

CLOUDBURST

Federation of Mountain Clubs of British Columbia Newsletter

July 1990



The Federation of Mountain Clubs of British Columbia (FMCBC) is the official sport governing body for mountaineering in B.C., representing the interests of hiking, climbing and outdoor clubs in the province.

The FMCBC operates as a non-profit organization addressing mountain related issues, promoting safety and education through courses of instruction, and constructing and maintaining hiking and mountain access trails throughout B.C.

Membership in the FMCBC is open to any individual or group involved or interested in non-mechanized outdoor activities and conservation concerns. Membership includes a subscription to CLOUDBURST.

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CLOUDBURST

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Unsolicited manuscripts are welcome and will be considered for unpaid publication. Submissions should be typed, double spaced, signed and accompanied by a SASE for return. Your ideas are welcome.

COVER PHOTO

Schielderup Lake and Greig Ridge in Strathcona Park – a pristine wilderness accessible to hikers. Photo: JR

ASSISTED BY



Ministry of Municipal Affairs, Recreation and Culture
Honourable Lyall Hanson, Minister

DIRECTORS' REPORT

Submitted by The Board of Directors

The Directors are pleased to report that the Federation has emerged from a difficult period of transition involving a member fee increase, loss of member clubs, and inadequate staff support, and has recorded a year of growth in all areas of operation. Throughout this difficult year the contribution made by volunteers, whether on one or more of the numerous and very active committees, assisting on a course, in the office producing the newsletter or answering the phone, has been impressive. The Federation remains for the most part a volunteer organization, and relies heavily on the generosity and dedication of its own members.

The professional staff have worked closely with the Directors in developing the administrative infrastructure, as part of the Federation's growth as an effective support service to its members.

The past year has, therefore, served as a period of consolidation, planning, and organization - answering the problems of the year before, and setting the Federation firmly on the path of being a functional and effective sport-governing body for hikers and mountaineers in B.C.

Membership

The Federation currently consists of 20 fee-paying hiking and mountaineering clubs, associations, and societies, with a current fee-paying membership of approximately 4,000. Of the five clubs which did not support the fee increase and are no longer Federation members, two clubs continue to make an annual donation. One society, consisting of just 10 members and formed to produce and promote their Vancouver Island hiking guide books, makes a generous annual donation far in excess of the membership fee.

A newly-formed club in Richmond is the Federation's latest member, and an application for membership has been received from a hiking and mountaineering club in Campbell River.

Most clubs report an increased membership registration this year, and the end result of all the above changes is that the Federation, though losing some member clubs, has basically maintained its number of supporting (fee paying) members.

We very much want the 5 ex-member clubs to rejoin the Federation. To this

end we have continued to mail the newsletter to those club members to keep them informed of our activities. Visits to the communities of those clubs are planned for Fall 1990, and club delegates have been invited to the Annual General Meeting.

Most significantly, the Federation has been given the support of its member clubs through acceptance of the fee increase. We recognize that this was not an easy process for some clubs, and we expect to justify that confidence through the Federation's performance on your behalf.

Communication

The Directors have been particularly concerned this year with the quality of communication between the Federation's member clubs and the Federation's office/Board of Directors.

Improved communication has been accomplished in the Lower Mainland region by better attendance at Delegates' meetings, both by club delegates and by members of the board. This has provided for discussions rather than one-sided reports.

The President also visited the Kootenay Mountaineering Club (KMC) and, with other Board members, attended the Vancouver Island Delegates' meetings.

The development of a Long Term Plan benefited particularly from this participation as the objective was to involve the clubs in the planning process, and ensure that their input guided us. The Directors have also produced Personnel and Financial policies to guide the organization, as well as task descriptions for directors and job descriptions for staff positions.

Another measure of the improvements in our organization is the more consistent format and regular production of our newsletter "Cloudburst", now on recycled paper. This is very important since it is the only direct link that the Federation has with each of its members.

Although the membership requested at last years AGM that we establish regional Directors, this has got off to a slow start. Initially, we had only one from Vancouver Island, but recent communication has resulted in two more - one for the Kootenay area, from the KMC, and one for the North East area, from the Caledonia Ramblers in Prince George.

As mentioned, we hope to realise this year the return to the Federation of the Okanagan region clubs. If the means of communicating more effectively with the isolated clubs had existed a few years ago and we had been able to do something for the clubs, perhaps they would have elected to continue as members.

Also, this year, for the first time, we have produced an annual report. Part of this report will be reprinted in the newsletter to provide information to members who do not attend the Annual General Meeting.

