

CLOUDBURST



The #FundBCParks Campaign | Volunteers in BC Parks: A Request for Your Experiences
Off-road E-bikes Have Arrived— Regulations Still Missing | A Lizzie Creek Work Hike

Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC

Accessing the backcountry one step at a time

Fall/Winter 2016

VOCO's Intro to Rock Climbing

Caitlyn Mackie, Varsity Outdoor Club Okanagan

The sun was shining the Saturday morning when 200+ VOCO members decided to make the trek out to Skaha Bluffs. The group split off to different climbing walls, and after about a 15-minute hike surrounded by beautiful views, the first set of walls were reached. Equipment was up and ready to be used.

Experience of the climbers ranged from expert to noobiest of the noobs, but none of that mattered. Everyone was out there to learn something new, and of course, climb! Veteran climbers were teaching lessons on tying ropes and belaying, while others went straight up the cliffs. The day was filled with lots of laughs, hammock hangs, and sore hands and feet. Friends were made, stories were shared, and overall it was an awesome day! Special thanks to all the VOCO executives who made the trip possible. ■



Photos by Caitlyn Mackie

@kayitscait

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Distribution: 4000 digital, mail-outs 1000 print copies
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Cover Photo

Linda Thompson's photo of the Robson Glacier (behind Mt. Robson) is featured on the cover of this issue of Cloudburst. Linda, along with four other women, spent four amazing days with perfect weather exploring Mt. Robson during the Easter 2016 weekend. Left to right: Brenda Leslie, Andrea Robertson, and Deb Hazell.

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FMCBC is a member of the Outdoor Recreation Council of BC, Canadian Avalanche Association and Leave No Trace Canada.

Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC

Working on your behalf

The Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC (FMCBC) is a democratic, grassroots organization dedicated to protecting and maintaining access to quality non-motorized backcountry recreation in British Columbia's mountains and wilderness areas. As our name indicates we are a federation of outdoor clubs with a membership of over 5000 people from across BC. Our membership is comprised of a diverse group of non-motorized backcountry recreationists including hikers, rock climbers, mountaineers, trail runners, kayakers, mountain bikers, backcountry skiers and snowshoers. As an organization, we believe that the enjoyment of these pursuits in an unspoiled environment is a vital component to the quality of life for British Columbians and by acting under the policy of "talk, understand and persuade" we advocate for these interests.

Membership in the FMCBC is open to any club or individual who supports our vision, mission and purpose as outlined below and includes benefits such as a subscription to our semi-annual newsletter *Cloudburst*, monthly updates through our FMCBC E-News, and access to Third-Party Liability insurance. In addition, member clubs are eligible to apply for project funding through our Member Club Grant Program which supports trail building and upgrading initiatives.

FMCBC's **vision** is that British Columbia's backcountry is shared amongst all recreational users in a way that self-propelled users have reasonable access to an enjoyable experience.

FMCBC's **mission** is to advocate for safe, self-propelled activities (such as hiking, mountaineering, backcountry skiing, snowshoeing, trail running and other backcountry activities) and the protection of BC's backcountry for current and future generations to experience.

FMCBC's **purpose** is:

- To represent clubs and the public interested in non-motorized backcountry recreation in BC, and to advise and take action on their behalf in matters which may impact their backcountry recreation experiences.
- To make recommendations to government and non-government organizations regarding the protection of and access to BC's backcountry and trails.
- To encourage self-propelled backcountry recreation, and to promote low-impact and safe practices.
- To promote the development and maintenance of a system of trails in BC.
- To promote the sound management and preservation of BC's backcountry recreation resources.

The FMCBC fulfills its purpose with a comprehensive approach to mountain recreation and conservation by:

- Participating in provincial land use decision processes
- Working to positively change government agency policies so that self-propelled outdoor recreation opportunities are recognized and protected
- Representing wilderness as a legitimate land use and a resource of identifiable value to society
- Advocating for new parks and wilderness resources, and working to maintain the integrity of existing parks and wilderness resources
- Advocating for improved access to existing recreational resources
- Supporting the building, maintaining and protecting of hiking and mountain access trails
- Promoting non-motorized and self-propelled recreation activities in BC's mountains and wilderness
- Educating its member and the public on mountain and backcountry safety issues and working with member clubs to address risk management issues
- Promoting membership within our member clubs
- Negotiating with insurance brokers to provide extensive liability insurance coverage for our members clubs

At the core of FMCBC's projects, issues and successes are the countless hours donated by dedicated volunteers from our member clubs across the province. Without these volunteers the FMCBC would not exist and we appreciate all those who have volunteered in the past or are current volunteers. We encourage others to join us to help us reach our vision. ■

President's Message

Bob St. John



Bob St. John on a ski trip to Boulder Pass last winter.

This October, Carol and I went on a 3-week camping/hiking tour of National and State parks in the western US. We visited some big parks (Yellowstone, Grand Canyon, Yosemite) as well as many smaller parks and monuments along the way. While some facilities were closed for the season, we were pleasantly surprised with the number of rangers, staff, and volunteers still at work. Welcome centres, campgrounds, and trails (frontcountry and backcountry) were generally in good repair or actively worked on when they weren't.

We talked with some of the many volunteers we met on our travels:

In Grand Canyon National Park, we met several [ACE crews](#) working to improve the Bright Angel Trail. ACE is a non-profit organisation offering young adults (18 to 25) the opportunity to undertake environmental restoration projects in national parks and forests. They are rewarded with shared outdoor experiences and knowledge gained from working with park staff. They are not paid, but are supported with living expenses and educational grants. Our observation was that they did good work, and seemed happy doing it.



In Colorado National Monument, we met an older volunteer who was retired, one of forty enrolled this summer. He was assigned one of the park trails to look after, and walked 'his trail' several times a week picking up litter, reporting any problems to the rangers, and generally being available to answer questions. He was wearing a park shirt and cap, and was obvi-

ously proud of what he was doing. He was not paid for his time, but interestingly the park received extra funding for the time he and others volunteered.

Ok, there are problems down south too. Overcrowding is one we experienced—some of their parks are suffering from too much attention. Underfunding is another we heard, although compared to Canada they seem flush with cash. Perhaps there are other problems as well, but we were impressed with their treatment of volunteers. They have innovative ways of supporting and encouraging volunteers, and this attitude comes from the top down.

Here in BC, volunteers face a different political environment. They are given the infamous Volunteer Agreement to sign and little else. No funding, no stewardship, little flexibility. The top-down attitude seems to be volunteers should be tolerated but little else. However, if you are a corporation with deep pockets and political influence, you may actually be able to have a Master Plan changed to your liking (Clayoquot Wilderness Resort - Strathcona Park), if not a piece of the park itself (Whistler-Blackcomb - Garibaldi Park)... but I digress.

Do I seem biased? I hear of a few good working relationships scattered around the Province, often the result of flexible and enlightened park managers. There are however instances where managers are concerned mainly about enforcement rather than reaching a solution that works for both Parks and volunteers.

A case in point is the ongoing dispute between BC Parks and the [Heathens Mountaineering Club](#) of Campbell River. The Heathens have been developing first-class climbing at Crest Crags since the 1980s, largely on their own expense. They have also been conducting open summer climbing camps at the Crags since the early 1990s. Initially, a steering committee was formed (Heathens, BC Parks, Hydro, other parties) to coordinate the development of the crags. Over time, all but the Heathens lost interest, and agreements made then were forgotten. Recently, the current park managers issued a stop work order to the Heathens unless they signed a new agreement. The Heathens have refused, citing past agreements now ignored by Parks. This summer, several Heathens were subjected to hefty fines (\$1500 per person) while trying to have their annual camp.

My point in bringing this up is to illustrate a sometimes acrimonious atmosphere between some volunteer groups and BC Parks. One could dig into disputes such as the one the Heathens are in and find fault on both sides. Perhaps BC Parks has the letter of the law on its side. I cannot help but feel though, after reading all that is available, that the Heathens are being stomped on, and have the sympathy not only of many climbers, but of many in the broader outdoor community.

The members of the Heathens who were fined will be going to court. Here is their address if you would like to send them a letter of support or help them with legal expenses:

Heathens Mountaineering Club
c/o Chris Barner or Paul Rydeen
125 B Taylor Way
Campbell River, BC V9W 3A7
rydeenp@gmail.com

Disputes such as this should not be happening. Park managers are fulfilling the mandate set out by their political bosses. Ultimately it is they who are responsible for setting the framework under which managers and volunteers operate. It is my opinion that more work needs to be done to encourage, fund, and support credible volunteer programs. Perhaps borrowing some ideas from our southern neighbours would be a good place to start. ■

WELCOME

Welcome to our newest FMCBC Member Clubs:

Hickory Wing Ski Touring Club
Tetrahedron Outdoor Club

Welcome to our newest FMCBC Directors:

Norman Clark (HWSTC)
Natasha Gellatly (TOC)
Brian Wood (BCMC)

THANK-YOU

We would like to thank the following people for their service as FMCBC Directors:

Ben Singleton-Polster (BCMC)

Trails News

FMCBC Trails Committee Report

Alex Wallace, Trails Committee Co-Chair

Howe Sound Crest Trail upgrade: This popular trail has become twice, or perhaps three times as popular since we started rebuilding it in partnership with BC Parks. It was already a busy trail in summer, with two previous attempts to rebuild it and repair erosion over the last forty years. The difficult section up to the preliminary summit on St. Mark's is still being tackled, which again involves excavating material that can be used to rebuild the trail. This year, the crew has had to start detouring and building new switchbacks just to get away from the crowds of hikers, as several pieces of machinery are being used to excavate and rebuild the trail. It is similar to having a construction site on Georgia Street in downtown Vancouver, where the public walks through the site intermittently all day instead of being kept out by the yellow rental fencing. (This is also why we are not in the role of contractor or project manager. We are explicitly leaving BC Parks to handle that area of responsibility, and any liability issues that may arise.)

