

Nose Hill

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The Friends of Nose Hill Newsletter

Spring 2024

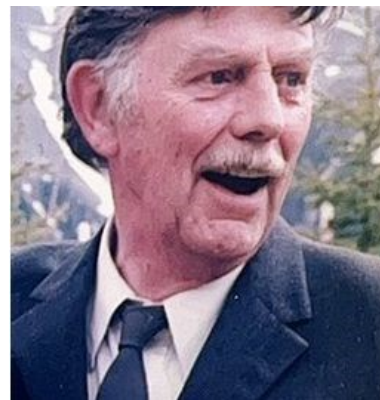
President's Message

By Anne Burke

Thank you to the Executive who continue to contribute to our group and all those who support our efforts to preserve Nose Hill as a Natural Environment Park. Two new volunteers have recently joined us to help with moderating our Facebook page, which now has 504 members! The page is related to Nose Hill Park, a place to share information that is both positive and constructive. So be responsible for what you post and courteous to others. The Alberta Institute for Wildlife Conservation, Coyote Watch Canada, and the Calgary Urban Coyote Project were only three of some re-postings by a former board member. Since International Women's Day is coming, I should mention a group "Calgary Women's Walk and Friendship Group". They "meet up" in Nose Hill Park at a pre-designated location posted on our Facebook page. It's free to join and most of their events are free too. Our outreach program in community newsletters offered by Great News Publishing continues unabated. By community there are: Banff Trail, Beddington, Brentwood, Cambrian Heights/Rosemont, Hawkwood/Citadel, Dalhousie, Edgemont, Evanston. Hamptons, Hidden Valley/Hanson, Hounsfeld Briar, Huntington Hills, North Haven, Panorama Country, Sandstone/McEwan, Ranchlands, Thorncliffe/Greenview, Triwood, Tuxedo Park, and West Hillhurst. The monthly reports are also archived online at <https://mycalgary.com/magazines/>. A glimpse at print circulation looks like 87,930+.

Nose Hill Park users were directed to provide feedback about an update of the Open

Space Plan for Calgary's new Parks' Plan. We were invited and pleased to represent Nose Hill at the engagement sessions. It was important to remind them that Nose Hill already has a Master Plan, a Master Plan Review, a two-volume Management Plan, and a Biophysical Land Use Study. **Phase 1 engagement was from April 17 - May 19, 2023. Phase 2 engagement took place October 13 - November 12, 2023. Phase 3 engagement will be in late Spring / early Summer 2024.** In Summer 2024, the Connect: Calgary's Parks Plan draft will be completed. In Fall 2024 the final version of the Plan will be presented to City Council for their approval. <https://engage.calgary.ca/parksplan>.



December 29, 1930 - Utrecht, Netherlands
January 24, 2024 - Calgary, Alberta

Robert van Everdingen was a long-time Friend of Nose Hill and regular readers will recognize him as designer and editor of this newsletter for many years. Share memories with other friends and his family at: [Robert Van Everdingen](#)

Hi Anne,

You can find the What We Heard Report for Phase 1 here: [Connect: Calgary's Parks Plan | Engage](#) to give you a better idea of how we used the feedback received. The Phase 2 report will be posted shortly.

As of yet, we do not have a firm date of completion for the draft. The project team is still working on it. My understanding is that it will be late spring or early summer 2024. To confirm the new plan – Connect: Calgary's Parks Plan – is not area-specific but rather an overarching guiding document for all of Calgary's Parks and Open Spaces. I do not believe there will be specific sections dedicated to individual parks. All feedback, including comments directed at Nose Hill Park, will be included in the What We Heard Report verbatim section.

Thanks for reaching out. The project team is still working on the draft plan so there is no public engagement scheduled yet. The billboards (or sounding boards) that were placed at Nose Hill Park were used to redirect people to the website [Connect: Calgary's Parks Plan | Engage](#) where they could provide their feedback.

I'm also going to set up a place on the www.engage.calgary.ca/parksplan where you can sign up for updates.

Respectfully,

Rebecca Derry Melenka (she/her) BA, BA, MA
Planner, Engage Resource Unit
© (403) 819-2428

This is what a sounding board looks like:



And this is where it was located.



14th Street NW and 64th Avenue NW

Here is the tactical definition of the sounding board: A sounding board is a roofed free-standing structure with a Plexiglas covered bulletin-board on one side that can be accessed from the back using a key. The back of the sounding board is black with no display area. Sounding boards are placed in strategic locations to spark interest in people walking and wheeling in the area. They can be used to provide information, ask questions, facilitate brainstorming and/or gather feedback using paper surveys.