Funding

The Federation began the year with a \$22,000 deficit. Support by the Federation's membership of the fee increase to \$9.00 has helped significantly in meeting the year's budget. Not all clubs have yet made a 100% transition to the new fee, but the full membership contribution will be realised next fiscal year. Extra support was provided by the Recreation and Sport branch of the provincial government, raising the basic grant from \$38,000 to \$45,000. We believe that this higher level of funding was largely possible because the membership was first prepared to support a member fee increase.

In addition, one-time funding was received in two areas:

1. \$2,000 for long-term planning
2. \$4,500 for staffing to provide improved member services.

Further support was given by the Vancouver Foundation and the Lottery Fund, enabling the Federation to re-equip its winter courses with new transceivers, shovels, and probes.

The Pursuit/Visa card has generated a very modest contribution to date, though we have hopes it will become more significant as members consider supporting us in this manner.

Finally, the Smoke Bluffs mortgage has been paid off! Though accounted through a separate bank account, it is

a relief to have cleared that obligation.

Support Staff

Continuity of staff in the office is something with which we have struggled continuously, due to lack of funds, since we hired our first full-time staff person (the Executive Director) and opened an office, nearly seven years ago.

We have just committed to our second permanent position with the hiring of a Manager/Member Services who will coordinate all the functions of our office facility. This new position will also enable the Executive Director to devote more time to addressing environmental concerns, which is a large part of that position's mandate.

Bookkeeping functions are much improved through a "permanent, part-time" position for all the accounting functions. The staff complement is rounded-out with a half-time course Coordinator position to run the Federation's instructional course program. It is hoped that as we try to offer our courses to more of the regions we represent, that this position will become full-time.

Preliminary discussions have been held with the Outdoor Recreation Council to investigate ways of creating a full-time position whose sole concern will be with the construction and maintenance of trails throughout B.C.

In Summary

The Board feels that the Federation has performed well this year. Reports from each committee indicate a significant record of achievement. The Directors wish to thank all staff and volunteers. Special thanks to the committee chairpersons for the strong role each played in having made this past year such a success.

AGM

The Executive of the Federation of Mountain Clubs of B.C. as nominated at the AGM on Saturday June 16 and elected to the Board on June 20 at the Directors' meeting is as follows:

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| President: | Suzanne Mazoret |
| Vice-President: | Larry Lowden |
| Past President: | Brian Gavin |
| Treasurer: | Simon Anderson |
| Regional Directors: | Judy Wigmore and George Evanoff |
| Secretary: | Beth Wark |
| Directors: | Judy Needham, Rick Davies, Len Dudley, John Randall, Erling Grenager |

Continuing to act as chairmen, co-chairmen, and advisors are:

| |
|--|
| Richard Howes |
| <i>Safety and Education Committee</i> |
| Charles Clapham and Gabriel Mazoret |
| <i>Trails Committee</i> |
| Roger Freeman and Jay MacArthur |
| <i>Recreation and Conservation Committee</i> |
| Bruce Blackwell |
| <i>Projects Coordinator</i> |

The AGM surprised everybody this year by finishing half an hour early. It was well attended by club delegates and club members. The Long Term Plan was passed as presented, as were the following policies:

Mountain bicycling:

"The Federation of Mountain Clubs is opposed to the use of mountain bicycles on trails traditionally developed for hiking"

Sport Climbing:

"The Federation of Mountain Clubs shall not endorse, sponsor, promote, or be associated with any competitive sport climbing activity or event organized by a third party. Furthermore, the Federation of Mountain Clubs shall not undertake to organize or participate in such events itself.

The following motions were passed:

"To retain Pannell/Kerr/MacGillivray as auditors for next year"

"To adopt Financial Statements as presented by Simon Anderson"

"That Individual Membership remain at \$20/year"

We thank Ric Careless, Executive Director of the Wilderness Tourism Council, for his enlightening presentation on the resolving of land-use conflicts in B.C.

O R C N e w s

New Recreation Maps Available

The Outdoor Recreation Council, in conjunction with ITMB Publishing, is releasing fully-updated editions of several of the popular B.C. Outdoor Recreation Maps. Available in April are maps of the Hope-Chilliwack and Merritt areas.

By June, recreation maps of the Kamloops and Salmon Arm-Shuswap areas are due to be reprinted. Plans are also underway for a revised map of the Campbell River region, and a new map of the East Kootenays. The Outdoor Recreation maps provide details of all types of trails, backcountry roads, natural history, whitewater opportunities, boat launches, and more on a topographic map.