Since we can't fence off the area under construction on a long ridge in the mountains, we have had to leave sections of old trail for the public to use while upgrading is under way. This can only happen for a short section, but the trail crew was increasingly getting slowed down by hiker traffic in 2016, and this was while working weekdays. Given the usual four-month construction season each year at high elevation (the crew was pulled out in mid-October just before the torrential rainstorms), it would be good to work weekends to take advantage of any dry weather, but this is clearly only going to happen if we can get away from the crowds. In fact, the rain in October 2016 was so extremely heavy at this elevation that it washed away part of the gravel trail bed from some sections that had been



Alex Wallace

Newly rebuilt switchback on the Howe Sound Crest Trail, September 2016. The trail was in a dire state at this location and was quite hazardous in wet conditions. It was rebuilt to withstand heavy rain and the rapidly increasing number of hikers.

rebuilt in previous years, and had withstood several winters' runoff conditions. Luckily, the trail crew had taken steps to clear and repair any drains and culverts on their way out. As you can see in the photo, switchbacks are being rebuilt with rock to withstand both the weather and hiker numbers.

Unfortunately, the Canada 150 Grant that we secured from Ottawa last year was rescinded, as we did not meet certain criteria in the small print despite being approved under these same conditions (i.e. specifically not being the contractor, although we had been able to work around this previously as the partner or sponsor of the project). Despite direct appeals, we

were unable to retain these federal funds. This was frustrating and time consuming, but fortunately BC Parks still had their matching funds in place for the 2016 work. Their experienced contractor worked an entire season on the trail, and we hope they are able to again continue in 2017 while we look for other funding sources.

The Baden-Powell trail on Black Mountain saw another season of work, with bog bridges and steps built by the Knee Knacker trail running group and Friends of Cypress, working with BC Parks rangers over several weekends. However, some previous work has already been overwhelmed by muddy conditions, so there is a strong possibility that a contractor and crew may also be hired next year using donated Park Legacy funds directed by Friends of Cypress to this specific rebuilding project over the summer of 2017.

This would be similar to the Opal Cone trail work at Garibaldi a couple of years ago, which was made possible by funds donated to the Park Legacy fund by a retired individual who specified that a particular backcountry trail was to be rebuilt by a trail crew with these funds. There is a tax advantage to individuals who donate trail funds to the government in this way, and there are also a few endowment funds from dedicated hikers that also accrue to BC Parks as a much-needed source for designated trail projects.

Mount Seymour: Again, a busy trail in need of rebuilding. In 2016, a blasting crew did preliminary work, and trail construction will resume in 2017. The formidable amount of work required to reconstruct this trail will take some years (or decades...) to complete, but it will result in a properly built trail separate from the ski runs and gravel roads on Seymour. Similarly, a trail crew will again be working on Dog Mountain, which strictly speaking is outside the provincial park and is within the Lower Seymour Conservation Reserve, with materials being hauled in from the ski area parking lots. This rebuilding project is being jointly funded and managed by BC Parks and Metro Vancouver, and again will take some years.

A frequently voiced question in recent years has been, "Why does trail rebuilding cost so much...!?" There are several answers to this important question. First, we have to look at how trails come to exist. I can think of two trail builders who effectively created trails by clearing routes of brush and downed trees, and then improved them over a couple of years. However, they sometimes followed game trails, and in effect they did not so much build trails as clear and mark them, with the organic soil layer intact. Once these trails have been in use for twenty or thirty years, particularly on the coast, the combination of wear and tear, drying out, the freeze-thaw cycle, and the seasonal runoff from rain and snow mean they almost inevitably become rocky and slippery creek beds as the organic layer



Repairs to a well-worn trail on Hollyburn, which was eroded lower than the surrounding terrain. Rock dams and on-site gravel were used to terrace the trail and replace slippery logs and loose rocks.

of soil and any loose rock has been eroded, turned to mud, and finally washed away over the years. This leaves the trail significantly lower than the surrounding land, effectively functioning as a drain in many cases.

There are then two basic options: First, to continue with a combination of brush clearing and some pick and shovel work to maintain the trail with hand tools and the occasional reroute. Second, on major trails with thousands of hikers annually, it can become necessary to bring in machinery and material to rebuild the trail in sections, and this can entail bringing in gravel, building bridges and boardwalks (or bog bridges), and installing culverts, all the while stopping work to let hikers go by (and their return trip doubles this, of course).

So, while building trails is often relatively inexpensive or 'free,' the rebuilding costs can be huge. One objective measure of costs is to look back at those trail projects locally that we know the rough figures for. The creation of a new Baden-Powell section on Black Mountain (to take the trail out of the 2010 Olympic Venues construction at Cypress) cost \$240,000 in 2008 for exactly 1.4 km of trail, and costs were kept down by virtue of the ski hill itself building the trail and being 50% responsible for the cost of construction. However, it was finally constructed in a steep location that required numerous switchbacks. We spent several years looking for a route that would avoid the one we ended up using, but there in fact was no better route available. This trail is now in need of repair due to erosion and hiker traffic (as gravel switchbacks are vulnerable to 'shortcutting'), so that project is actually ongoing and subject to further negotiations.

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The Grouse Grind, rebuilt by the FMCBC under Linda Coss and supervised by Don McPherson some 20 years ago, was relatively inexpensive, but the recent rebuild by GVWD, turning it over several years into an impressive staircase of wood beams for much of the 2.2 km length, cost around \$800,000, or more than \$300,000 per km. The Howe Sound Crest trail upgrade project is getting on for \$770,000, with much of this coming from VANOC or Ottawa, but once it is past St. Mark's Summit, the trail work will not be done by machinery and costs should drop drastically over the next 5 km (and progress will speed up...we hope!). The Dog Mountain project, on the other hand, is labour and materials intensive, as the Mount Seymour main trail rebuild is likely also to be.

These estimates—or scope of work—of course are entirely dependent on terrain and the number of creeks and bogs that have to be tackled, but based on the experience of different agencies, a figure of \$100,000 per kilometre to rebuild an established hiking trail would seem to be par for the course. This being said, two of the local trails that I have been involved with, Hollyburn Peak and Elsay Lake, have been maintained for

quite a number of years solely by use of volunteers, with ranger involvement only when they are available and with relatively little in the way of materials.

In the case of the Elsay Lake Trail, the overgrowth of bush means it has to be completely cleared end to end every five years, as by that time much of the trail has actually moved downhill by one to two metres (as hikers avoid overhanging bushes and wear the outside edge off the trail each season, it slowly creeps sideways down the mountain), and the usual format is one or two rangers with a brush cutter and/or a chainsaw, accompanied by 20 to 30 volunteers. However, we increasingly don't have the ranger staff or volunteers to do trail work, due to current conditions.

In summary, it may be easy to 'build' a trail, but it can be a huge effort or expense to maintain and rebuild it after twenty, thirty or in some cases eighty years of heavy use. The photo shows basic erosion control on Hollyburn, where records show the trail has been in use since around 1919. ■

Rails to Trails Initiative for Vancouver Island E&N Rail Line

Sherry and Peter Durnford, Island Mountain Ramblers



There is huge potential for a multi-use non-motorized trail to replace the E&N rail line on Vancouver Island

There is a 225-km long trail on Vancouver Island—an uncut gem—but no one is allowed to use it. It's called the E&N rail bed.

For several years, the [Island Corridor Foundation](#), run by a retired MLA, has been trying to make it work as a railway again. It's becoming obvious even to the most diehard rail buff, however, that the track's deterioration is extensive and accelerating with time. The capital costs to get it up and running are not coming through and the operating costs are a wildcard for taxpayers. Already, a \$1 million debt to CIBC is being discussed as being paid from the sale of property that the Foundation owns. If many more debts stack up, we fear we could lose this wonderful corridor that would make a world-class "rails to trails."

On October 16th 2016, a small group of us met and formed the Friends of Rails to Trails Vancouver Island (FORT-VI). At that first meeting we discussed what we as citizens can do to save this wonderful corridor as a non-motorized-use trail that extends from Victoria to Courtenay, with a branch west from Parksville to Port Alberni. Until now, municipalities and regional districts have been trying to build parallel trails but these cover about 15% of the distance and have been done at a huge cost. Our vision is to transform the rail corridor itself into a world-class destination for hikers, cyclists, and outdoor enthusiasts as well as a great commuting corridor for island residents that keeps them safe off the highway and winding road systems.

We need to show our politicians that we realize a train system (at least in the short term) is not viable and that we don't want to plow millions of dollars into something that won't get much use. No matter how they present the numbers, their proposal to reinstate the rail system doesn't make economic sense and

seems destined to follow the same fate it did under VIA Rail's leadership, operating seriously in the red and even presenting safety concerns at unregulated rail crossings and providing only a short-term (less than 5 year) fix to the tracks and trestles themselves.

If you have information that would help us in our quest to make this trail happen, or if you would like to volunteer, please email sherry@fortvi.ca or visit our website at www.fortvi.ca. This is a complex issue and will require a lot of determination and work to see through to fruition but it is worth it to save this gem. ■

Recreation and Conservation

Sproatt Ridge Access Via the Northair Mine Road Compromised

Bryce Leigh, ACC-Whistler Section

Prior to the 2010 Winter Olympics, the provincial government relocated Canadian Snowmobile, now Canadian Wilderness Adventures (CWA), to their current Sproatt Ridge location south and east of the Whistler Olympic Park. For many years, there was an existing logging road that led from the old Callaghan FSR up to the Northair Mine site, then continued on to the top of the clear cut at 1300 m. In 2008 or 2009, CWA built a new road from the top of the existing logging road that ended at 1300 metres to the semi-alpine adjacent to Sproatt Lake, where they have a small log cabin/warming hut at approximately 1500 m.

This road extension, for all practical purposes, was not driveable. CWA uses this road to access their cabin at Sproatt Lake via snowmobiles and ATVs. For hikers, the existing logging road to 1300 m could easily be driven with a good AWD or 4WD vehicle. From 1300 m, the new CWA road provided an easy hiking route that put the semi-alpine areas within an easy 30-minute walk. This provided one of the quickest and easiest routes to the alpine in the Whistler area.

