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Notice Board

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FEDERATION OF MOUNTAIN CLUBS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

representing hiking, climbing and conservation groups

NOV 18 1980

OUTDOOR RECREATION COUNCIL

MEMBER GROUPS OF THE F.M.C.B.C.

Alberni Outdoor Club	North Shore Hikers
Alpine Club of Canada	North & West Vancouver Search
- Vancouver Section	and Rescue Society
- Vancouver Island Section	Okanagan Similkameen Parks Society
B. C. Mountaineering Club	Outdoor Club of Victoria
B. C. I. T. Outdoor Club	Outdoor Club of Victoria - Trails
Caledonia Ramblers	Information Society
Canadian Hostelling Assoc. (BC)	Outsetters Club
Comox District Mountaineering	Outward Bound (BC)
Club	Penticton Outdoor Club
Fort Nelson Cross Country Ski	Sierra Club (BC)
and Outdoor Club	Simon Fraser Outdoor Club (S.F.U.)
Hygh Tymers	Squamish Ski and Outdoor Club
Island Mountain Ramblers	Timberline Trail and Nature Club
Kelowna Outdoor Club	Valley Outdoor Association
Klister Outdoor Klub	Vancouver Natural History Society
Kootenay Mountaineering Club	Varsity Outdoor Club (U.B.C.)
Kootenay Nordic Club	Vernon Outdoor Club

NEWSLETTER

Volume 3; Number 3,

Nov. 1980.

EDITOR: Leon Kolankiewicz

ASSISTANT EDITOR: Simon Priest

The function of the F.M.C.B.C. is to foster and promote cooperation and coordination between outdoor oriented groups throughout the province of British Columbia. It presently concentrates on organizations that are directly involved with self-propelled mountain activities such as hiking, backpacking, climbing, ski touring and especially conservation; hence the name: Federation of Mountain Clubs.

PLEASE FEEL FREE TO REPRODUCE ANY OF THE CONTENTS OF THIS NEWSLETTER.

This is the primary purpose of our bulletin. Member Groups are asked to submit a copy of their newsletter to the assistant editor c/o the above address. In addition, please send any and all information that you would like to share with the Federation membership and your fellow outdoorpersons! If you happen across an item of interest in this bulletin, please reproduce it for your member's interest. THANKS!



GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

▲ A.G.M.: For those unacquainted with organizational jargon, that's Annual General Meeting. The FMCBC's AGM will be held November 29 (Saturday) at Robson Square in downtown Vancouver. Festivities start at 9:30 AM, fireworks sometime after that. No need to bring a pillow to the business session....we're outdoorspeople, not parliamentarians! Still, if interest runs high, there'll be recreation of an indoor sort that evening. Accomodations can be arranged with Vancouver members for Friday or Saturday night by those needing them. Phone June Banwell at 736-0567.

▲ INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT OF RESOURCES CONFERENCE, 1980: A little late to attend, but members may be interested in knowing of this conference held October 29-30 in Kamloops. A follow-up to the IMR conference in Vancouver two years ago, its purpose is to "provide a forum for persons from industry, government and the public to meet and exchange information and keep abreast of current developments and problems in the province's resource industries." Sponsered by the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences, UBC. Proceedings will be available, and can be obtained at 228-3270 or 228-5639.

▲ FOREST SERVICE MEETING ON PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: Dr. Bruce Fraser of the B.C.F.S. is chairing this gathering of representatives from government and invited members of the public at the University of Victoria on November 14 & 15. Details are still sketchy to us. Dr. Roger Freeman is presenting a paper and attending on behalf of the Federation. For more information, he can be contacted at 263-9101.

▲ Western Canada Wilderness Calenders for 1981: A newly formed group calling itself the Western Canada Wilderness Committee has produced a handsome calender for 1981. The calender features 13 wilderness areas proposed by different groups in British Columbia and provides a photograph and information on each. As Paul George, a Committee member, pointed out recently, while the Sierra Club's calenders are nice, profits from them go to finance the Club's activities in the U.S. Meanwhile, here in B.C., we probably have more areas in need of preservation than in the whole U.S. put together. Purchasing one or more of these calenders as gifts will help in some small way. Incidentally, clubs can purchase them at 2.95 ea. (\$3.07 with tax) directly from the Wilderness Committee. (Suggested retail price is \$5.95.) Call Paul George in Vancouver at 734-3234.

