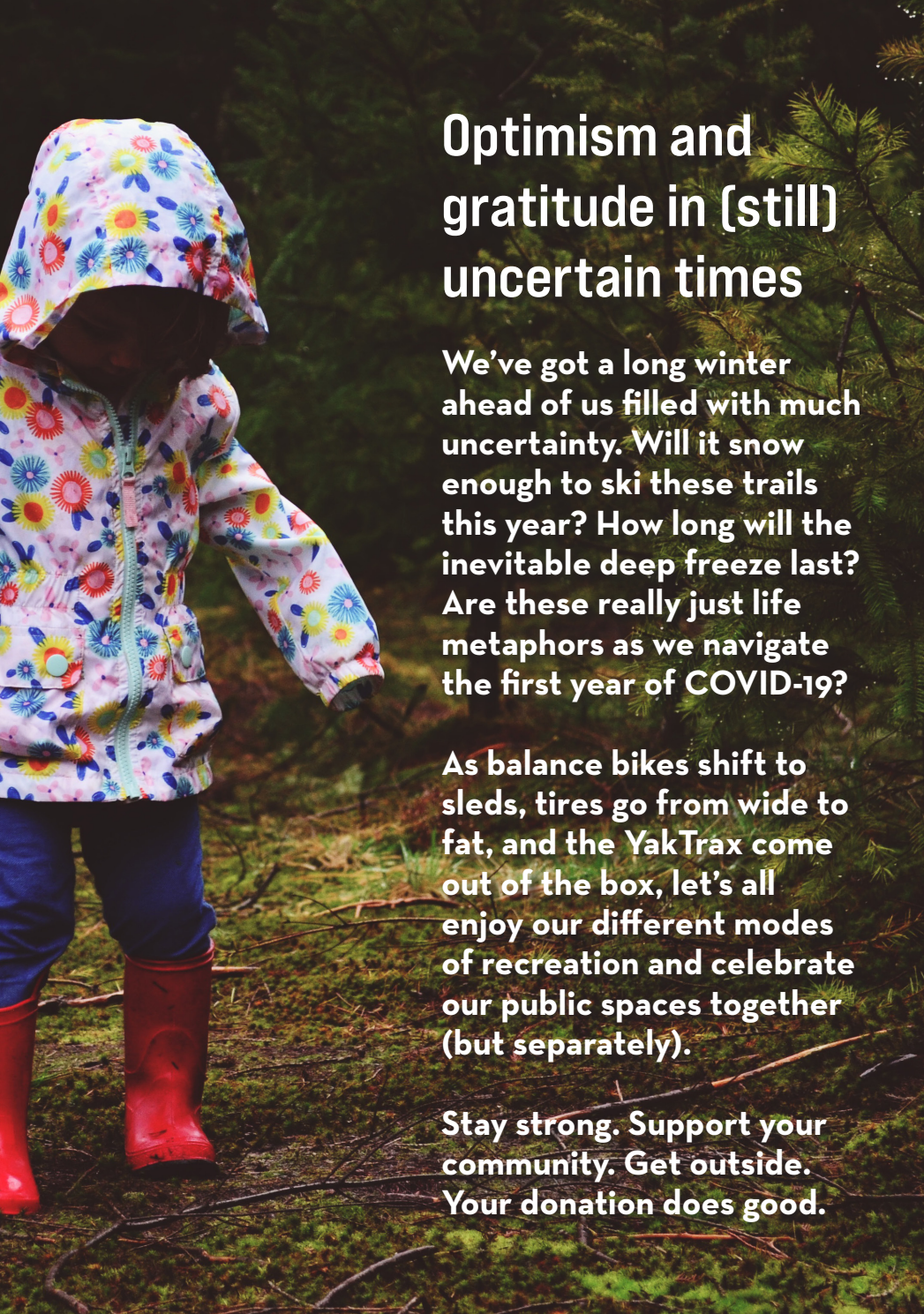




FOY'S TO BLACKTAIL

TRAILS

2016-2020 TRAIL REPORT



Optimism and gratitude in (still) uncertain times

We've got a long winter ahead of us filled with much uncertainty. Will it snow enough to ski these trails this year? How long will the inevitable deep freeze last? Are these really just life metaphors as we navigate the first year of COVID-19?

As balance bikes shift to sleds, tires go from wide to fat, and the YakTrax come out of the box, let's all enjoy our different modes of recreation and celebrate our public spaces together (but separately).

Stay strong. Support your community. Get outside. Your donation does good.



QUICK LOOK AT WHAT'S INSIDE

This report will go out to FTBT members once a year. It's our chance to show our gratitude for all the support we have received from you. We are excited to brag about how our volunteers have made our trails better and the exciting improvements planned for the trail system. We also need more helpers. We also need more helpers and hope that this year-end report gives you some ideas on how to get involved.

SLOW YOUR ROLL • PAGE 4

Meaningful trail interactions are best enjoyed at walking speeds.

FTBT TRAIL REPORT • PAGE 6

Check out the the improvements and the fun we've had over the years on the trail.

