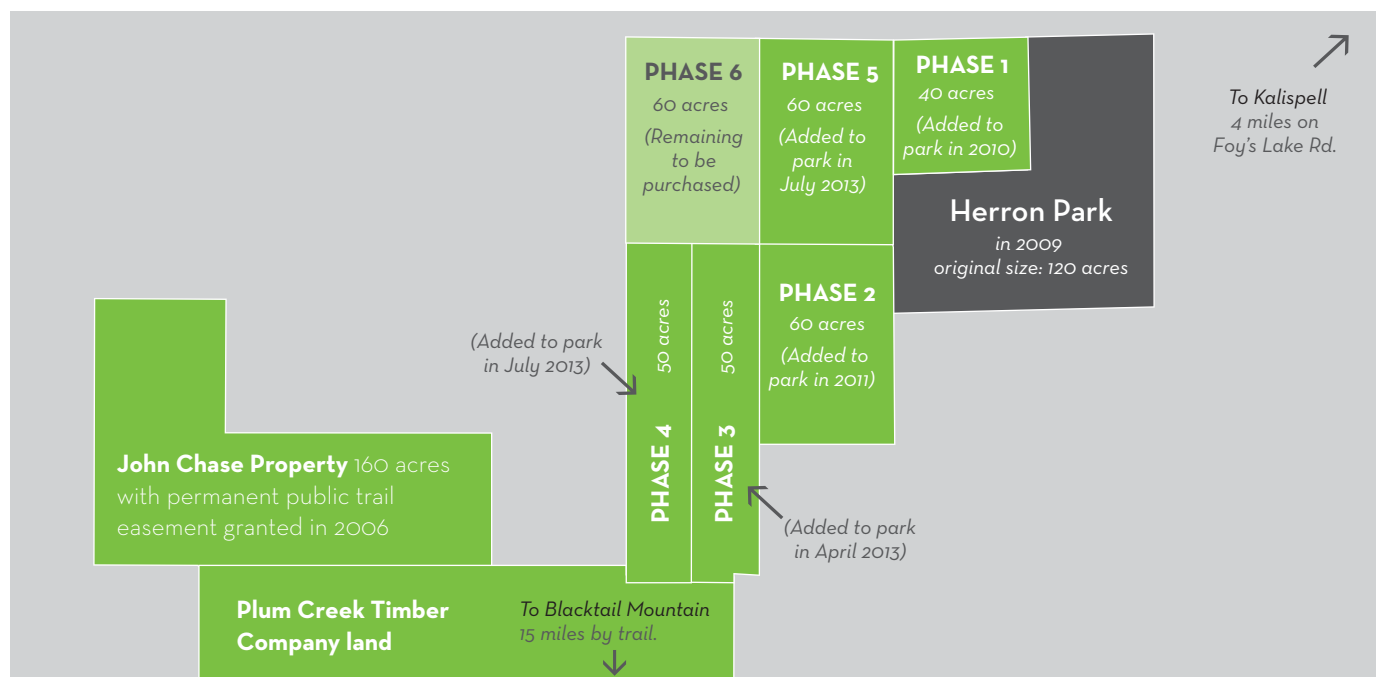
Our thanks to the Flathead County Parks Department, as well as the Flathead County Commissioners for their continued support of the Foy's to Blacktail Trails at Herron Park.

RECOMMENDED RUNNING ROUTES

By Danielle Coffman, Board Member, Foy's to Blacktail Trails

It wasn't all that long ago that our route choices in Herron Park were fairly limited. Now, with multiple new trails and recent expansion of the park, the possibilities are numerous and it can be somewhat overwhelming, especially early in the morning before coffee. Indeed, I like to run in the early morning before work, and will admit to being frequently pressed for time due to my willful deafness when the alarm goes off. I have two stand-by loops that can be completed in well under an hour without exhausting climbing. I suggest you give these routes a try. Grab a free trail map at the kiosk and bring it along with you if you like.

Route 1 – A four mile loop: This loop takes me approximately an hour (to run, but it's a nice walk too). This time estimate includes stops to pick up dog poop and to allow them to sniff things (my furry BFFs always accompany me). From the parking lot, take a right towards the north boundary of the park. There are signs indicating a left turn to get to the Family Trail, which is a mellow grade trail that wanders up to the upper kiosk. Follow the signs for the Family Trail (you will take a left off the main logging road) and take the Family Trail all the way to the upper kiosk and then hang a left up



Status of land purchase efforts, Foy's to Blacktail Trails at Herron Park. Phase 6 is owned temporarily by The Conservation Fund and must be purchased before the end of 2015.



Foy's Overlook , the most popular destination in the FTBT trail system, lies within the remaining 60 acres of at-risk private land FTBT is working to buy and add to Herron Park. With your help we can purchase and protect this last, best piece of land.

learn from forestry professionals about forest stewardship, forestry science, and small-acreage timber management including fire prevention and disease control.