▲ THE SIERRA CLUB PRESENTS: "Our Trees: Going, Going, GONE!" This presentation features the revealing film: "The Falldown" plus a complete panel of industry and government representatives to answer all your questions. Date: November 24; Time: 8 PM; Place: Robson Square, Vancouver; Admission: \$2.00; Info: 531-7478 (day) 688-6154 (eve)

▲ "A TRAIL GUIDE TO THE VALHALLAS": A second edition has been issued by the Valhalla Wilderness Society. It contains a topographic map with Valhalla Park Proposal features highlighted, trail descriptions, and a short history of this issue. This guide and further information regarding the Valhallas may be obtained by writing the Valhalla Wilderness Society, Box 224, New Denver, B.C.

▲ CASCADE WILDERNESS SLIDE SHOW: Victor Wilson of the Okanagan Historical Society has put together a slide presentation on this area that Okanagan groups (primarily the OSPS) have been working to preserve since 1972. (ELUC has placed a two-year moratorium on it while the issue is studied further.) He is anxious to show it to as many groups as he can before next summer. If your club is interested or if you know of possible groups that would be please contact Victor at 496-5522 or RR#1, Naramata, B.C.

▲ U.S.F.S. IMPACT SLIDE SHOW: The U.S. Forest Service has prepared a "minimum impact/ wilderness challenge" slide show that backcountry rangers of the Mount Baker National Forest are interested in showing to Vancouver outdoor groups at your convenience. The program is about 35 minutes long with a discussion period afterwards if time permits. (Anyone who feels indignant about what they might see as yet another example of the U.S. telling Canada what to do should keep in mind that most hikers and climbers in the Baker area are Vancouverites.) Anyone interested in the show can contact Alan Schmierer or Tom Highburger, Glacier Ranger District, Glacier, Washington, 98244.

EDITOR'S SPACE

"A Question of Balance"

The Setting: "Riverfest," April 1980, Robson Square, Vancouver

The Story: During one of the coffee breaks that are such welcome (and important!) parts of any conference, two men met for the first time and traded some polite remarks. To an unknowing observer, it would have seemed a fairly typical exchange marked only by a few similarities between the two: both claimed the same surname, both were men of notable achievement, and both seemed to hold similar philosophies on the relationship that should exist between Man and Nature, between civilization and wilderness. Said one to the other: "I really enjoyed your talk this morning, especially your thoughts on the need for a balance between civilization and wilderness..." or something like that. To a knowing observer, on the other hand, as I confess I was, this seeming accord was nothing short of remarkable, for I knew enough about both men to expect argument instead.

Roderick Nash is a rather dashing university professor from California, a well-known and respected author (among outdoor academics) of such works as Wilderness and the American Mind and The Big Drops: Ten Legendary Rapids (with Robert Collins). He's the sort whose youthful appearance is a surprise at first, in light of his achievements. Nash kicked off the day's programme with one of the most insightful, entertaining and generally excellent illustrated lectures I have ever seen. One of his recurrent themes was this idea of striving for a balance between preservation and progress. He maintains that wilderness appreciation (in its most contemporary form) is in fact a very civilized trait, and one that arises most often in those who are for at least part of their lives most removed from man's distant origins in the wild: the well-educated and the urban-rooted. Civilization values art highly; in much the same way a "rich" culture will appreciate the creations or artwork of untamed nature--for their originality, their beauty, and their ultimate mystery.

Nash told us that he is regarded as an uncompromising radical by many who know him in the States. His stand is that in the U.S. at least, it is time to stand firm; the compromises have already been made. They were made with the damming of Hetch Hetchy Valley in Yosemite, Glen Canyon of the Colorado River, the complete harnessing of the Columbia and Tennessee River systems, and countless other sacrifices in the name of Progress. To allow any more would tip the balance

The other Nash--the gentleman who complimented the first one for these comments--is Charles W. Nash. For those of you less familiar with B.C.'s public affairs than I, this Nash is Vice-President of Corporate Affairs for B.C. Hydro. Mr. Nash is a frequent contributor to forums on environmental matters that in some way affect Hydro (which as some of you may have heard, rivers do). No, he does not sport fangs or even horns, as some of you might expect or hope. He is, rather, from what I've seen, a nice man who recognizes the legitimacy of environmental concerns and probably even shares some of them himself. But he does have a different, and I think, distorted notion of Balance.