Instructor Certification

An issue which is currently of crucial importance to both the FMCBC and the broader mountaineering and hiking community of B.C. is the likelihood of the provincial ministry of parks requiring some level of certification for Park Use Permit applicants. Only by becoming actively involved in this process can we ensure that such a certification program, if required, is at least appropriate and workable.

To this end, the FMCBC will be administering a job development project to research the existing literature and prepare materials in preparation for any certification requirements. The FMCBC has traditionally been opposed to certification and will represent this opinion to Parks

PlanNext Winter - Now

Eldorado Creek - Southern Chilcotin - Hut based Ski Tour

This is the third year the FMCBC will be enjoying the wonders of the Southern Chilcotin snow and excellent ski terrain. An added bonus for next year is the new sauna. Reserve your spot early. Suited for intermediate skiers. Feb. 24-March 1 1991. Includes hut fees \$400 10 places only. Deposit \$100

Esplanade Hut to Hut Ski Tour

Feb. 2 - 9 1991

Enjoy the beauty of the Esplanade Range in the fabulous Selkirk Mountains. Intermediate skiers will love the powder and the chance to enhance route finding skills and decision making in the winter environment.

Cost: Includes helicopter access, instruction, food and hut fees \$700

Booking deadline: November 1, 1990. 10 Places only. Deposit \$100

Rock Skills:

New course this summer

Break rock climbing barriers

Rock skills development: This is an intensive two days of technique coaching and rope skills improvement. The course is geared towards the climber in the 5.8 to 5.11 range who wishes to up their grades and break some of the barriers which can limit a climber's potential. The two climbers to one instructor ratio ensures lots of climbing and personalized instruction.

This program is ideal for climbing partners as the format works best with two people of similar goals and abilities. We can run this program on short notice mid-week.

Cost: \$250.00 Scheduled dates: July 28-29 August 18-19

"Friends of Cypress Provincial Park"

A new group called the "Friends of Cypress Provincial Park", was formed by the residents of Greater Vancouver who enjoy and appreciate the rich wilderness of Cypress Provincial Park.

This beautiful park is located next door to the city of Vancouver and suffers from encroachment by private and public operated pulp operations upon its wilderness areas. The group believes strongly in the preservation of Cypress Park.

If you feel the same and wish to join this group, the membership fee is only \$10.00. Please make all cheques payable to the "Cypress Provincial Park". the mailing address is: #312-6655 Lynas Lane, Richmond, BC V7C 3K8.

If you would like more information, please contact: Peter Goy, Chairperson at 271-0462.

Women Park Wardens -

Wanted: Women Park Wardens/Park Rangers
Park Officers

A timely book is being written about your work experience. Whether seasonal or permanent, presently employed or not, we need to contact you. Please send your name and address to:

Women for the Wilderness, Box 781, Banff, Alberta, T0L 0C0

The Mountain Equipment Co-op's Environment Committee has recently approved a grant of \$4,000 to the FMCBC to produce an educational report on the Southern Chilcotin Mountains and the land-use conflicts there.

Copies of this report will be sent to FMCBC members and be available for wide public distribution.

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SUPPLEMENTARY SUBMISSION TO THE FOREST RESOURCES COMMISSION OF B.C.

From Mike Feller - representing the FMCBC

As a result of further discussions within the FMCBC on the future of our forests, together with our participation in the community meetings held by the B.C. Forest Resources Commission, we wish to elaborate further on some of the issues we addressed in our previous submission to the commission.

This previous submission identified 7 areas of concern to the FMCBC. These were:

1. Inventory
2. Old growth forests
3. Public involvement
4. Forest tenures
5. Multiple use management
6. Wilderness
7. Native land claims

We wish to elaborate further on the first 6 of these.

1. INVENTORY

The point has been made by many that a proper inventory of a resource is a precursor to sound management of that resource. Considerable attention has been given to timber inventory. However, timber is merely one of the resources supplied by forests. Sound forest management requires that we have proper inventories of all forest resources. This means in addition to timber, wildlife, water, range, recreation, other vegetation, etc.

Of particular concern to the FMCBC are wildlife and recreation inventories. Wildlife inventories are not the domain of foresters in B.C., but since foresters are managing much of the wildlife habitat, perhaps they should be. Wildlife inventories appear to be in worse shape than timber inventories. Wildlife Branch wildlife population estimates sometimes appear to be little more than educated guesses with little hard data.

Recreation inventories have been done by the Forest Service. Having inspected some Forest Service Recreation Inventory maps, we feel these recreation inventories are, like wildlife inventories, in worse shape than timber inventories and sometimes little more than uneducated guesses. We have found serious omissions from Forest Service Recreation inventory maps. Such omissions include mountain huts and hiking trails which are well known to the outdoor community. Such maps also sometimes lack information on the prime recreation features which attract people.

