

FRIENDS OF ROBERT LAKE YEARLY REPORT June 2022-June 2023

Directors

Karen Perry: President

Ian Walker: Vice-President

Laura Hooker: Secretary/Treasurer

Louise Nelson: Member-at-Large

Robert Lalonde: Member-at-Large

Given the modest size of our organization, 'Friends of Robert Lake Society' continued to be busy throughout 2022-2023. We gained new members while losing some others, so we now have twenty-two members, compared to twenty-five last year.

During the Autumn, Laura was in communication with Kevin Van Vliet (Utility Services Department Manager, City of Kelowna) and Wayne Darlington (Manager of Park Planning/Capital Projects / Visitor Services, RDCO) drawing their attention to the conservation covenants that exist around the lake in addition to the Central Okanagan Land Trust/RDCO covenanted property. Original documentation and maps of these provided by Roland Gerbauer were passed on. She also drew their attention to the website. The information was received with some interest.

On November 4, an extensive and in-depth article about the Robert Lake dilemma appeared on Castanet. The author of the article interviewed Ian Walker and drew heavily on material available on the FoRL website. Viewership of the site increased substantially after the article appeared. It's good to see that our Society dues, which pay for the website, are yielding some benefit.

We sent out a Fall newsletter.

Laura continued correspondence with Gisele Rehe of the environmental consulting firm 'Associated Environmental' and found out that the Spadefoot Toad roadkill samples collected over the last two years were not sent in for DNA sequencing and species confirmation. Apparently, this was because the City of Kelowna decided not to continue funding for the monitoring project. Ms. Rehe provided the name of the commercial lab that would have done the sequencing and the estimated cost of the number of samples in their possession – about \$400. Currently, the status of that population is a concern because the wildlife culverts don't appear to be sufficient, and monitoring is not being done.

We received the UBC O West Campus Lands Conceptual Structure Plan. In general, we were pleased with what appears to be UBC's lack of interest in altering the northeast shoreline the lake. However, from the Spadefoot's perspective, it's unfortunate that the hillside to the northeast of John Hindle is slated for viticulture research. Tilling and other activities could easily disrupt the toads migration between the lake and their over-wintering sites in the hillside.

In the new year, Laura was contacted by new City of Kelowna Council Member Gordon Lovegrove, who had explored our website and subsequently decided to aid us with our cause. He brought two potential items to our attention. One was that RDCO's has plans in their back-pocket for increased parking at the regional site - if the water ever recedes. The second was that there is/was a proposal for soil infill on a property essentially adjacent to the lake. The proposal had to be cleared by City of Kelowna Council first and then sent to the Agricultural Land Commission for approval. This prompted us to write a letter to City Council outlining some of FoRL's concerns with the project. The City approved moving the project forward to the ALC. Laura reported this development to the Central Okanagan Land Trust, whose covenanted property lies nearby, which initiated them to write a letter to the local ALC representative, Gerry Zimmerman, reiterating FoRL's concerns. Laura also sent a letter on behalf of FoRL to Gerry Zimmerman.

Also in the new year, we added Myron Campbell's (UBC O visual artist) Robert Lake inspired series of digital prints to the website. In the future, we would like to add some written artistic works inspired by the lake.

With the onset of warmer weather, Ian, Bob and member Blythe Nilson started their UBC O Bugs, Botany and Birds walks - which often head down towards the lake. As such, a general invitation to join the walks was extended to the FoRL community.

Finally, at the end of May, FoRL participated in a RDCO Parks Expo in Winfield. Bob manned an information booth for us. He reported that attendance at the event was a little sparse (possibly because of the location), however, he did manage to talk to about a dozen people - so, a dozen more than had we not been there!

Good work everyone, and thanks!