Do you see my surprise now at such ostensible accord on "development versus preservation" between these two people--one an avowed river rat and preservationist, the other a high-ranking spokesman for B.C. Hydro?

In an exchange of letters with Charles Nash a year or more ago, we debated the appropriateness of Hydro's policies and the desirability of the sort of British Columbia they are inexorably leading us to. I made the claim that someday very soon (if not already) that the social and environmental cost of generating yet another megawatt of electricity would exceed its benefit. (My argument was actually based on a principle you learn in Economics 101--the "law of diminishing marginal utility" it says that the more we get of something, the less each unit of it is worth to us. The corollary is that things that grow scarce--i.e. solitude, wilderness, quiet, etc.--rise in value.) I also insisted that in B.C. we now have no formal, institutionalized process by which to make this comparison. Instead, Hydro was given the mandate to meet the demand, any demand for power, whatever its cost. Pick a demand, any demand, and by law Hydro must build to meet it. The only question is how and where. I said that someday this would have to stop, and I hoped it was well before all of our resources were transformed into megawatts and the things that consume them.

Mr. Nash responded by saying, in effect, that what I called for sounded like an oppressive dictatorship. The government would have to set a limit on the growth and development of the province; people would lose their personal freedom, one of our most precious assets.

And so what is a balanced approach to the development of this great land? For many people it is over-developed already. Would a balance then be to remove some of us and some of our paraphernalia

Sure! As long as it isn't me or my friends. Who would we force to leave paradise? Who would we prevent from entering it?

Is balance to keep things as they are now? After all, they're already a lot of us and we're already so wealthy we're bored or psychologically warped. Virtually none of southern B.C. remains unaffected by man. Still, to most people such a suggestion is reactionary, unreasonable, "anti-growth" (a real insult!), and if nothing else, totally unworkable. It wouldn't be good for Business--whose business it is to keep us forever dissatisfied with what we now have--and of course jobs would be lost.

Is it balanced to support a "moderate" growth rate--several percent a year? so that we all have time to adjust, including the casualties of growth--the physically uprooted, those whose villages or lifestyles are permanently disrupted, those who ache to see the province's beauty and wilderness disappear?

Is it reasonable to force people out of their valley homes but unreasonable to force (and not merely ask politely) other people to use energy efficiently? Is it not balanced to provide for 5.8% increase in electricity production and consumption yearly and safeguard the environment by spending millions on environmental impact studies (as Hydro does) to help in choosing the least damaging sites for power plants? Is it unreasonable to say that we don't want the cost associated with the production and use of 8 times the amount of electricity we now have just 35 years from now, at present rates of increase that everybody who's anybody thinks it's so important to maintain?

Do we now have an appropriate balance between the acreage we preserve as parkland and that which we subject to flooding, power lines, logging, mining, roads, ski developments, urbanization, etc.? Are you a fool for believing some valleys should be for moose, and some estuaries for salmon? Certainly no one thinks it's unbalanced to suggest that there is an optimum level of development for B.C....beyond which its residents will suffer a decline in their quality of life. Why then do so many write you off as a radical when you suggest we keep our eyes open for that level and not go beyond it?

Ponder these questions. In upcoming years, more and more, you'll be asked them, and if you don't answer, one of them will for you. --LK

IN GENERAL...

++ FUNDING FOR A COORDINATOR ++ The FMCBC executive believe that if we are ever to amount to an effective voice on behalf of mountain users, we must have a paid full or part-time coordinator. A salary gives a person much more of a responsibility to get work done than volunteers, who usually feel that by giving any time they've contributed above and beyond the call of duty. Anyone closely involved with the Federation knows just how much there is that needs to be done, how little of it we actually accomplish, and how few people are responsible for our collective effort. Right now 4 or 5 people hold the group together--not very impressive for an organization that on paper at least lists 31 member clubs with approximately 10,000 members altogether.

A paid coordinator could serve as a catalyst, transforming some of that stationary mass of members out there into energy.