Members of the FMCBC have also tried to maintain trail registers which the Forest Service installed but has been incapable of maintaining.

We have seen almost no interest from district or regional Forest Service staff in seeking our input or asking for our assistance in developing accurate recreational inventories, despite our offer of such assistance. Our experiences, particularly with Forest District staff, have led us to believe that they have generally a very low level of awareness of recreation management and place a minimal priority on collecting recreation inventory data.

OUR SOLUTIONS:

1. The Ministry of Forests should put greater effort into inventories.
2. The Ministry of Forests should make greater attempts to request input from knowledgeable user groups
3. Integrated inventories of all forest resources should be conducted
4. The outdoor recreation management awareness and expertise of Forest Service staff should be upgraded.

2. OLD GROWTH

The spiritual, ecological and recreational values of old growth forests require us to set aside significant areas of these forests and to manage our forests so that we have a sustained yield of old growth, as well as timber.

We consider the amount of old growth currently set aside as totally inadequate. In coastal B.C., this amount is approximately 186,000 ha which is much less than the area clearcut each year in B.C. This 186,000 ha represents less than 3% of the total area of productive forest in coastal B.C. (Roemer et al. 1988. Protected old growth forests in coastal B.C. *Natural Areas Journal* 8:146-159). We are very disturbed by the false economics used to their other values.

Why is it that if old growth forest not yet used by a timber company is taken away from that timber company, the company is reimbursed for the timber value (e.g. South Moresby) Whereas, if a timber company cuts old growth forest destroying its spiritual, ecological, and recreational values (e.g. Clayoquot Sound area or numerous other areas throughout B.C.) the company is not required to reimburse the public for the loss of these values?

The current economic thinking which considers only the dollar value of the timber in an old growth forest must be replaced with one that considers all the values.

OUR SOLUTIONS

1. Set aside in reserves a significantly greater area of old growth forest.

2. Change our economic evaluation of such forests to include the values of all the resources they contain and not just the timber values.

3. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

We desire, but have yet to experience, meaningful involvement in decisions about the management of our forests which we use all the time.

Our past experience with public involvement processes organized by the B.C. Forest Service has been almost entirely negative. Every conceivable problem has already arisen, but we must mention that in particular:

*we have sometimes been led to believe that the major decisions have already been made and that our involvement has been tokenism, required to satisfy some bureaucratic objective.

*we have sometimes not been informed about meetings until after they have occurred and/or have not been informed about the results of meetings.

*we have sometimes not seen any evidence that our input has even been considered.

*a serious problem with both the Chilliwack and Squamish Forest Districts is that the majority of users of the forests in these districts come from the Vancouver area yet public involvement meetings are invariably held in Chilliwack or Squamish discouraging participation by most of the users.

At this point we should state that we do not blame the Forest Service entirely for our negative feelings about public involvement programs. Our provincial government often dictates what will take place, and so the sincerity of our government must be questioned as well. Major decisions on the level of the AAC or the granting of major forest management licences, such as TFL's, have been political ones. Many of the problems facing B.C. forests today have been bequeathed to us by previous governments which thoughtlessly alienated our forests. We have rarely been allowed to have any meaningful say in these major decisions, (the recent TFL hearings being an exception) but have rather been asked to comment on ways in which these political fait accomplis can be implemented.

This problem continues today, as we understand that towards the end of April the government granted a pulpwood harvesting agreement in the Chilcotin area - an area where logging is highly controversial because of non-timber values and an opposition to

expanded harvesting activities. Now that public opposition to any harvesting has apparently been ignored, the public will probably be asked to comment on precisely when a particular area should be harvested. Actions such as this by the government effectively tie the hands of the Forest Service, get the public angry, cynical, and disillusioned with any subsequent Forest Service public involvement process. Probably the single most important decision in forest management is the level of the AAC, as this influences most other aspects of forest management. To our knowledge there has never been any meaningful public involvement in this most important decision. Why not?

On this point we note that "the 1979 Forest and Range Resource Analysis" of the Ministry of Forests discussed the issue of falldown as a result of what was then considered overly high AAC levels. A graph from this analysis indicated that if the then current harvest level were increased, the falldown would occur sooner and be greater than if the then current cut remained the same.

Today we hear nothing about falldown, but we note that, since 1979, the area harvested annually in B.C. has increased greatly - from below 190,000 ha to over 240,000 ha in 1988. The volume harvested has also increased from around 50 million m³ in the early 1980's to over 70 million m³ in the late 1980's.