In 2013, construction began on a machine-built "multi-use" trail that started at 1500 m near CWA's cabin and climbed gradually to the alpine and the ridge of Sproatt. Over the next 3 summers, the trail was extended south and east along the ridge on Sproatt. This trail was funded by the RMOW and Rec Sites & Trails BC at a cost of \$30,000 per km. In addition to this trail, the RMOW and WORCA (the Whistler Off Road Cycling Association) built climbing and descent trails on the eastern portion of the ridge above Function Junction at a cost of several hundred thousand dollars.

During the initial meetings of the Trails Planning Working Group (TPWG), access via the Northair mine road was discussed. Alistair McCrone from Rec Sites and Trails stated that a decision regarding access or limiting access via the Northair Mine road would be made at a later date.



Bryce Leigh

Scenic tarn in the Sproatt alpine

In July 2014, CWA blocked access to the Northair Mine road at 1000 m with the placement of many large boulders. This blockade was removed by early August 2014 and driving to 1300 m was again possible. During the first week of July 2016, the Northair Mine road was again blocked by large boulders at 1300 m and by two very large cross-ditches at 1125 m which limited access to all but ATVs and dirt bikes.

Danielle Cunningham from FLNRO confirmed that CWA's tenure agreement does not allow them to block the road. Subsequently, Danielle stated that Alistair McCrone authorized blocking the road. Alistair made this decision supposedly after consultation with others. The reality is that there wasn't any consultation, as I checked with the RMOW, WORCA, and the ACC - Whistler reps from the Trails Planning Working Group and nobody was consulted. Cascade Environmental Resource Group Ltd., who created CWA's management plan, claimed CWA had the right to block the road under their Snowmobile Trail Management agreement. This appears to be blatantly incorrect as clause 1 of Schedule B of the agreement states the "operating season for this agreement is November 15 to May 30."



The Northair Mine road provided quick access to the alpine on Sproatt with minimal elevation gain, making it one of the easiest ways to reach the alpine in the Whistler area. Having this access blocked at 1000 m adds 300 m of elevation and 3 km each way to the hike. After several hundred thousand dollars was spent building the alpine trail network on Sproatt, it is the height of hypocrisy to



Bryce Leigh

Large boulders blocking access to the Northair Mine Road.

limit public access while at the same time allowing a commercial recreation tenure operator, CWA, to benefit from reduced public access.

What is most disturbing is that the government appears to be favouring commercial recreation tenure holders over the public. At a time when participation in non-motorized backcountry recreation is increasing at a rapid rate, every effort should be made to enhance public access, not to impair it—especially when public funds have been used to build the trails. This is just another unfortunate example of how a commercial recreation tenure operator can impair public access to the backcountry.

At the October 6, 2016 public hearing regarding CWA's rezoning application for its base area, there was overwhelming public opposition to the road being blocked. When Alan Crawford, one of CWA's owners, was pressed for a commitment to find a solution to this situation, he agreed to work with the stakeholders to resolve the issue. As of October 12, 2016 the rocks blocking the road have been removed. This is an improvement, as it reduces the hiking distance on the road by approximately 1.5 km and 125 m in elevation. However, the ideal solution remains restoring driving access to 1300 m and we will continue working to achieve that. This situation is a good example of the disturbing trend of the government giving priority to commercial tenure holders at the expense of the public. ■

Get Involved—Volunteer with the FMCBC!

Help us protect the backcountry for non-motorized users by volunteering a little or a lot—every bit helps!

We are looking for individuals with skills and/or experience in many different areas including social media, communications, grant writing and more. Contact us for more info at info@mountainclubs.org or 604-873-6096 or talk to your club's FMCBC Director.

Off-road E-bikes Have Arrived— Regulations Still Missing

By Steve Jones, ACC-Vancouver Section

Globally, e-bikes are expected to be a \$15.7 billion industry in 2016 with significant year-over-year growth projected for the foreseeable future. A large portion of the market is in Asia for on-road e-bikes, but as the overall market grows, the underlying technology becomes more advanced and more affordable. In recent years, battery and motor technology has evolved to the point where it is now possible to buy affordable and rugged electric bikes for off-road use.

There are a number of exciting applications for mountain e-bikes. Cross-country mountain bike trips that may have required a long day in June to complete could now be finished in the shorter days of September. BC could become a world-class destination for multi-day backcountry bikepacking trips, supported by solar-powered battery recharging stations. E-bikes could bring new people into the sport and could bring people back who have had to stop due to injuries or other physical challenges. The use of gasoline-powered vehicles for shuttles could be reduced or eliminated in many riding areas and e-bikes could provide a new tool for rangers, trail maintenance volunteers, and search and rescue teams.

At the same time, there are a number of potential challenges that will need to be managed. E-bikes are heavier and more powerful and can increase wear and tear on trails. E-bikes can move faster uphill and may not be compatible with human-powered users on busy trails. E-bikes will allow people to travel deeper into remote areas in a single day or weekend, which may have an impact on wilderness preservation objectives. There are precious few places remaining that are used purely for non-motorized recreation and e-bikes could intrude into those areas.

With the introduction of this new type of vehicle, there are many questions about where they should be allowed to be used and what rules they will need to follow. One of the key challenges in regulating the use of e-bikes is that there is a huge amount of variety in the offerings from manufacturers. At one end of the spectrum, an e-bike is a mountain bike that provides a bit of extra help while climbing trails. At the other end of the spectrum, an e-bike is more similar to a dirt bike than to any human-powered mode of transport.

Some of the key variables include:

Drive System	On some e-bikes, the motor complements the effort of the human rider. If the rider is not pedaling and putting in some effort of their own, the bike will not move. On other e-bikes, a throttle can be used to activate the motor without any human effort.
Power	At the low end, e-bikes have around 250 watts of power. At the high end, e-bikes have 10,000 watts or more of power.
Speed	At the low end, e-bike motors will propel users to around 30 km/h. At the high end, e-bike motors will propel users to over 100 km/h.
Range	At the low end, e-bikes provide great assistance for a short trip. At the high end, the range can be hundreds of kilometres.

Existing regulations:

In most jurisdictions, laws have been established to define a class of e-bikes that will be treated as bicycles for use on the road. These laws allow qualifying e-bikes to use bike lanes, to be driven by people without a driver's license, and to not require a license plate. In BC, the Motor Assisted Cycle (MAC) legislation provides bicycle privileges to any e-bike that has less than 500 watts of power while they are being used on roads and streets.

Those rules only apply to use on the road. There are no specific regulations for the use of e-bikes in off-road locations in BC and so users are stuck with existing off-road regulations that were written before off-road e-bikes were contemplated.

The Bureau of Land Management in the United States has made a policy decision that all e-bikes are motorized vehicles and are therefore banned from trails that are designated as non-motorized.

In British Columbia, one should assume the same thinking applies at the current time. If a trail is designated as non-motorized, then e-bikes are not allowed because they have a motor and because no exceptions have been stated for low-power e-bikes. The lack of policy clarification from the BC government is creating confusion. In that vacuum, e-bikes are starting to be used on non-motorized trails in BC parks, almost certainly in contravention of the existing rules.

Why not use the existing Motor Assisted Cycle regulation?

A common suggestion for regulation of e-bikes in off-road locations is to simply apply the existing Motor Assisted Cycle regulation and to allow any e-bike that meets the MAC definition to be used on trails where mountain bikes are allowed.

At first glance, this sounds like a reasonable idea, but it is not without its challenges:

1) The MAC was not written with off-road applications in mind and it is not entirely appropriate for that application. For example, the MAC allows bikes that use throttle control instead of pedal assist. Unlike the corresponding legislation in Ontario, the BC MAC does not have a weight limit. The MAC also has no limit on range or torque, which are a function of battery capacity and gear ratios respectively and which have a meaningful impact when considering how e-bikes will change use patterns in the backcountry.

2) There are some trails and areas that should be preserved forever for completely non-motorized recreation. If e-bikes are automatically classified as bikes and given the same access rights as human-powered bikes, then it is likely that bikes as a combined group will suffer from reduced or eliminated access to a number of those areas.

3) Enforcement is difficult given the ease with which bikes can be upgraded and modified. If qualifying e-bikes are allowed on trails, it's almost a guarantee that a portion of those e-bikes will not be complying with limits and it will be very hard to stop that from happening. Can you imagine that we had horsepower limits instead of speed limits for cars on the road? How would a police officer hand out tickets without carrying a portable dynamometer everywhere?

4) Would this mean that any e-bike that did not meet the MAC would need to register as an Off-Road Vehicle under the new BC Off-Road Vehicle Act? Should there be a middle ground between a Motor Assisted Cycle and an Off-Road Vehicle?

Suggestions going forward:

It's not a valid strategy to pretend e-bikes do not exist, that all e-bikes should be treated as bikes, or that all e-bikes should be treated as dirt bikes. E-bikes are a unique and new form of transportation that bring many exciting opportunities, but also some management challenges. The government should be proactive in working with stakeholders around the province to engage in a serious conversation about the regulations and policies needed. ■

Cover Photo Contest

We're looking for summer shots for our next cover of Cloudburst. Email your entries to us at cloudburst@mountainclubs.org
Please submit photos by April 1st

Mountain Matters

Volunteers in BC Parks: A Request for Your Experiences

Brian Wood, BC Mountaineering Club

Over the last few summers, I have been involved with the Friends of Garibaldi Park Society and their annual work parties, which typically last 2 or 3 days, sometimes on weekdays and sometimes overlapping the weekend. The work parties are composed of volunteers who help maintain the badly worn trails in the Black Tusk Meadows and some trails that access Garibaldi Lake.

Due to the relatively high elevation of these trails, the snow recedes late in the summer and so the trail work season usually lasts only about 2–3 months. To maximize time, the volunteers usually camp high for one or two nights, and for safety reasons and planning, are supervised by one or more park rangers. I have been told that over 20,000 people per year visit the park, and most of them come in the summer, and so trail work on weekends can be constantly interrupted to let folks pass along the trail. It is added that professional trail builders, usually with powered equipment, are sometimes employed during the week to work on particularly bad sections of trails. This has been relatively successful if there is sufficient funding for this work and the weekday crowds are light. This past summer was so busy that even during mid week, the few rangers in the park were fully engaged dealing with the crowds and were not available to supervise volunteers working on the trails, resulting in no volunteer work parties.