Some of the activities he or she might undertake would be travelling to clubs throughout B.C., bringing advice, soliciting concerns, and generally fostering a sense of belonging; taking advantage of the media to promote ourselves, our views, efforts and contributions more widely; research and supply comments on the many government plans and public interest group proposals that the Federation is now asked to act on and must forego; lobby government in Victoria and establish greater interaction with industry; galvanize greater volunteer support of projects; and generally provide a greater sense of continuity from month to month and year to year.

Since government grants are sporadic at best, and tie us to specific undertakings, the Executive has favoured a solution that it thinks is the only feasible alternative: replacing the current flat membership fee with a fee of two dollars per member of each member club per year. If all clubs stayed in the Federation after such a move, this would raise \$20,000 revenue, an amount that would go a long way in making us a genuinely active organization. Think of it this way--two dollars a year for the privilege of belonging to a club that belongs to this group of clubs that will be pushing for your interests in a time when outdoor recreationists will increasingly be pushed around a lot by other interests as the scramble for a shrinking pie gets hot. Two dollars annually represents two days' bus fare, two beers, less than 20 cents a month, and one helluva lot less than most active outdoorspeople spend a year on equipment and trips. A real bargain.

This issue will be debated at the AGM on November 29. Everyone welcome.

++ FOREST LAND USE LIAISON COMMITTEE (FLULC) ++ Last meeting held September 6, 1980. Next meeting to be held November 29, 1980. Major topic at the last meeting was forest road management:

"One of the major concerns of outdoor persons is that some roads make sensitive areas too accessible which creates a danger of over-use or abuse. In such regions it is a common belief that such roads should be 'put to bed' while other roads not required for management and/or protection of new forests should be allowed to return to nature, thus being open only to pedestrians or appropriate traffic at own risk. Decisions concerning such area plans could be made by the Ministry of Forests in consultation with the company and local interest groups. Another concern is whether or not deteriorating forest roads should be maintained. Suggested proposals for this problem are to maintain old forest roads used exclusively by the public only in areas of high use near large centres of populations and in remote areas where they provide the only routes between or to established communities. However, they should be maintained at public expense only if they are being used exclusively by the public. A final and often irritating problem for the outdoor recreationalist is denied access on some roads outside of fire season and stand tending without reasonable grounds other than fear of vandalism and carelessness.

"Reaching a consensus on the management of forest access roads will require the implementation of a site specific policy rather than a blanket policy for B.C."

If you are interested in contributing to the development of guidelines that will facilitate this, please contact Mary Macaree, FMCBC FLULC representative at 738-5362 (h) or 228-3609 (o).

++ SOUTHERN CHILCOTIN MOUNTAIN COALITION ++ This group, of which the Federation is a member, met in late September to discuss a proposed plan prepared by the Forest Service for managing development of the Gun and Tyaughton Creek watersheds. (Spruce Lake is in this area.) Initial reaction to their proposal was mixed, but it appears obvious that the Coalition will not be getting nearly all that it first hoped for. For info, call John Phillips at 683-8039.

++ PROPOSED CASCADE WILDERNESS CONSERVANCY ++ A Public Advisory Committee (P.A.C.) similar to the Stein Public Liaison Committee has been formed to assist the Forest Service in decision-making in this contentious area northwest of Manning Park. Set up concurrently with the ELUC-sponsored study of the area, this response comes largely as a result of long efforts by the Vancouver Natural History Society, the Okanagan-Similkameen Parks Society, and the Okanagan Historical Society to establish a reserve protecting historic trails and pleasant high-elevation backcountry found there. The first meeting of the P.A.C. was held Oct. 26 in Princeton. Representing the Coast are Trevor Jones of the Sierra Club (734-8226) or Peter Hatfield of the V.N.H.S. (738-8345). Further information, including pamphlets and booklets, can be obtained by writing W.H. Johnston, Chairman, Trails and Wilderness Committee, Okanagan Similkameen Parks Society, P.O. Box 787, Summerland, B.C. V0H 1Z0; Victor Wilson, R.R. #1, Naramata B.C.; or H.R. Hatfield, 687 Vancouver Avenue, Penticton B.C., V2A 1A4.

++ PHYSICAL FITNESS AND AMATEUR SPORTS FUND ++ The FMCBC has appealed our grant and been told that it would be reconsidered in October. It may be recalled that the Federation was cut back by about \$1500 as a result of a misunderstanding as to how some of last year's grant money should have been spent.