This suggests that we are going to run out of merchantable and old growth forests sooner and that the falldown and subsequent unemployment will be greater than if the cut had remained at 1979 levels. It also suggests that non-timber land use options are being removed at a greater rate and that opportunities for meaningful public involvement are being reduced at a greater rate than if the cut had remained at 1979 levels.

OUR SOLUTIONS

1. Both the government and the Forest Service should implement meaningful public involvement programs which consider public input into major decisions as well as minor ones.
2. The public should be given a meaningful say in the determination of the AAC. On the question of the most desirable type of public involvement program, we believe that the mechanics of the program (i.e. whether in the form of submissions with public meetings, or discussion groups, etc.) are not too critical. The most important thing is that the people conducting the program are sincere and that the public are listened to and their ideas considered. It is vital that the public have confidence and can see that their input has been considered in this process.

4. FOREST TENURES

Forest management licences which have been awarded to date (TFL's, TSML's, etc.) have been essentially timber management licences, with little real consideration being given to non-timber values. A few years ago, TFL licence holders were charged with recommending to the Forest Service how non-timber uses would be managed on TFL's. The licence holders generally do not derive any income from these non-timber uses, so it is not in their interest to put much effort into catering for such uses. This situation can be likened to asking a fox how he would manage a group of chickens given to him.

The FMCBC does not know what the best form of tenure or forest management licence is, but we do know that for all forms of tenure the planning role should rest with a government agency - the Forest Service - and not with the licence holder. The licence holder should be required to implement broad land use plans drawn up by the Forest Service.

OUR SOLUTION

1. Land use planning for all forest management licences should be done by the Forest Service. Such planning should consider all forest resources and user groups.

5. MULTIPLE-USE MANAGEMENT

Current multiple-use management has been defined by some FMCBC members as being what you do to land after it has been logged. We do not believe that all uses should be practised on the same area of land but we do believe that within a large area of land, such as a forest district, individual smaller areas should be given to dominant uses with other uses being accommodated where possible. This means that all land uses should be given equal importance, but different land uses would dominate in different areas. Timber production should dominate in some areas, wilderness recreation in others.

This would require the Forest Service to give greater consideration to non-timber values, particularly, from our perspective, recreation values. We note that the emphasis given by the Forest Service to recreation management has actually declined during the 1970's. Thus, during the 1981 - 1984 period, recreation management accounted for about 1.3% of the Forest Service's annual budget. This declined to about 1.0% during the 1985 - 1988 period. Or, put another way, while the total Forest Service annual budget increased by 64% from 1981/84 to 1985/88, the amount spent by the Forest Service on recreation increased by only 21% - 1/3rd of the total. This is hardly conducive to improved recreation management.

We would also like to see the Forest Service manage outdoor recreation to minimize conflicts between different outdoor

recreation user groups, such as cross country skiers and snowmobilers. Such conflicts are increasing and the Forest Service could easily gain public support were it to resolve them.

Genuine multiple-use management, however, involves not just the Forest Service, but all land use management agencies. The framework for genuine province-wide multiple use management is a provincial land use strategy. Recent B.C. Parks emphasis on commercial development in parks, and Ministry of Crown Lands promotion of commercial recreation development, have greatly eroded wilderness recreation opportunities in B.C. and placed much greater pressure on the Forest Service to supply and manage wilderness. The activities of these agencies as well as others all interact. The situation requires coordination and rational planning to ensure that all user groups are given a fair opportunity.

OUR SOLUTIONS

1. The Forest Service should increase the effort it devotes to recreation management.
2. A provincial land use strategy should be developed. The development of such a strategy should consider and involve all government land use management agencies, as well as the public.
3. The Forest Service should give equal consideration to all forest uses and not consider timber production as always being dominant.

6. WILDERNESS

The FMCBC believes that B.C. requires a Wilderness Act. The wilderness areas defined by the recent Ministry of Forests' policy on "Managing Wilderness in Provincial Forests" provide for a whole array of uses (road access, cattle grazing, mineral exploration, etc) generally considered incompatible with wilderness.

Many FMCBC members are sceptical that forest wilderness areas will really be wilderness or that wilderness areas in parks will remain that way, given Parks' current tendency to commercialization.

OUR SOLUTIONS

1. B.C. should develop a proper Wilderness Act modelled on the U.S. Act.
 2. Moratoriums should be placed on new developments in areas proposed to the B.C. Forest Service. These areas should be studied and as many new wilderness areas as possible set aside.
- Ed. Members, this is how the FMCBC has represented you. Do you care to comment?