Currently, professionals from the Society of American Foresters are working with FTBT and Flathead County to write a Management Plan for the Community Forest. This will become the guiding document managing use of the forest in the years to come. In the coming months, education plans and opportunities will be developing. If you have expertise in forestry and/or education and would like to help, please contact Foy's to Blacktail Trails and we'll put you in touch with the appropriate coordinators.

the main road. After roughly another half mile, you will see a faint trail to the left that has a sign with an arrow (that is lying on the ground – this is not an FTBT established trail, it might be secret, so don't tell anyone). Jump on that trail and follow it down. It will switchback and eventually take you back towards the main road at Scary Stump. Take a right on the Horse Trail and follow it and take whatever route back to the parking lot you prefer (I hop on the Family Trail near the bottom to make it an even 4 miles). **Important:** *As the name indicates, the Horse Trail is intended primarily for horses.* This means you need to exercise extra care in making sure you do not surprise or spook any horses. This is a good trail to take it extra slow on (I am always looking for a good excuse). If you do approach a horse, step off the trail and make sure to speak loudly with the rider so the horse knows you're a person and not a predator. (Or you can converse directly with the horse if you prefer). If your dog is with you, make sure he/she is secured closely at your side. Remember that everyone must yield for horses and it can be very dangerous to the rider if you scare their horse.

Route 2 – A Three-ish mile loop: When you're really pressed for time and want a relatively mellow route, this is your loop. Again, head right from the parking lot to the main logging road but this time head to the right on the Notch Trail. This trail is slightly steeper than the Family Trail but is still a reasonable grade (I can still run up this trail though I take walk breaks). Follow the trail up until you get to a double track old road. Take a left and follow it until you reach the main road around the upper kiosk. Cross the road and take the Family Trail down. This route is fairly quick but gets you outside and still constitutes a legitimate morning workout. Certainly the dogs appreciate it. Enjoy the trails, be considerate of others, and have fun!

THE FOY'S COMMUNITY FOREST

Besides helping to fund the addition of 110 more acres to Herron Park, the recently executed Community Forest grant brings a new dimension—education—to Herron Park. The grant establishes a 220-acre Community Forest (covering Phases 2 through 5 – see map on Page 2). This will remain a working forest where timber is harvested using best-management practices, and both children and adults will

IN MEMORY OF STEVEN D. BECH

We are sorry for the loss of Steven Bech, 68, who died May 11 in Kalispell. Steve loved the outdoors, including skiing and hiking. Steve's family requested memorial contributions to Foy's to Blacktail Trails. Steve volunteered for a number of worthy organizations both before and after his retirement from Flathead Electric. We at FTBT are humbled by, and appreciative of, the many donations made in his memory.

THANK YOU!

Our thanks to George and Elma, who donated their graphic design talents to producing this newsletter.

HOW TO DONATE



Yes! I want to support Foy's to Blacktail Trails' efforts to secure Phase 6, the final 60 acres. Please accept my donation of \$ _____

Name: _____

Street: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

If gift is in memory/honor of someone, please note here:

 Please mail checks and this form to:
P.O. Box 81, Kalispell, MT 59903.

You may also make a secure donation at:
www.FoysToBlacktailTrails.org

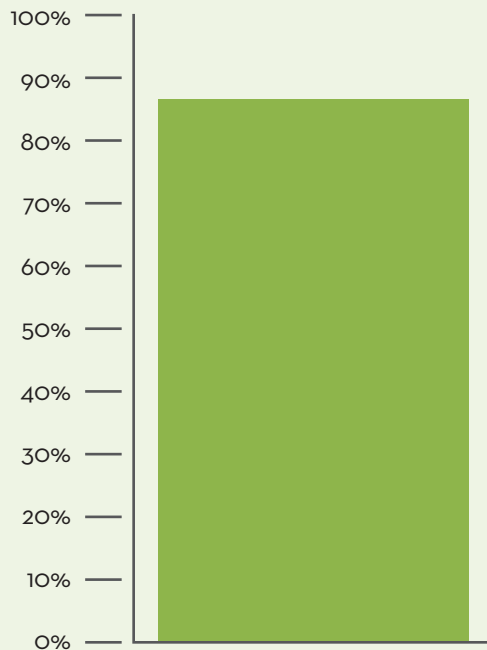


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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

% of \$2.25 Million Goal



As this issue goes to press, we've reached 86% of our \$2.25 million fundraising goal. Your contribution helps purchase the remaining 60 acres of at-risk land, including the Foy's Overlook! Please donate today, and help 'raise the bar' to 100%.

Watch our website for updates on progress.

**OUR
MISSION**

To secure historic access to trails and lands connecting Herron Park to the forest lands at Blacktail Mountain. To provide long term stewardship of this corridor. To accomplish this mission through voluntary and cooperative means.
www.FoysToBlacktailTrails.org