SEEKING VOLUNTEERS • PAGE 8

If you enjoy these trails, we need your help! Please pitch in.

THANKS & REMINDERS • PAGE 10

Our supporters are the best. Hats off to you! Also, please pay attention to some recurring trail issues.

YEAR-END PRIZES • PAGE 11

Some great gear. Some great sponsors. You could be a winner, but only if you donate!



Slow Your Roll

Outdoor spaces have been our salvation during the pandemic, providing a healthy outlet for stress relief, social interactions, family gatherings, and exercise. With travel plans cancelled for many of us, we've taken to exploring the many lakes, parks and trail systems in our own backyard. We found new places because our kids were not in school and the libraries were closed. We've always wondered about that one spot along the road, and with extra downtime, we decide to check it out.

Over the past year, people outside of Montana have been doing some exploring of their own. Out-of-state license plates fill the parking lot and visitors are checking out

the map kiosk daily at Herron Park. For a long time, the Flathead Valley was Montana's best kept secret. Now that we've been discovered, it's time to make some improvements to our trail system in order to accommodate the increased traffic from locals and visitors alike.

More people are trying different activities. Hiking, biking, and dog walking are on the rise. Overall, this is a great thing! Fortunately, the trails at Herron Park do an excellent job of dispersing users in such a way that a full parking lot seldom means crowded trails.

However, there are some negative consequences due to this increased use. More than 100 pounds of dog waste were removed from the meadow and trails this year. During this year's spring thaw and snow melt, our trails saw the worst damage ever. Increased traffic produced deep ruts, dinosaur-like footprints, and widened corridors. This summer, an inattentive bicyclist

collided with a horse, injuring two equestrians in the process. We can do better!

Foy's to Blacktail Trails is working with Flathead County Parks, Herron Park Equestrians, Flathead Area Mountain Bikers, and other user groups to improve safety on our trails. Watch for updated signage making the lower, high traffic trails a "slow zone". We will also be instituting a trail ambassador program to help promote safe recreating.

For most of us, yielding and trail courtesy are cornerstones to a positive outdoor experience. We leave the headphones out or on low volume; we appropriately leash and clean up after our dogs; if we're riding our bikes, we slow down, especially with limited sight lines. We do these things because they make for positive encounters. With so many newcomers to the area, we see the importance of doing this work. Your support helps! Thank you for doing your part. ★

2016-2020 FOY'S TO BLACKTAIL TRAIL REPORT

CHECK OUT ALL THE AMAZING WORK WE HAVE ACCOMPLISHED OVER THE LAST FEW YEARS. GO TEAM!



TRAIL WORK

2017

- 9 miles of new trail constructed
- Boundary Trail completed (Spirit Bear Connector)
- Foy's to Blacktail Trail completed

2018

- More than 300 downed trees cleared from trails after the epic winter of 2017-2018
- Emmons Spring trail constructed
- Hiker Shelter built with 100% donated materials & volunteers

2019

- 120 hours of work by Montana Conservation Corps trail crews
- 10 miles of weed control
- 2 miles of trail retread

2020

- \$21,000 spent on erosion control (drain features) & trail touch-ups in Herron Park
- Professional trail designers hired to improve trails
- 35 people completed the Herron Half/10k/5k even though the event was cancelled



MAPS & SIGNS

2016-2020

- 6,000 maps shared with the local community
- 50% of maps obtained at Herron Park trailhead yield a \$1.00 donation from users
- Additional trail markers installed on Foy's to Blacktail Trail
- "A Landscape Shaped by Glaciers" interpretive sign installed near Foy's Overlook
- Herron Park kiosk map updated



VOLUNTEERS

2016-2020

- 850 hours of volunteer time
- \$17,000 value of trail crew labor used for grant matches
- 200 hours required per year for moving dirt and spraying noxious weeds



TRAIL USERS

2017-2020

- FTBT sees an average of 150 users daily, about 5,000 unique users annually
- If each of these trail users donated \$50 annually, we would have a trail budget of \$250,000 dollars for expansion, maintenance, dog-doo pick-up, additional trailheads and more
- Types of trail users observed on FTBT: hikers, bikers, XC skiers, equestrians, bird-watchers, dog-walkers, trail-runners, photographers...are you one of these people?



Jandy Cox, Owner
Rocky Mountain
Outfitter in Kalispell

The Foy's to Blacktail trail system is a great asset to our community. We especially realized the benefit during the COVID pandemic. Local trails require local support. Please pitch in! We all love these trails.



MEMBER SUPPORT

2016-2020

- Approx \$124,000 raised since 2016 by FTBT memberships
- 300 active FTBT members each year (thank you!)
- \$82 donation per member (annual average)
- Total expenses between years of 2016 to 2020 = \$370,957
- Total income between years of 2016 to 2020 = \$372,953

Memberships dropped to just 220 in 2020 leaving a current budget shortfall of \$33,000.

IF YOU HAVEN'T MADE YOUR ANNUAL FTBT DONATION YET, PLEASE HELP US REACH THE \$10,000 MARK BY THE END OF THE YEAR.