(From Province of B.C. News Release)

Victoria - The boundaries of Strathcona Provincial Park have been amended to return more than 10,000 hectares to the oldest provincial park in B.C., Parks Minister Ivan Messmer announced.

A further 10,251 ha. of former park lands have been reserved as exchange lands, Messmer added. With the addition, the Class A portion of Strathcona Park grows to 219,145 ha. The Class B portion of the central Vancouver Island park remains 3,328 ha.

Comox MLA Stan Hagen, who is also Minister of Regional and Economic Development, joined in the announcement. "I'm pleased our government has taken such positive steps to enhance one of our finest provincial parks. This demonstrates that the government is not only willing to listen, but is willing to act on the concerns of the community."

Messmer said: "Following the recommendations of the Strathcona Park steering committee, our government has expanded this park to include the Bedwell Valley in the southwest area of the park. Mt. Bueby, Ramsey and Crest Creeks, and Puzzle Mountain will also be brought into the park," said Messmer. "We are committed to restoring the wilderness character of Strathcona."

"Cabinet has endorsed the recommendations of the steering committee," added the Parks Minister. "I will introduce an amendment to the Park Act to legislate the new boundaries of Strathcona this session."

Lands formerly in the park but not returned at this time will be protected under the Environment and Land Use Act. They will continue to be managed by the Ministry of Parks, and will be used only in exchange for existing private forest holdings within Strathcona Park and for further potential additions to this park.

Other possible additions will be considered during development of the park's master plan. This plan will serve as a blueprint for management and development of Strathcona Park.

"As with each master plan, we will encourage public involvement in the development of this master plan. I have instructed the steering committee—including its three public advisors—to begin a master planning program in Strathcona immediately," said Messmer.

The steering committee is chaired by assistant deputy parks minister Jake Masselink. BC Parks planning director Derek Thompson, South Coast regional director George Trachuk, and Strathcona

district manager Ron Lampard also sit on the steering committee.

Gold River Mayor Anne Fiddick, Comox-Strathcona regional district director Peggy Carswell and Jim Rutter, executive director of the Federation of Mountain Clubs of B.C., are the public advisors to the steering committee. This committee was established in December 1988 to find ways to implement the recommendations of the Strathcona Advisory Committee chaired by Dr. Peter Larkin.

GUIDED HIKING IN AUSTRIA

Sept. 22 - Oct. 7, 1990. Vancouver return.

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Eight hikers will fly LUFTHANSA to Munich, travel in Austria by coach and enjoy 2 spectacular 4-night mountain tours staying at huts. All other nights at hotels as you explore Austria.

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Old Growth

Fifty participants in the first meeting of the Old Growth Working Group met on April 5-7 to construct a provincial old growth strategy.

The group is made up of 5 teams focusing on the interrelated topics of:

- Ecological Research and Inventory
- Old Growth Values
- Policy Development
- Management Practices
- Conservation of Areas

Team participants represented interests from provincial and federal government departments, public interest organizations, universities, industry, professional associations and independent consultants.

The overall objective is to develop a working strategy for the management of old growth forests in British Columbia. Elements of the strategy will include: a research agenda, a procedure for old growth inventory, a review of current legislation and policies relevant to old growth management, identification of

forest management practices consistent with conservation of old growth values in commercially managed landscapes, development of a provincial framework for identification and reservation of representative old growth stands to meet a wide variety of social, economic, environmental, cultural and scientific needs. There will be an assessment of economic considerations involved in managing old growth.

While the old growth strategy is being developed, the team focusing on conservation of provincially representative areas has identified, as its first priority, development of a process to locate and recommend critical areas of old growth that should be deferred from logging or other major development while the strategy is being prepared.

Critical means old growth planned for harvesting within the next 2 years.

The Federation needs input from you, now, if you know any such areas. Contact Bruce Blackwell.

OFFICE REPORT

Staff: Our recent project applications have been approved, and the office now has four full time office staff for the next 8 months. We welcome Steve Pratt, Anne Ng, Curtis Barber, and Kevin Eedy.

Heli-Skiing

The Ministry of Crown Lands is proposing commercial heli-ski operations for the mountains surrounding Meadow Creek, north of Kootenay Lake. The Ministry is seeking information on the conflicts this activity may have with other recreational uses. Contact Dave Butler, Senior Land Officer, Ministry of Crown Lands, 828A Baker St., Cranbrook, B.C., V1C 1A2, phone 426-1414.