++ COQUITLAM MOUNTAIN STUDY ++ Johnnie Murray of the Valley Outdoor Association reported to the delegates recently that ELUC, through the GVRD, organized a series of meetings attended by representatives of all interest groups. One serious concern that has emerged is that the Greater Vancouver Water District is planning to take over Widgeon Lake, Hixon Lake and Orr Creek in order to provide water for the expected increase in population. This will automatically mean closure to the public. It is reported that the Water District uses 5% of the water with the rest going to B.C. Hydro.

++ SKAGIT RIVER ++ This long-brewing issue has recently been stirred up again. What is at stake is some 5,000 acres of some of the finest valley-bottom in southwestern B.C. that will be inundated if Seattle City Light receives permission to raise the Ross Dam on the Washington portion of the Skagit. Latest and probably last round is that the issue has now come before the International Joint Commission (IJC), who will be holding public hearings early in the new year.

COMMITTEE ACTIVITY

The three FMCBC committees that hold regular meetings began getting together again in September after a summer hiatus. Highlights of what's been happening:

++ RECREATION AND CONSERVATION COMMITTEE ++ Meetings were held Sept. 25 and Oct. 30.

Stein Watershed: The Lands Branch has granted permission to upgrade the road into the Silver Queen mine. (This is the only existing road in the valley.) Our worry is that any yahoo in a 4 wheel drive will now be able to cross the divide into the watershed. B.C. Forest Products now says a road through the lower canyon of the Stein is feasible and may apply to build one in the next year or two. A study of the flow of timber to the Boston Bar mill shows that it will be running out of alternative sources in the Botanie PSYU in the next few years and that then the only options are to log the Stein or cross over into the Dewdney PSYU, which is against Forest Service policy(!), for it is another management unit altogether.

Timber Supply: The main subject of the last two meetings has been the issue of timber supply--where the timber is, how it is inventoried, how management units are established, how allowable annual cuts are decided upon, etc. This issue is an extremely important one, for decisions on allowable cuts and mill expansions ultimately determine land use and options for preservation. It is the Editor's feeling that most of the forestry-wilderness stand-offs around the province now--the Stein, Southern Chilcotins, Southern Moresby (Queen Charlottes), the Valhallas, the Cascade Wilderness Proposal--have arisen largely because commitments of timber were made in the last two decades without our having been aware of the consequences such cutting levels entailed until it was too late to avoid a classic jobs versus environment confrontation. It's one matter to set aside a wilderness area before any investments or jobs rely on the timber found there, and quite another matter to attempt to do so afterwards.

++ SAFETY AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE ++ Meetings held Sept. 17 and Oct. 29, 1980.

Avalanches: The Chairman made a short presentation to an international workshop on avalanches held in Vancouver Nov. 3, 4, and 5. He described the avalanche pamphlet which we have helped the Outdoor Recreation Council prepare. At the Sept. 17 meeting avalanche phone numbers and the possible making of an avalanche film were discussed.

Funding: The Physical Fitness & Amateur Sports Fund has granted the following:

\$1,000 for a volunteer course instructor workshop

\$1,000 for a volunteer trip leader safety project

Ideas are being considered.

Schools and Rappelling: Problems with schools offering ill-advised, unsafe instruction in rappelling were discussed. A workshop for teachers is a possibility, but these usually get poor turnout.

++ TRAILS COMMITTEE ++ A meeting was held Sept. 18. The second meeting of the fall has been cancelled. Committee chairman Rick Sheppard has resigned because of his school and business workload. The continued existence of the Trails Committee will have to be discussed at the AGM. At the Sept. 18 meeting the few clubs represented reported on their trails work over the summer. The "Trail Chairman's Thoughts" from the minutes of the meeting are worth repeating:

"It appears the Government cut back grants to the B.C. Forest Service to hire summer students for trails and other recreational work. This in combination with the government's paltry grant to the FMCBC is a pretty strong indication of their misguided priorities. Compared to the expansive outlays for trails work in the U.S. National Parks and Forests the government effort here seems neanderthal. It appears they can spew out copious amounts of cash (\$100 million plus, for example) on sports stadiums so hordes of yahoos can squat on their butts and howl their lungs out, but hardly a crumb is available for viable outdoor pursuits. It's not only insulting, it's disgusting."

N.B. New Trails Committee + Communications Comm. *chairpersons needed!*