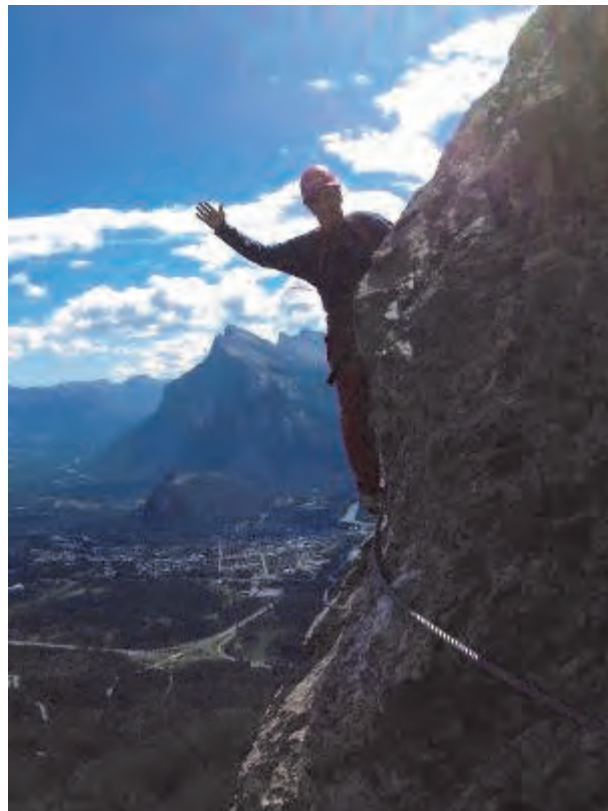
In other BC parks, I have been told volunteers can work on trails without the direct supervision of park rangers, so it seems there is a variation across the province in the practices relating to volunteers working on trails. Why this is so I do not know. Perhaps some rangers know their regular volunteers can work on trails without direct supervision, enabling the trails in these parks to be better maintained? I am surprised these variations exist as I understood supervision was considered necessary for liability reasons, even though all volunteers signed liability waivers. So why would liability concerns vary from park to park?

Also, some parks include commercial operations within them and sometimes these operations can contribute personnel and equipment to help maintain park facilities, although this does not seem to be common practice. I think the commercial ski area operators in the two Lower Mainland parks do not contribute to any large extent to the maintenance of the poorly maintained trails in those parks.

One of the purposes of this article is to collect reports of experiences of folks who volunteer to help maintain park trails, etc. in as many parts of the province as possible. I would be particularly interested to learn about the various procedures required for volunteers to work on park trails and whether or not commercial operators contribute towards trail maintenance. So, I am requesting that parks volunteers please report their experiences to me at: brian.wood@mountainclubs.org. Thank you. ■

Mt. Norquay Via Ferrata: Déjà vu Alpine Europe

Ron Dart, ACC-Vancouver Section



Ron Dart enjoying a European experience on the Mt. Norquay Via Ferrata.

Mt. Norquay (Banff) is celebrating its 90th anniversary (1926-2016) this year. Norquay antedates Sunshine, Louise and Nakiska ski hills by many a decade. The last three years, Mt. Norquay has developed one of the finest via ferrata climbs in Canada. Those who have spent much time in Austria and Italy know, only too well, the proliferation of the via ferrata as way and means of ascending steep rock pitches through the use of metal steps, climbing harnesses, lanyard with carabiners, and metal ropes of sorts.

The Mt. Norquay Via Ferrata can be taken at three levels: Explorer, Ridgewalker, and Mountaineer. The Ridgewalker and Mountaineer levels are definitely the best. The narrow and precipitous cliff ridges, stark and steep cliff faces, volatile bridge crossings, and constant use of carabiners to protect and stay close to minimal mountain edges makes such a via ferrata worthy of the trek—all sorts of memories of Switzerland, Italy, and Austria. The sheer success of the Mt. Norquay Via Ferrata has meant a more challenging and demanding route will be put up to the summit of Mt. Norquay in 2017. Those who are in Banff in 2017 for a few days should take advantage of this opportunity to get a feel for what many take as normal in European climbing and mountain life. ■

Lake Louise Icefields: July 16–24

Ron Dart, ACC-Vancouver Section



Cirque Peak and Helen Lake in the Icefields

Stuart Wood

We had a fine trekking group for our weeklong trip from Lake Louise and into the Icefields environs. We met for dinner at Peyto's Café on July 16th to discuss planned trips for the week. After dinner, we did a short stroll to the lookout (tourists mostly gone) at Moraine Lake, then along the shoreline to the foaming white waterfalls at the lake's end.

The 17th was a cat and mouse weather day—as early afternoon approached so did dark nimbus clouds—but we did most of the Iceline Trail in Yoho. We made it down to the trailhead (sleet and hail on the Iceline) and decided to go to Emerald Lake for the afternoon. We had, initially, plenty of rain at Emerald, but as mid-late afternoon joined us, the clouds broke and a blue sky joined us. It was back to Louise to bid adieu to the departing day, the trip up to Yoho Pass and Emerald Lake the goal for another challenging day.

Parker Ridge (both sides) was on the agenda for the 18th. The 1.5-hour drive from Lake Louise to Parker Ridge was, as anticipated, a beauty not to miss. The short trek to Parker Ridge took us to the fine overlook of Saskatchewan Glacier, then to the other side of the Ridge where we huddled in the rock wind-breakers for lunch. A few from the group rambled up the first rock knob and headed towards the second (such sights to see from such a perch). The 19th made for a fuller day. The morning and early afternoon, we headed up to Larch Valley and Sentinel Pass.

As we were about to head up to Sentinel Pass, the rain joined us in fits and starts. A few went to the Pass (the route to Mt.

Temple) and the clouds dissipated when the Pass was reached. Those who did not go to Sentinel Pass took to the Eiffel Lake route, with its magnificent views of the Valley of Ten peaks from both places, and glacier calving occurring often. By early afternoon, the Sentinel Pass group joined the Eiffel Lake-Wenkchemna Pass tribe. The clan was together for the rest of the afternoon—again, many a fine photo taken. The evening of the 19th, tourists mostly gone, we did a leg stretcher to Johnson Canyon, round the catwalks, and to the rushing cataracts of white and spray water (Inkpots were left for another day).

The 20th was a day not to miss—Sunshine Meadows is considered one of the must-see beauties of the Rockies. We caught the early bus, and some took to snow-packed Quartz while others dipped over Healey Pass and sunned, like marmots, on the rocks and soaked up the valley scenery. "Canada's #1 Premier Day Hike" is a keeper not to bypass. There's so much to see from various and varied angles. We topped off the day, blue canopy above and sun warming us, with a generous dinner at the Waldhaus in Banff (a fine Bavarian paradise to dine).

The 21st was yet another bounty not to miss. The trek to Helen Lake, then up over the cliff escarpment to Katherine Lake to Dolomite Pass, is a journey into expansive and epic views. A few from the group decided to head up Cirque Peak, but the wind on the exposed mountainside turned them back—some good snow still lingered in Dolomite Pass.

On July 22nd we did the Lake Agnes Tea Hut (next year we will do Mt. St. Piran and Devil's Thumb, which are often ignored in

the more predictable tourist loop as is the fine Mount Niblock scramble), up to Big Beehive, a traverse to Plain of Six Glaciers, then a further kilometre to the base of the Death Trap. We had a fine lunch above the Death Trap and took some good group photos of Abbot Hut above us between Lefroy and Victoria. The 4 COC members who were doing Assiniboine throughout the week joined us for dinner at Peyto's and regaled us with their many tales and trails taken.

Some of the group joined the Assiniboine COC clan on the 23rd and did Bow Hut, the second hut from north to south on the splendid Wapta Traverse haute route—a fine trip with many a worthy site. Most of the group began to head back to the Valley again on the 24th, a splendid week in the Banff-Louise-Icefield now part of a memory worth the nurturing.

Members: David and Monica, Stuart, Elly, Tracy, Cindy, Mary Ann, Lucy and Ron (trip leader and reporter) ■

Yoho National Park and the Burgess Shale

Ron Dart, ACC-Vancouver Section

When most of us take to the beauty and bounty of Yoho National Park, we either book into Elizabeth Parker or Abbot Huts (from which many a fine hike, scramble, or climb can be done) or settle into Stanley Mitchell Hut (from which many a superb peak can be summited). The many trails, rock climbs, and glaciers worth the doing in Yoho make such a mountain paradise worthy of many a return trip in all four seasons of the year. But, there is more in Yoho to see and delight in.

The Burgess Shale fossils were declared in 1981 to be a UNESCO World Heritage Site and are now a protected site within the Rocky Mountain Parks World Heritage Site. The fossils were initially discovered in 1909 by Charles Walcott, and since then, many of his interpretations of the varied fossils have been questioned, but the ongoing work of fossil interpretation (and earth dating) goes ever on. When Walcott first discovered the fossil gold mine of sorts, most of the fossils were shipped to the Smithsonian Institute, but now, gratefully so, most go to the Royal Ontario Museum (ROM) in Toronto.

Those who are keen to get a close-up look at the various fossil finds can either take trips with the Burgess Shale Geoscience Foundation or Parks Canada. The longer trip is to the Walcott Quarry and is a 22 km round trip with an 825 m elevation gain. The trip begins near the Whiskey Jack Hostel, ascends to Yoho Lake/Pass, then traverses the mountainside to the Quarry. When I did the trip this summer, we were fortunate to see two large mountain goat families (one on the high ridge, the other in the Valley). The trip can take between 10–12 hours (depending on the curiosity of the group and weather of the day).

The Mount Stephen Trilobite Beds (that begins in Field) is also a trip worth the taking. I did this trek also this summer. The Mount Stephen trek is only a 9 km round trip with a 795 m elevation gain also—this means there are some steeper patches on the Mount Stephen trip but all quite doable. The Walcott Quarry and Mount Stephen Trilobite Beds are packed with a wide range of fossils that can be touched, looked at, and their history pondered. The guides are quite competent and well trained. There are many fine books that bring the more intricate discussion of fossils up to date.