MOUNTAIN BIKING

Jim Rutter

Hikers Vs Bikers

As a mountain biker and a hiker, I was intrigued to be invited to the Outdoor Recreation Council's (ORC) symposium on mountain biking as an opening speaker.

It wasn't so much a question of what to say, because the issues are clear as is the Federation's position of being opposed to the use of mountain bikes on trails traditionally developed for hiking, but how to say it.

The audience was a mixture of bikers interested in protecting and developing their off-road opportunities, and land managers from B.C. Parks, the Forest Service, municipalities and regional districts, each looking for direction on resolving the developing conflict between such disparate user groups.

As the three other speakers made their presentations, I had a growing feeling that the basic problem was being missed, and the assumption was growing that if bikers said, "howdy" to the horse riders, and went slowly past the hikers, all would be well out there.

Fortunately I had chosen to be frank, though as a bearer of bad news it was inevitable I would become bad news - a position further clarified later at the social

time when the dreamers and fence sitters, horrified at the idea of facing a true conflict of values and having to deal with it, passed me as they would some doo doo in a doorway.

My slides showed how trails are made - wrested from the earth by hard labour - and maintained, by the volunteers who

fact, even the anticipation of meeting a bike, from seeing a tyre print on the ground, is enough to rob away a hiker's reward. The frank part is that hiking and biking are essentially incompatible, because the practice of the one, mountain biking, can ruin the sought-for experience of the other.

"opposed to the use of mountain bikes on trails traditionally developed for hiking"

use them. Such an act creates a sense of ownership, and it also creates trails graded and designed for hiking use.

Also, I used slides to try and impart a sense of just what it is the hiker seeks and finds on the trail; how the natural pace, the silence and the scents of nature allow a walker to be absorbed and feel at one with the outdoor world—and very far from the speed and flurry and mechanical life of the urban environment.

As hikers, we know how easily that mental space is shattered by the presence of alien things—such as helicopters, snowmobiles and mountain bikes. In

So it may sound harsh to be opposed to mountain bikes on the hiking trail—but there's good reason for such a position. Obviously bikes should be accommodated where they don't conflict. But let us start from that position, and not deceive ourselves that if we are all nice to each other we can share.

Land managers who will be tempted to believe differently, will end up compromising everybody. Though the Federation's position is a bitter pill, it forms a sound basis from which to plan. I support it, and I hope our members do so too.

TRAILS COMMITTEE - Doug Herchmer, Province of B.C.

Subject: B.C. Forest Service Role in FMCBC ADOPT A TRAIL Program

The B.C. Forest Service of the Ministry of Forests heartily supports the FMCBC, and all participating member clubs, with its "ADOPT-A-TRAIL" program currently underway. In this era of shrinking budgets and increased workloads, government resource managers can certainly use all the assistance they can get.

It is important however, that volunteer organisations, user groups and individuals understand the obligations and responsibilities involved when undertaking work on recreation trails within Provincial Forests.

The following is a brief summary of the major concerns -

1. The B.C. Forest Service is ultimately responsible for **liability** on recreation facilities that are open for public use on Provincial Crown lands under its jurisdiction and that are managed either in cooperation with a user group or by the Forest Service itself.

2. The cutting, damaging, removing or destruction of Crown timber is an offence under the Forest Act unless a permit or special permission has been granted beforehand. This applies to all standing live trees and any merchantable or commercial trees which may be lying on the ground.

3. The Provincial Government has a blanket general insurance policy which covers volunteers working on approved projects. The policy does not cover volunteers who are working on unauthorized projects. Therefore, it is in the interests of volunteers and user groups to have projects pre-approved prior to commencing work.

4. It is a policy of the B.C. Forest Service that when a non-profit user group constructs or maintains a recreation facility or provides a recreation service within a Provincial Forest and a written

management agreement must be prepared and signed by both the organization and the appropriate Forest Service office which states the responsibilities of each party. This may take the form of a simple Letter of Authorization-Management Agreement for maintaining a particular trail(s).

The Forest Service salutes the FMCBC for initiating this important program in the Lower Mainland and offers assistance to participating clubs in seeing this project through.

Questions or additional information may be obtained by writing the Recreation officer, B.C. Forest Service, 4595 Canada Way, Burnaby, B.C. V5G 4L9, phone 660-7608.

Douglas Herchmer, R.P.F.
Recreation Officer
Vancouver Forest Region

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Received from Nicholas Dormaar

Dear Sir/Madam

British Columbia and Alberta have some of the most beautiful and accessible hiking trails in the world. There is potential for a multi-million dollar industry. The physical infrastructure is in place, the trails, the transportation system, the hotels. The one thing that is missing is the software, the system that puts it all together.