THANK YOU!

One factor uniting most of us living in Montana is our shared appreciation of wild, open spaces where we are able to recreate and reset.

We are fortunate to have a small cadre of wonderful and dedicated volunteers that help us look after Foy's to Blacktail trails. Thank goodness for these giving souls, but with more use, there is more work, and we need more hands!

Next spring or summer, please consider swapping one day of peak-bagging for bagging trash at Herron Park, or lend a hand for a weekend to repair a damaged section of trail. We are also recruiting helpers and support crew for noxious weed eradication (we are licensed sprayers, so it's cool, we know what we're doing). There are plenty of opportunities to get involved by volunteering with FTBT. You just need a willing attitude and some energy to share to support a place you love.

And if you don't feel like playing in the dirt, please donate a little extra this year to help us out. The trails need a little extra support during COVID!

Get news and updates about volunteer needs. Sign up on the Foy's to Blacktail website and we'll keep you posted.

VOLUNTEER GIGS

CUT DOWNED TREES
CLEAN WATER DRAINS
SCOOP DOG-DOO
(EXTRA KARMA POINTS)
INSTALL TRAIL
SIGNAGE

EARLY SPRING

NOXIOUS WEED
MITIGATION:
3 TRAILHEADS &
18 MILES OF TRAIL
(SCHLEP GEAR AS
SUPPORT CREW OR
LEARN TO APPLY
HERBICIDE)

SPRING

TRIM BACK BRUSH
TOUCH-UP DRAINS
MINOR RETREAD
CHECK SIGNAGE
EXPLORE ALL TRAILS
ONCE SNOW-FREE

SUMMER

TRAILHEAD CLEAN-UP
AFTER BUSY SUMMER
PRE-WINTER
DOG-DOO SCOOP-UP
SCOUT ALL TRAILS
TO LOOK FOR ANY
ISSUES BEFORE
WINTER

AUTUMN



IN EVERY WALK WITH
NATURE ONE RECEIVES
FAR MORE THAN HE SEEKS.

JOHN MUIR

Like many, COVID hit us hard this year. Our fundraisers were cancelled. Donations were understandably limited. Annual community events didn't happen. Yet our trail work and costs increased.

Will you help us bounce back?

The shortage in our normal budget is roughly \$33,000 this year. We are crossing our fingers that 2021 will have better things in store for us all. It's a turbulent, unpredictable time. You all know this.

Please help us raise \$10,000 by December 31, 2020.

As we finish up 2020 (thank goodness!) we are asking you to give what you can. We hope these trails offered you an escape from the chaos and uncertainty this year. Your gift will help ensure these trails are always around; no matter what comes our way. Please donate online. Thank you.

FoystoBlacktailTrails.org

📍 Did you know? The FTBT Board is 100% volunteer-based! Collectively, this team donates about 350 hours of personal time each year to ensure our trails are open and accessible for you.

I have found that among its other benefits, giving liberates the soul of the giver. “ Maya Angelou

THANK YOU & REMINDERS



EMMONS SADDLE TRAILHEAD

The Emmons Saddle trailhead is located where the Foy's to Blacktail Trail crosses Patrick Creek Road. This is set to be formally developed in late spring, 2021. Since 2017, FTBT has driven out to this spot several times each season to clean up trash and fire pits. We are happy to report that after the spring 2020 cleanup, no additional efforts were needed! Keep us updated about any trashy shenanigans at info@FoystoBlacktailTrails.org



DOGS ON LEASH

In Herron Park, dogs are required by Flathead County to be on a leash. You are subject to a fine if cited by a Parks official. The dog poop left on the ground reached record levels this year. We know we're preaching to the choir here, but perhaps a little social pressure will help keep the doo off the snow this winter. And what's with the scooped and bagged poo left on the trail? That's like leaving the gas cap sitting on the top of your car after filling up.



BIKERS, HIKERS & HORSES, OH MY!

Whether you are biking, hiking, running, or cruising on your pony, please be kind. Slow down and say hello. Remember, the human voice is the most important thing for a horse to hear so it knows you're not a mountain lion wanting to make it their next meal. The most meaningful interactions on our trails occur at walking speeds.



THANK YOU DONORS & SPONSORS

It takes the whole community to keep these trails open. Please thank our local business sponsors and buy their goods and services. Along with donors like you, they keep the wheels turning with cash and donated goods.



\$250 GIFT CARD TO OUTFITTERS SUPPLY

\$100 GIFT CARD TO RMO (x2)

\$100 GIFT CARD TO MURDOCH'S (x2)

RIDEFAST CARBON FIBER HANDLEBARS

Every \$10 donation (or increment of \$10) gets you a chance to win!
Be sure to donate between November 16 and December 18 to enter.
Drawing will be held on Saturday, December 19 to choose the winners.

Visit foystoblacktailtrails.org for full details and to make your donation.

Psst! You can choose which item(s) you'd like to win and load up all your tickets for those prizes. Good luck and thank you for your donation!



FOY'S TO BLACKTAIL TRAILS

**MALLING
INDICIA**

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