There are also new fossil bed finds in Kootenay National Park (not yet open to the public) and shorter tours near Stanley Glacier (fit for family trips). Yoho National Park's motherlode of fossils (and the meanings they carry) are worth a visit, and will enrich a trip to Yoho.

I would recommend, for those in minimally good shape, doing the Walcott Quarry to see the "stone bugs." The views for most of the trip are exquisite and from the upper traverse and quarry, Emerald Lake below is eye candy worth the seeing. ■



Tracy Sombathy

At the cairn on Iceline Trail, with Emerald Glacier in the background .

A Lizzie Creek Work Hike

Vincent Hanlon, Varsity Outdoor Club

This is going to be one of two trip reports about the (most recent) Lizzie Creek work hike—and apparently the other report is going to be better. Anyway, this is the one where we mostly talk about what needs to be done to the trail, rather than the one where we recount jokes and adventures. Some jokes and adventures are however recounted free of charge. I've also summarized what I think the trail needs at the end of this article.

On Friday afternoon, five of us drove up towards Lillooet Lake to wallow in the hot springs before hiking up the Lizzie Creek trail Saturday morning. We arrived slightly too early at Skookumchuck, which disappointed Roland Burton because that meant he had to keep his clothes on longer, until it was darkish. So we disrobed incompletely and waded around the pools, trying not to disturb the couple eating each other's ears two tubs over, before soaking a bit (that's foreshadowing, everyone) and sleeping early. By the way, the name of the hot springs has been changed to 'Tsek,' pronounced 'chick,' which is more authentic and definitely easier to pronounce and remember.

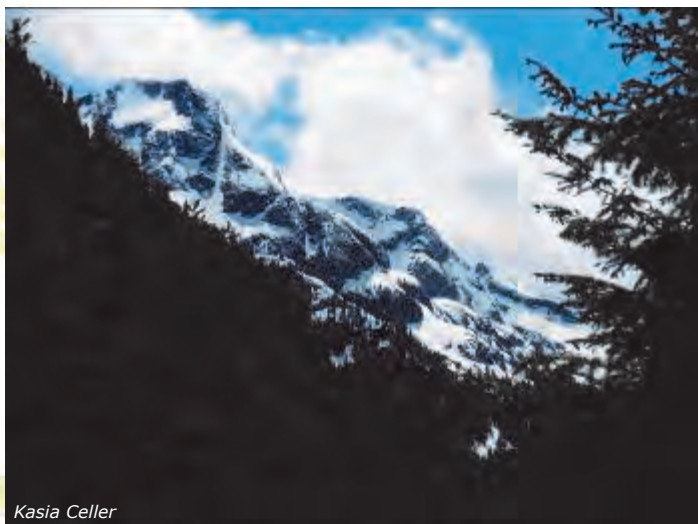
On Saturday morning, we drove to the Lizzie trailhead, met up with two more carloads of VOCers, and stepped out to meet the rain. We chose the lower bypass this time, which is a narrow and precipitous goatpath that is not for the faint of heart (nor the clumsy of foot). The lower bypass is one of three options for avoiding the washout on the old road; the upper bypass alternative involves less cliffy sidehilling, but it's quite long and involves a sharp little boulderfield and some balance. If you don't like the upper and lower bypass options, and if Lizzie Creek is low (as in winter), apparently you can also ford the creek down at the washout and rejoin the trail further on. One or both of the bypasses seem to need a fair amount of work (details below), although it may not be worth maintaining both of them.



Kasia Celler

After the bypass, we hiked up the old road as the rain increased. (At this point, the lemon meringue pie I was carrying for the dessert potluck worked its malice: I tripped on a rock, and landed on my face in a stony trickle with the pie held flat and gently in front of me.) The thimbleberry bushes along the old road were crowding the trail too much, although we did clear some of them while hiking through. Anyway, they were soaking wet, and when we dripped into our campsite (just before the circular clearing/helipad about 200 m before the one-log bridge), we were 12 very soggy VOCers with very wet almost everything. The tarp Julien Renard strung up across the trail was a godsend.

To warm up a bit, we soon decided to do some work. We crossed the one-log bridge au cheval with the death machine (alder saw) and a whole bunch of loppers. Simon Litchwark froze his thighs by trying that in short shorts. Last November, we had cleared about a third of the trail from the bridge to Lizzie Lake on a similar expedition. Unfortunately, winter, and the addition of wet leaves to the alder, had significantly narrowed the path we had cut, so it needed to be widened everywhere and in many places totally redone. So future workhikers, remember! The trail should be as wide as possible, ideally to 3 m or more.



Kasia Celler

It wasn't all rain and despair.

The next day, Roland woke us with the roar of the death machine and we tromped out to kill more alder in the sunshine. We made good progress clearing or widening the trail beyond the one-log bridge. The two green blobs I drew on the map stolen from [Rich So's blog post](#) mark the extent of the cleared trail. There is a flattish stretch of grass near the end of the first cleared stretch (just before a rockslide) that we agreed could take 3 or so tents. That'd save a future work party hiking up and down the hill and across the log all the time. There's also a little trickle of water across the path for drinking water (not super dependable), but probably also access to a creek that should be nearby.

We think a team with a death machine, loppers, and 10 or more people could likely clear the rest of the path to the lake (1.5–2 km) in a weekend if everyone's elbows were greased. The alder's really thick, though—thick enough that some of the time it might be easier to bushwhack off the trail than on it. It's a dense thicket of inward-curving alder roughly two to six centimeters in diameter. Beyond that, people from the last expedition tell us there's lots of blowdown past the lake that needs to be cleared. We also decided the death machine should be taken into the shop for service before the next trip; it may be having trouble with the transmission. A couple new blades and the tools for changing them are also good to bring. Maybe we could return to Lizzie and finish the path to the lake later this summer.



Things that still need to be done:

- Clearing alder to the lake (most important)
 - The trail to the lake is quickly becoming too overgrown to be a trail. 1.5-2 km left to do.
- A replacement for the one-log bridge (very important)
 - Something sturdy that can be skied?
- Improving one or both of the bypasses (important)
 - The lower bypass needs to be widened (dug into the hillside more) if possible, since at the moment it's not skiable (although maybe the upper bypass is). Maybe we could go all out and do something with rebar and wood to make the trail wider. It could also use more rope railings/hand lines and a thicker rope for the 8 m or so steep section just before it descends to the road. Alternatively, the upper bypass could be improved (we didn't hike it this time, so details are lacking).
- Clearing the trail between the bypass and the one-log bridge (nice to do)
 - A weedwacker or a scythe or something could help cut back those bushes so summer hikers don't get immediately soaked.
- Cutting through the fallen trees beyond the lake (apparently very important)
 - Chainsaw work? That's a long way to carry a chainsaw.

Loyal workhikers: Alex Girard, Jeff Taylor, Filip Kilibarda, Mirko Moeller, Roland Burton, Taniya Adak, Jin Guo, Vincent Hanlon, Julien Renard, Erica Acton, Kasia Celler, Simon Litchwark, Lea Zhecheva ■

Fay's Non-Technical Trip Report of the Lizzie Lake Work Hike

Fay Chen, Varsity Outdoor Club

I registered for membership in the VOC. I dropped my fee off during the Gear Hours. I signed up for a trip that seemed interesting. I went to the pre-meeting and....found myself the only one not wearing outdoor apparel in the room! It was not difficult to realize I was the only new one.

Harlin asked, "Do you usually do sports? Do you know what you are facing?" Cassandra just laughed. I didn't know anything and thus I was super fearless.

It felt unreal when I stepped out of the car under the stunning-glittering-amazing starry night sky and had the first inhale of the fresh air from the woods. Wow, my first hike! Thanks Sylvia for letting us stay at the cozy lakeside cabin on Friday night!

We had a spry start the next day, which meant everyone walked at a supernatural speed (for me) and nobody was in sight after a maximum of 5 minutes, excepted Lucy and Ross behind me.

The first kilometer was a terrifyingly narrow trail that goes up and down, and I tried quite hard not to think "what if I fall?" when going across the boulders. It didn't become any easier with time (bitter recall, hahaha). The challenges were lined up and took turns appearing. After surviving the rough patches of trail, two hours of going uphill, rain, and the one-log bridge, I ended up on the upslope near Lizzie Lake. The angle of the trail is definitely greater than 60 degrees. Millions of thanks to Ross, to whom the award of Club Gentleman should go to, for keeping me accompanied and describing how bad his first VOC trip was. We discovered some blueberries, made the wrong prediction that "the hut must be somewhere close" and stopped to rest several times.

We reached the hut around 5 pm, not necessarily tired but surprisingly cold. The first group had already done lots of work. They fixed the roof shortly after our arrival and we started cooking dinner. It was amazing! There was even a tap with running water in the hut. The stove was also nice and warm. We managed to light up the room using a headlamp and a translucent water bottle. Then came the most interesting part of the VOC.

The situation was totally out of control after someone took out the VOC Song Book. It's a magical book that transforms a group of backpackers into a drunk choir. City people can never imagine over a dozen people squeezing into one bed trying to read the lyrics of this legendary book in the dim light and singing out loud (and hardly with correct rhythm). I took a video for my newly wedded cousin with everyone saying "happy wedding" in Chinese. Oh, and my cousin liked it a lot. She said that's the most unique wedding blessing she has received. Thanks guys!

It was so cold at night that I had to bury my head in my sleeping bag. First rain and then snow, and after struggling for several hours, I decided to climb downstairs to find my hat in my backpack. Harlin was snoring. The famous cute mouse got stuck in some plastic stuff and was making a lot of noise.

Sunday began by trying to activate the chainsaw for over 20 minutes. We took loads of photos of Cassandra in an orange working suit. After 3 or 4 people tried, Birgit made the final pull to success and I left on the return trip to the trailhead with Jess. It was much easier the second day. Ross and Lucy enjoyed a quick swim in Lizzie Lake on the way back and I activated the brushsaw—yeeeeah!