The sounding board was on location at Nose Hill Park from October 27 – November 10 (2023). There will be no in-person engagement attached to the board. It is mainly for information purposes and to redirect folks to the engage portal page where they can provide feedback or check out other ways to participate.

Friends of Nose Hill

Connect: Calgary's Parks Plan Follow Up: I would like to thank you for attending the workshop today, the feedback we collected was very beneficial and we appreciate you taking the time out of your day to contribute to this project.

Yes, the City Nature Challenge will take place again this year. The dates for the event are April 26 – April 29. I have set up the project page and working with the global organizer team for materials and such. <https://inaturalist.ca/projects/city-nature-challenge-2024-calgary-metropolitan-region>

Not much to report at this time but I can send you more information later. I'll have a better idea about the number of cities in Canada and around the world that will participate.

As a side note, I am interested in trying to get more people to go birding and explore Nose Hill this year. I may try and organize some park-specific bioblitzes in June to help get a better snapshot of our biodiversity. Nose Hill is on my list of places to showcase.

As a part of that, within the City of Calgary municipal boundaries, we currently have about 164,000 iNaturalist observations. I haven't quite publicized it yet, but my goal is to try and reach 250K observations for 2025. That would be about double the number of observations that were added in 2023. I'm optimistic we could achieve it but we'll need as many different people to contribute so that we can make it. It would be great if you could put an encouraging note into the newsletter for people to share their new (and old) photos of flora and fauna to iNaturalist to see if we can achieve it.

You might be interested in this recent share of Nose Hill. I'm not sure exactly when a Sharp-tailed Grouse was last seen in the park but it might be close to 20 years. You can view it here: <https://inaturalist.ca/observations/196589640> (See photo).

Note: Sharp-tailed Grouse lek and nesting areas. Currently, there is a known lek that supports approximately a dozen breeding birds. The nesting habitat of this species on Nose Hill is currently not well understood. There is potential for disturbance of breeding grouse at the lek if its whereabouts become commonly known. Unfortunately, publicized closure of the area for stated reasons, could draw people to the area and create more disturbance than is currently taking place. This is an awkward situation, and one which will

require further discussion. We recommend meetings between the Calgary Field Naturalists Society and the City of Calgary to identify an appropriate solution. A study should be conducted to locate the key nesting areas, and their proximity to the lek. No organized trails should be placed within the vicinity of the lek. p. 155 (*Biophysical and Land use Inventory Analysis of Nose Hill Park* December 1993).

The Nose Hill iNat project currently stands at 7,322 observations. <https://inaturalist.ca/projects/nose-hill-park-bioinventory>



Thanks for reaching out and happy new year,

Matt

Matt Wallace *Freelance Urban Ecologist & Citizen Science Coordinator* BSc Geography (Honours) University of Calgary
www.citizenblitz.ca www.citynatureyyc.ca

Q: Thank you for the update. Anything more to add?

A: The only other thing is that the new City Nature YYC website will be online with information on the challenge.
www.citynatureyyc.ca

Matt Wallace

Hello,

I am a frequent user of Nose Hill Park and have noticed that the washroom at the Edgemont parking lot has recently been closed part-time. I'm sure that the city has concerns about inappropriate use of the facility; however, as a distance walker and older person, I have often relied on this washroom throughout the year (it was not seasonal) as a mid-stroll convenience and was very concerned to see that its hours of access are now limited. What is of greater concern is that there are no posted hours of accessibility, and I have found access to be extremely unpredictable. This causes great anxiety, I'm sure not only to me. I can understand the need to have greater control over the facility, but if hours are to be limited, the city needs to post them, consistently maintain them, and then, like at Berkley Gate, there needs to be a 24-hour port-a-potty available for emergency use. The alternative would be far less desirable. I have contacted the City already and am waiting for the Parks department to return my call; however, I am wondering what the FONH Society thinks about this situation.

Response:

Hello FONHS team, here is an update:

From: Parks:

Subject: RE: [External] Foreword: Question about Edgemont Washroom Follow Up

Hope you are well. The washrooms in our parks have recently been upgraded by Facility Management. I have a shout out to them looking for an update. I believe the access is under a remote-control system.

Will advise soonest.

Cheers, Guy,

Guy Beavers, Parks Strategist,
Calgary Parks North and West

POLES ON TOP OF NOSE HILL PARK

Q: Can you tell me what those poles are on the top of Nose Hill Park. How did they get there? Who put them up? What are they for? I thought the park was never to be built on. What's next? Our mayor's wish for housing development and is, perhaps, included in Trudeau's demand for re-zoning!