My knees stopped working the moment I walked out of the woods. I got back with at least 3 scratches on my thigh and my toenails were filled with soil, but this was such an amazing experience! I felt so sad about going back to civilization. During the drive back, I was thinking that my life is going to be filled with updating Facebook posts and walking around the university again.

Here are some interesting memories of my first trip:

You are the most amazing people that I've ever met in university! Full of energy and humour, and super friendly! Thanks for looking after me on my first trip. See you soon!

I learned new words for describing different tools (chainsaw and brushsaw), different wood houses (cabin and hut), and different animals (rat and mouse).

Since I survived from not washing my face for three days, does it mean the money and time I spend on cosmetics can be saved from now on?

It is a new way of living. People will not die without a cell-phone signal or a hot shower. It just feels good! And, I love you guys! ■



Fay Chen

Singing songs by headlamp from the VOC Song Book.

The Charlotte Alplands

Doug Smith, Kamloops Hiking Club

The Charlotte Alplands are in a remote area of the province, southwest of Nimpo Lake, but on the Interior side of the Coast Range. It is a Provincial Protected Area with the highest concentration of alpine lakes in BC. There are no roads or trails in the area, except for a few hard-to-follow horse pack routes through the brush and forest. We (Kamloops Hiking Club) hired an outfitter (One Eye Outfit) to haul our gear in, cook our meals, and guide us through the hills.



Camping on the hillside above Frog Lake in the Charlotte Alplands.

We left from Nimpo Lake by floatplane and landed at Fish Lake, then hiked in to a basecamp at the Frog Lakes. The chain of lakes sits at 5700 feet. The forested basecamp area on the shores of Frog Lake sits in wet subalpine meadows below rocky peaks. All of our hikes crossed boggy ground and heavy brush to get to the alpine, but once above (in about 60 minutes), the routes were in alpine terrain.

We hiked to a number of unnamed peaks, labelled as North, South, West, and 2222 (m). To the south and west of the Charlotte Alplands is the Coast Range, with high glaciated peaks, including the Monarch Icefield Ranges and the Waddington Ranges, the highest peaks entirely in BC. Tweedsmuir Park is only 15 km from the basecamp area. The highlights were the alpine passes, rocky peaks, and high plateaus with numerous tarns at 6000 to 7500 feet surrounding Frog and Fish Lakes. We hiked for 7 days in this seldom-visited area of the Charlotte Alplands.

In August, there were lots of black flies, wet crossings, and heavy brush to get to the alpine. These are not established trails so hikers face a true wilderness experience and even the camp was a bit rough. We were pleased to hike the alpine routes of the Charlotte Alplands and would love to return to the high area south of Mt. McClinchy to explore the tarns, glaciers, craters, and ridges in the alpine above the forested and wet valleys. ■

Doug Smith

Club Ramblings

Ancient Forest: Angle of Repose and the Aged

Nowell Senior, Caledonia Ramblers

While the 16,000 volunteer hours over the past 10 years at the Ancient Forest have included volunteers of all ages, about 85% of the work has been carried out by retirees who like to stay busy and learn new skills. New skills also include new terminology, as was demonstrated in a rather cute way when our somewhat elderly volunteers were challenged by bridge building on the Universal Boardwalk project.

The walls or abutments to support the bridge also needed to be supported. Our engineer had recommended using angular rocks to support the abutments. We were not sure how many of these angular rocks would be enough to give this support. How would we know when to stop? How would we know when we had enough rocks in place? Our engineer, with a patient tolerant smile, advised that we keep dropping the rocks against the abutments until the "angle of repose" was achieved.

Thinking that since we are getting on in years, and our engineer was poking fun at us, we assumed he meant we keep hauling and dropping these angular rocks until we collapsed from exhaustion and adopted a sort of relaxed position lying on our backs, knees up on the forest floor.

Of course he didn't mean us in repose, he meant the rocks, and we soon realized what a brilliant term to use for adding a rather sensual element to these sharp, multi-faceted rocks. Sure enough, when the rocks ceased rolling over one another, and had indeed locked themselves together into a natural embrace, fully supporting the bridge abutments, we had finally reached the Angle of Repose.

Another word or two about these venerable volunteers is worth mentioning: They, like the antique cedars in the Ancient Forest, stand straight and proud under the weight of age. Yes, they might be considered decadent and falling apart in places, and although no longer reproducing in the biological sense, they are leaving something of themselves in the Ancient Forest for new generations to inherit.

Without doubt, these so-called Old Timers, through their efforts, just as the cedars do, continue to contribute to this unique and beautiful ecosystem.

Adieu with a handshake in thought. ■

Some Good Reads

The Tilman Collection

By H.W. Tilman

Published by Vertebrate Publishing, 2015

Reviewed by Mike Nash,

Caledonia Ramblers Hiking Club



UK mountaineering publisher, Vertebrate Publishing, and nautical publisher, Lodestar Books, are collaborating to reprint the entire works of celebrated 20th century explorer H. W. 'Bill' Tilman. Under the imprint Tilman Books, the series details Tilman's pioneering mountaineering, sailing, and military careers.

In what became one of the most famous mountaineering partnerships of all time, Bill Tilman began climbing with Eric Shipton soon after World War I when, as neighbours in Africa, they made the first ascent of the twin summits of Mount Kenya. From 1934 to 1950, Tilman and Shipton embarked on a series of exploratory expeditions to the Himalayas, forging a light-weight expedition style decades ahead of most others. Together, they pioneered a route into the hitherto inaccessible Nanda Devi Sanctuary; and later, in 1936, Tilman guided a British-American team to make the first ascent of Nanda Devi, the highest mountain climbed until the French summited Annapurna 14 years later in 1950.

Tilman and Shipton's achievements were not limited to summit bagging; they got satisfaction from their minimalist exploration of the often untrammled (by westerners) country through which they passed. Their respective writings make good adventure reading today, as well provide interesting historical context. After 1950, Tilman turned his attention to sailing both as an end in itself and as a means of accessing more remote mountains. Through this, he continued an occasional collaboration with Eric Shipton exploring mountains and icefields of Patagonia. Tilman disappeared in the South Atlantic in 1977, presumed lost at sea.

When Vertebrate Publishing asked me to review their Tilman collaboration, I jumped at the chance as I had a tenuous connection to the subject. Seventeen years earlier, I had hosted ex-pat Brit and Yukon-based physician author Peter Steele in

Prince George for a presentation of his excellent biography Eric Shipton – Everest and Beyond, published by Seattle-based The Mountaineers. I had heard Steele present this talk at the 1998 Banff Mountain Book Festival, just two weeks after my close friend and former FMCBC Director, George Evanoff, was killed in the mountains near Prince George. My conversation with Steele afterwards was a key inspiration to undertake what became a ten-year project to research and write George's biography *The Mountain Knows No Expert*, published in 2009. How Peter Steele came to write Shipton's biography was fascinating in itself, involving an old ice axe providing a link to a long ago lover of Shipton and then still living in Victoria, BC; but that's another story. Meanwhile, this connection introduced me to other works of and about Shipton and Tilman. I already had a copy of Bill Tilman's *The Ascent of Nanda Devi*, and Tim Madge's 1995 biography *The Last Hero - Bill Tilman: A Biography of the Explorer*. So in response to the review offer from Vertebrate Publishing, I chose *When Men & Mountains Meet* and *Mount Everest 1938*.

I picked the former because it offered a different view of Tilman: his remarkable career as a highly decorated soldier in both world wars. In World War II he not only fought with the legendary Eighth Army in the deserts of North Africa, but volunteered for clandestine and dangerous assignments behind enemy lines working with partisans in Iraq, Persia, Albania, and north Italy, often finding opportunities to scramble in whatever hills or mountains happened to be nearby. His wartime narrative is told with the same wit as his mountaineering adventures, and serves to reinforce the intellectual depth and casual down-to-earth toughness of the man. *When Men & Mountains Meet* opens with seven chapters on Tilman's pre-WWII adventures in the Assam Himalaya, with the remainder of the book devoted to his wartime adventures. *Mount Everest 1938*, first published after the war, details Tilman's leadership of the 1938 Everest attempt, with insights on the tensions between climbers and scientists, expeditionary styles, types and use of oxygen systems, and even the veracity of the abominable snowman.

Tilman's old-style writing is such that reading two or more of his books back to back is not necessarily easy, but for me it's good to know they are on the bookshelf where they can be savoured from time to time like fine wines (I had previously read both his and Shipton's gripping Nandi Devi accounts more than once). Tilman's succinct, witty, at times hard-hitting writings provide modern readers with a change of pace from the often introspective prose of today. Many of the places Tilman passed through will have changed beyond recognition, but some modern day travelers might use these works for context and comparison.

Eight of Tilman's books in this new series have now been published as of June 2016, and the remaining titles will appear two each quarter from September 2016 to June 2017. With original photographs and maps, plus new forewords by well-known contemporaries, the mountaineering books in the collection are well worth reading and are available in paperback through VP's website at: www.v-publishing.co.uk. ■

Ontario Climbing Volumes 1-2: The Southern Escarpment & The Northern Escarpment

By Gus Alexandropoulos and Justin Dwyer, 2016

*Reviewed by Ron Dart,
ACC-Vancouver Section*

There is a justifiable tendency to assume the Canadian West Coast (British Columbia, Alberta, Yukon) is the fittest and finest place to do climbing and mountaineering. But, flattery aside, the Niagara Escarpment in Ontario has some beauties that are often not known to the mountaineering tribe on the West Coast. The sheer charm and delight of Ontario Climbing (Volumes 1 & 2) is the detailed and meticulous way Gus Alexandropoulos and Justin Dwyer have offered the curious reader a map of sorts to the varied and various rock climbs (of different levels of challenge) on both the northern and southern escarpments.

The comic-book covers of these two volumes are quite enticing and the internal text (well done in colour with various routes well articulated by photo and text) make these compact books keepers for those keen on knowing more about some fine climbing challenges on the Niagara Escarpment. The maps make it abundantly clear how to reach each destination, exquisite photographs of climbers on rock slabs tell the tales well, the history of climbing in the area is a delight to read, and the foreword and afterword in the volumes act as needed bookends that fill in details for mountain safety.

Volume 1: The Southern Escarpment is somewhat shorter than Volume 2: The Northern Escarpment, but this is understandable given the nature of the Niagara Escarpment. The index in both books makes for a rapid search and find for those interested in specific routes and ways and means of reaching destinations. I might also add the books are solidly put together and make for an attractive combination.

There can be no doubt that serious climbing on the northern and southern parts of the Niagara Escarpment has been admirably served well and wisely by Ontario Climbing (Volumes 1-2). I lived in the Niagara Escarpment area until about 1974, and if I had had such finely crafted books then as guides and leads, I would have certainly taken to the rock bluffs more often and eagerly.

Do purchase and inwardly digest these books if for no other reason than to get a sense of the vibrant climbing history (then and now) on the lengthy Niagara Escarpment. In sum, multiple kudos to Gus and Justin for threading together the finest books at the present time on climbing in the northern and southern escarpment in Ontario. May those who read such well-wrought beauties take to the routes that the books point to, and may those from the West Coast realize that Southern Ontario has some climbing challenges worth the doing. ■



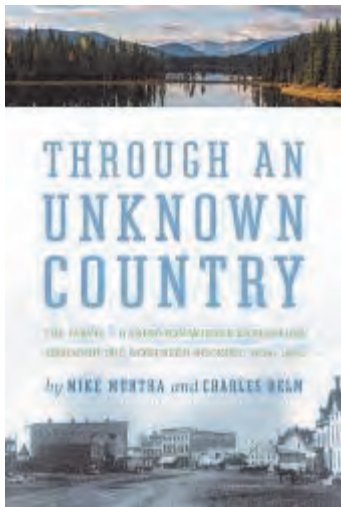
Some Good Reads

Through an Unknown Country: The Jarvis–Hanington Winter Expedition through the Northern Rockies, 1874–1875 (edited reprint from Canadian Alpine Journal)

By Mark Murtha and Charles Helm

Published by Rocky Mountain Books Ltd., 2015

*Reviewed by Mike Nash,
Caledonia Ramblers Hiking Club*



In January 1875, two men set out from Fort George (Prince George) in the dead of winter to explore the unknown country north of the Fraser River through the Rocky Mountains. Their urgent charge from Sandford Fleming, head of the Canadian Pacific Survey, was to find a northerly route through the Rockies for the future Canadian Pacific Railway. The Canadian Pacific Survey was established in 1871 and construction of the railway was a project critical to Canada's future as a nation. The railway was intended to be

completed by 1881, but by 1875 the route had not yet been settled.

Through an Unknown Country is the latest work of Mike Murtha and Charles Helm on the exploration history of Canada's Northern Rocky Mountains. Helm is a physician in the resource community of Tumbler Ridge in the heart of the Northern Rockies and is the author of several books and journal articles on the area and its history. Mike Murtha was a planner with BC Parks in Prince George, where he took personal interest in researching the history of many of BC's northern parks. Together, Murtha and Helm have written about historical explorations of the region including Samuel Prescott Fay's 1914 trek through the Northern Rockies¹ and Prentiss Gray's 1927 exploration from the Peace to the Fraser². There is symmetry between their works on Fay and Jarvis in that the respective journeys intersect at present-day Jarvis Lakes.

The editors were stirred by three historical quotations to undertake the task of combining E. W. Jarvis' and C. F. Hanington's accounts of their epic journey. The first was in 1925 by a young schoolteacher in BC's Peace region, Gerry Andrews (later to become Surveyor General of British Columbia), who noted the importance of this part of Canada's history to its citizens, especially to its young people. The second quote was by an apparently disillusioned Charles Hanington who remarked in a 1926 letter that his and Jarvis' 1875 exploration "...is of little value to modern people, who don't give a Damn for what has happened in the past." The third quote is by archivist Douglas Brymner in

his 1887 report to Canada's Parliament. Commenting on Jarvis' vivid but formal narrative and Hanington's unreserved personal account of their day-to-day experiences, he declared, "Both narratives should be read together."

Jarvis and Hanington left Fort George on January 14, 1875 after a week of below-minus-40 temperatures had frozen the Fraser River sufficient for safe travel. The first part of the expedition included several native men recruited in Fort George, along with supplies for two months and 24 dogs in six sled trains. Hanington had earlier established a supply cache seven days travel upriver, plus they had prearranged to buy salmon cached by a native man near the Bear (Bowron) River. For gear, each man had a pair of snowshoes, a pair of blankets, a light cotton sheet for a lean-to shelter (no tents), and several pairs of moccasins. For the next two months, they battled severe cold, difficult canyons, cold water immersions, heavy snowfall in-filling their tracks, a steady death toll among their working dogs, and near starvation as they neared Jasper House to find it deserted and devoid of supplies.

They first investigated the 'north fork' (Herrick Creek) to its upper reaches below Mount Ovington³ to ascertain it was entirely unsuited for a railway. Retracing their steps, they ascended the 'south fork' (McGregor River) and eventually took the north tributary branch (Jarvis Creek) up 'the summit' (present day Jarvis Lakes in BC's Kakwa Provincial Park). Passing below a beautiful pyramidal mountain resembling the Matterhorn that is the northernmost peak over 10,000 feet in the Rockies, Jarvis records that they named it "Mount Ida."

Jarvis had by now determined that a railway was infeasible by any proximate route through the Rockies, but despite fear of death by starvation they decided to push on to complete a thorough survey. One of the startling facts coming out of the narrative is that Jarvis and Hanington took turns counting paces for the entire journey as a measure of distance traveled. Anyone who has tried navigating with just a compass and paces for short distances will appreciate the enormity of just this one aspect.

Through an Unknown Country is suited to academic and lay readers, and both should be prepared for some initial hard work as the book opens with Jarvis' formal report which must be read alongside extensive end notes by the editors. The reader's early perseverance is soon rewarded, however, by Hanington's plain-spoken letters to his brother in chapter 2.

Jarvis' and Hanington's treatment of First Nations team members in their respective narratives is typical of nineteenth century mores, although by the end of the book the reader senses a deeper regard for their native companions than is at first evident in their writings. Jarvis emerges as a quiet, competent, thoughtful leader, but one who didn't share a lot of his thinking with his companions, and yet it is the stalwart Hanington who is key to Jarvis' life and death decision not to turn back at the 'summit' (Jarvis Lakes). Thus both of them were instrumental in the ultimate prosecution of Sandford Fleming's orders. Gerry Andrews later recognized their achievement as "an epic of Ca-

nadian exploration,” and Sandford Fleming in his 1889 paper to the Royal Society of Canada highlighted this as the most noteworthy of the many Canadian Pacific Survey expeditions. ■

Through an Unknown Country: The Jarvis–Hanington Winter Expedition through the Northern Rockies, 1874–1875 edited by Mike Murtha and Charles Helm; Rocky Mountain Books, 2015; ISBN 978-1-771601-33-7; \$30.00 (CAD). Highly recommended.

1The Forgotten Explorer — Samuel Prescott Fay’s 1914 Expedition to the Northern Rockies; edited by Charles Helm and Mike Murtha; Rocky Mountain Books, 2009.

2 Early Exploration in the Neglected Mountains by Charles helm and Mike Murtha; Canadian Alpine Journal, 2004.

3 Kitchi-Kakwa Mountaineering from 1875 to the BCMC Sumer Camp – Ovington Creek Area, 1-8 August 1992 by Michael Feller, B.C. Mountaineer, Vol. 62 (1994).

Warnings Against Myself: Meditations on a Life in Climbing

By David Stevenson

University of Washington Press , 2016

*Reviewed by Ron Dart,
ACC-Vancouver Section*



There are rock jocks that are quite able to deftly describe routes taken to reach summits, but such writers speak little of their inner journey or what mountains have taught them. There is a canon of literature written about mountains, often by those who have never taken to more demanding treks above the alpine. It is, indeed, rare that a fine and telling book is published by a qualified and experienced mountaineer that reflects, in some depth and detail, on the deeper and more significant life lessons of mountain life.

Such is the genius and beauty of *Warnings Against Myself: Meditations on a Life in Climbing*.

David Stevenson has aptly and wisely threaded together, in this compact delight of a book, a list of his many climbs in varied places and different seasons, literary insights, and meditative and-hard learned lessons on tracked and untracked pathways of time. Each of the chapters is worthy of many a slow read and reread, and the fine photos scattered throughout the book illuminate the text in a suggestive way and manner.

I was particularly drawn to Stevenson’s insightful reflections on Dougal Haston. I lived in Villars, Switzerland in the early 1970s when Haston was at the peak of his mountaineering life in Ley-

sin, Switzerland. Villars was quite close to Leysin and the Club Vagabond in Leysin was an animated pub to be in for Haston and many aspiring mountaineers at the International School of Mountaineering. The way Haston inspired Stevenson on many significant levels (as he inspired Chic Scott) is more than worth the heeding in *Warnings Against Myself*.

The underlying gist and message of this timely missive goes to the core of what it means to be human and alertly alive. There comes a time when a slowing down must be done, deeper internal journeys need to be taken, and more seen in the process. There are many signals and warnings that are often sent our way, but we are often too busy or too deaf to hear them. The consequence—some form of sad or tragic reality—becomes an unneeded and unnecessary part of the journey. Such cliff edges and tumbles could be avoided if the warnings were better heard and appropriately heeded.

Warnings Against Myself should be placed on the shelf of one of the better books on mountaineering that integrates the inner and outer journey and does so by telling, in a most compelling manner, of many a fine mountain adventure that holds the reader close to page and well-told tale. ■

FMCBC’s Member Club Grant Program

In 2012, the FMCBC began a grant program to support projects initiated by our member clubs. All donations to the FMCBC now go directly into this fund providing a great way for organizations and individuals to give back to our trails and the outdoor recreation community.

FMCBC grant funds have been used to upgrade trails, install bridges, improve huts, purchase tools and run community events. Learn about our recent grant funded project on **page 22** of this issue.