Response: I don't know either. How about asking for more details, such as "Have the poles just appeared, and in what area? In the meantime, I am walking there tomorrow with a long-time member who knows every inch of the Hill, I will ask.

A: Having phoned the number on the email and had a nice conversation, it looks as though the reference is to power poles which are possibly being replaced, just like all the poles on John Laurie. Looking forward to the result of your walk.

Q: I was wondering if all the parking lots at Nose Hill have names. Is there a story as to why the Brisebois parking lot was named "Many Owls"?

A: The parking lot is at the base of "Many Owls Valley", so named long before the lot was there.

Q: Hello. I'm wondering if anyone there knows where I could purchase: *Exploring Nose Hill: A Hands-On Field Guide* by J. Kirker and D. Kary?

I've tried to track it down online, checking all the societies I could think of, with no luck.

Any help would be greatly appreciated.
Thank you.

Also: Anne Burke's column in "The Honker" mentioned *Exploring Nose Hill: A Hands-On Field Guide* by Jill Kirker and Diana Kary. Could you tell me if this is for sale and if so where it is available and the cost?

Thank you.

A: The book can be found at the Calgary Public Library.

Re: Membership

Q: Hello, I am interested in becoming a member. Can I do this online?

Thanks,

A: We accept cash, money orders, and cheques but are looking into online transfers.

Greetings Friends of Nose Hill,

I am reading a book entitled *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants*, by Robin Wall Kimmerer. The book is a fascinating discussion of Indigenous understanding of the natural world. Kimmerer is Indigenous but is also a traditionally trained academic biologist.

The book has raised the question for me of where I might see sweetgrass in the wild, including in Nose Hill Park. I consulted a book I have entitled *Nose Hill: A Popular Guide* by Beryl Hallworth, published in 1988 by the Calgary Field Naturalists' Society. I was delighted to see in the chapter on grasses that sweetgrass (*Hierochloa odorata*) is the first one mentioned and to be found, at that time, in the "moist swales on the north side of Nose Hill" (p. 64).

As the book is 36 years old, I thought I'd check the Friends of Nose Hill website description of Nose Hill flora, as well as the 2006 City of Calgary Report cited there entitled *Biophysical Impact Assessment: Nose Hill Park - Cross-Park Pathway Routes*. Nowhere is sweetgrass mentioned. Does this mean that sweetgrass no longer grows in Nose Hill Park?

Comment:

Sweetgrass has slightly different significance in different communities. To the Anishinaabe Nation (Woodland Indians), it is believed to be the sacred hair of O'gushnan, Mother Earth, and is often braided; with the three sections representing mind, body, and soul. Some First Nations believe the three sections of the braid represent love, kindness and honesty.

Response from John McFaul:

I found one report of Sweetgrass in iNaturalist.ca. It was photographed at the edge of the storm pond NE of the intersection of John Laurie and Shaganappi. I am not a grass expert so I cannot say if I have seen it myself on Nose Hill.

Well wishes,
John McFaul
President
Nature Calgary



John McFaul

Comment:

For Nose Hill to be renewed spiritually, the land would need to be cleansed by returning it to a natural state. The areas of the most spiritual significance would need to be closed off to bike and even hiking trails. **These areas would include the coulees where the herbs and medicines grow and some of the natural grasslands amongst the highest points of the hills.** Also, the area with the buffalo rubbing stone would need to be preserved." Source: *Nose Hill Park Trail & Pathway Plan: Part 2 – Technical Background Information*, April 20, 2005.

Medicine harvesting in Nose Hill Park

Miskanawah (meaning "many little paths" in Cree) is an Indigenous-led charitable organization, grounded in cultural traditions and teachings, and has operated in Calgary for over 35 years.

Note: Collection of plant specimens is not allowed in any protected or restricted areas, such as Nose Hill Park and Fish Creek Park, unless you have a permit from the Director of Parks (e.g. for sage). Native people have permission for an Edible and Medicinal Plant Walk in Nose Hill Park. Photo:



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The Friends of Nose Hill invites 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 has a Facebook Group. If you are a Facebook member, check out the group: "Friends of Nose Hill Society". It has 504 members and more than 2630 photos 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: information@fonhs.org

**Friends of Nose Hill Society Membership
\$20.00**

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Please return this form with your cheque or money order to (**new address**):

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