To make a donation visit the Canada Helps website:

www.canadahelps.org



Thank you for your support!





Joseph Wong



Joseph Wong

2016 Annual Climb and Conquer Squamish Camp

Joseph Wong, Vancouver Rock Climbing

This year's annual Squamish camp on July 8–10, 2016, had 35 youth and 18 volunteers! Thanks to community donations and a generous grant from the Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC, we were able to make this camp cost-free to all youth participants (all of our Climb and Conquer programs are \$0).

For our youth, going camping is not a given and our annual camp is their **ONLY** camping opportunity for the year. After the camp, they were already asking if we could have a second one in August, and when the next one in 2017 would be happening. This year (like one of our camps in previous years), it was pouring rain on one day. But it had zero effect on the explosive happiness and energy coming from our youth.

Our youth enjoy many first-time experiences such as setting up tents, sleeping in the outdoors, picking berries, night hiking in the forest, and rappelling. Our volunteers taught them outdoor cooking, Leave No Trace principles, bear safety, and other outdoor skills.

It's our utmost privilege to be able to share this gift of outdoor adventure to all the youth and we always learn and become inspired by their energy. Throughout the camp, we witness the transforming empowerment that comes from simply being in nature and the power of rock climbing and outdoor adventure. Most importantly, it's all about the relationships and friendships that build each of us up. We are a community and it's a beautiful moment of supporting each other to achieve our dreams.

Thank you to all our dear volunteers who worked tirelessly to make it happen: Aggy Li, Arianna Sanelli, Bliss Zuniga, Boris Lau, Danny Martin, Drew Copeland, Edwin Chen, Faisal Elstone, Hun Wynn, Ivan Luo, Jeannie Furmanek, Jeff Yoo, Joe Wong, Joleen Prystupa, Lorena Martin, Marc Bourguignon, Natasha Drozdzenska, Sherry Lin



Joseph Wong

When Parks Go Viral: The #FundBCParks Campaign

Stacey Santos, FMCBC Communications Coordinator

As regular users of British Columbia's provincial parks, we've all seen the effects of chronic underfunding. We've hiked on the crumbling infrastructure, witnessed the ecological damage, and helped pack out the piles of trash. Our parks have been in dire need of funding for over a decade, and it shows.

Thanks to the phenomenal success of our [#FundBCParks campaign](#), however, hundreds of thousands of British Columbians—and the government—saw these issues too.

But first, let's take a step back to where it all began.

The #FundBCParks campaign kicked off earlier this year, when we asked you to send a letter to your MLA and let them know how much you value BC's provincial parks and that you want to see them properly protected and funded. Then, we asked you to reinforce that message with an image.

The images began as pictures of family and friends in favourite parks (tagged with #FundBCParks, of course), and by the summer these images transformed into a powerful narrative of the many issues plaguing BC's provincial parks. Our collection grew so large that we created a dedicated [#FundBCParks Facebook album](#) to help us tell the story of why more funding is needed for BC Parks.

At the same time, we continued to encourage people to sign our online petition (sent directly to the Minister of Environment), and to send letters to the Premier, their local MLA, and/or the Minister of Environment letting them know that you support more funding for BC Parks.

And then something wonderful happened: It all came together in the best way possible. Because you all shared, commented, took photos, sent letters, and otherwise engaged in this important issue, #FundBCParks was picked up by major media outlets throughout the province.



A bridge over Volcano Creek on the Elk River Trail that has been neglected for several years after a tree came down across it.



A heavily damaged boardwalk in Cypress Provincial Park.

We did interviews with CBC British Columbia, Global News BC, CBC Radio's All Points West, and News Talk CKNW, and were featured in numerous articles. You can see all of our media highlights, past and present, in our ["FMCBC in the News"](#) page.

And in October, this momentum strengthened our presentation to the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services (presented by Steve Jones on behalf of the FMCBC). We were able to address their follow-up question regarding deferred maintenance examples by showing specific issues from every corner of the provinces.

The #FundBCParks campaign has been an incredible ride for everyone involved, but remember: It's not over yet! The campaign has reached new heights, but we know it can go further. So, please continue to send your photos to fundbcparks@mountainclubs.org, sign our petition, and send letters to your MLA, the Minister of Environment, and the Premier. And of course, keep the #FundBCParks conversation rolling both online and off. Thanks to everyone for your support! ■

FMCBC Member Clubs

CENTRAL & NORTHERN INTERIOR

Bulkley Backcountry Ski Society
Caledonia Ramblers Hiking Club
Fraser Headwaters Alliance
Hickory Wing Ski Touring Club
Ozalenka Alpine Club

FRASER VALLEY

Backroads Outdoor Club
Chilliwack Outdoor Club
Chilliwack Park Society
Valley Outdoor Association

LOWER MAINLAND & SEA TO SKY

Alpine Club of Canada – Vancouver
Alpine Club of Canada – Whistler
BC Mountaineering Club
Friends of Garibaldi Park
Hike BC
North Shore Hikers
North Vancouver Outdoors Club
Outsetters Club of Vancouver
SFU Outdoor Club
Vancouver Rock Climbing Group
Varsity Outdoor Club

SOUTHERN INTERIOR

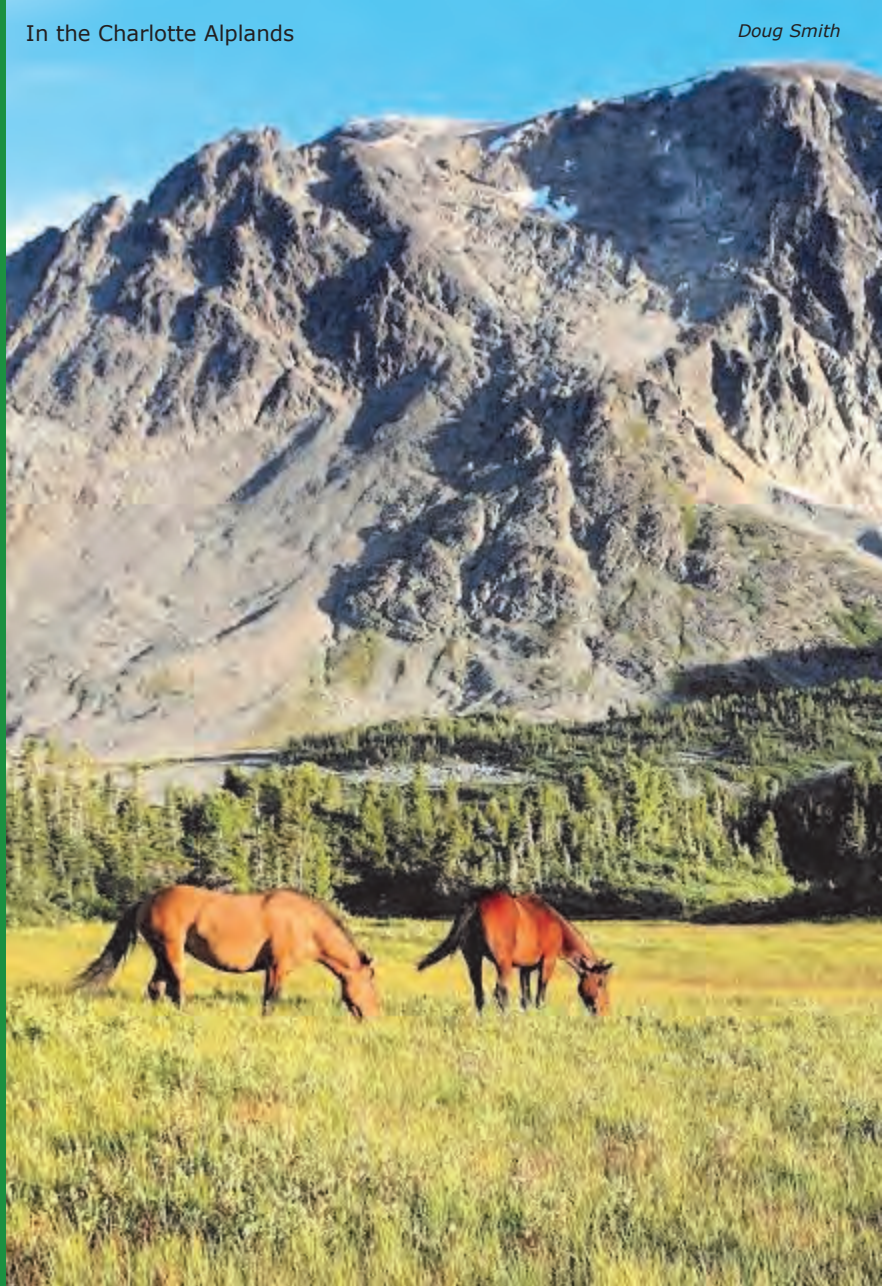
Kamloops Hiking Club
Kootenay Mountaineering Club
Penticton Outdoors Club
Skaha Bluffs Park Watch Society
South Okanagan Trail Alliance
Varsity Outdoor Club Okanagan

SUNSHINE COAST - NORTH COAST

Mount Remo Backcountry Society
Powell River Parks and Wilderness Society
Tetrahedron Outdoor Club

VANCOUVER ISLAND & ISLANDS

Alberni Valley Outdoor Club
Alpine Club of Canada – Vancouver Island
Comox District Mountaineering Club
Friends of Strathcona Park
Island Mountain Ramblers
Outdoor Club of Victoria
Quadra Island Outdoor Club
Vancouver Island Spine Trail Association
Vancouver Island Trails Information Society
Victoria Outdoor Club Meet-up



Help us advocate—Join the FMCBC!

By working with outdoor recreation organizations, industry and government agencies, the Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC protects and maintains access for quality non-motorized backcountry recreation in British Columbia's mountains and wilderness areas.

We represent over 5000 individuals from non-motorized outdoor recreation clubs across BC. Here's how you can get involved:

Join one of our member clubs (listed on this page)
Encourage your club to join the FMCBC (\$10 per member)
Join as an individual (\$25 per year)

Make a tax deductible donation to help us build and upgrade BC trails
Sign up for our newsletters

Learn more at www.mountainclubs.org