Two years ago I stayed overnight at Whistler, on the edge of Garibaldi Park. I asked at the desk where I could hike. They did not know. After a bit of confusion I was handed a useless little map. Last year my wife and I thought of going by train to Lake Louise or to Banff to stay two nights and do some hiking. I phoned the local tourist information office. A civil servant recited the required answers and sent me the usual brochures. Nothing about hiking. I then phoned my brother in Lethbridge who told me that I should forget it.

There are a hundred trails in the Cariboo, but my local tourist information office can not give me directions to one single trail head. I know two trails in BC that have been deliberately neglected because they compete with commercial gondolas.

Why is BC missing the boat?

I wrote the BC Ministry of Tourism and received a computerized reply. Then, as I talked with a resort owner, I suddenly became aware of the road blocks. This is not Europe. Europe has an established hiking industry in which all the parts just naturally co-evolved into the system it is. In BC this never happened. And if it is going to happen at all, then the parts of the system must all be put in place at the same time.

You just read the beginning of a letter that still has to be written. I plan to contact government, transportation, tourism, resorts, and conservation groups. It is the plight of some of BC's irreplaceable forests that has sparked this initiative. In the increasingly heated confrontation between the forest industry and conservationists, both sides talk about jobs. But the logging industry talks about existing jobs, the conservationists talk about non-existing jobs. Conservationists want logging in certain areas to stop,

now. If they get their way, jobs will be lost, now. If that happens, conservationists must come up with new jobs, soon. I think those jobs are there. I believe that people in BC are eager to take to the outdoors, with a little help. I believe that BC's 'forest-enjoyment' industry is mature and ready to be harvested.

But first we need to find out some facts. How much of the infrastructure is already in place, how much is not? How many people hike, and how many people would hike if hiking were part of our culture? Remember that it is only a few years ago that we took to skiing.

Before we can advertise across North America and Europe, a network of hotels and resorts must be in place, dedicated to the needs of hikers. Province wide there must be a network of trails for beginners and for experienced hikers, short walks off the highway, and long, planned hikes. They must be blazed, mapped, maintained and marked with province-wide recognisable signs.

The 100 Mile House and area hotels maintain a network of ski trails and organise small and large events, including Western Canada's largest marathon. That is expensive, and it is good only for two months, maybe. With less money the same people could maintain thirty trails and a base camp for overnights, and organize events throughout the season, with one marathon-like occasion in the fall.

These hotels and resorts must be in print, with a description of their trails and their yearly events, as well as transportation information, including off-highway trails you can catch while driving from one centre to the next. And clear instructions for those who travel by bus or train.

I expect that this first 'draught' letter will bring in advice, suggestions and information. In a few months I will write down what I have learned and send that out again.

Ed note: Please reply to
Nicholas Dormaar
Box 130

TRAILS COMMITTEE REPORT

Note that heavy snowfalls and winter storms have resulted in a windfall. You can help when hiking if you clear enough limbs etc. to keep the trail on its present track. If at all possible, avoid making detours! Some trails affected are the Lynn Peak Trail and the Lynn Headwaters Trail. Note that the NorVan Creek bridge in Lynn Headwaters park is out.

Adopt-A-Trail

Big News - Vancouver Island is becoming involved. Details are unavailable at writing.


We need a zone co-ordinator for the Lillooet-Fraser zone. Anyone interested please contact the Trails Committee

Garibaldi Park has had more trails adopted.

Tools are available for those who have adopted trails. Paul Binkert is storing them. Phone office for details.

The year is still young - lots of time to adopt a trail, but please don't delay - DO IT NOW!

Neil Grainger, Trail Committee



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WELLS GRAY PEAK NAMED FOR LATE HUGH NEAVE

A mountain in Wells Gray Park has been officially named in honour of the late Hugh Neave of Kamloops. The announcement was made by the Toponymy Division of the Ministry of Crown Lands in Victoria.

Mount Hugh Neave is located 16 km north of Azure Lake and immediately east of Hobson Lake. At 2829 metres, it is the fourth highest peak in Wells Gray Park.

Hugh Neave was well-known in Kamloops for his mountaineering expertise and for his explorations in Wells Gray Park. Members of the Kamloops Mountaineering Club are planning an expedition to Mount Hugh Neave in 1990.

NORTHERN PERSPECTIVE

HIKERS AND HELICOPTERS CONFLICT AT MT ROBSON

Mike Nash, Caledonia Ramblers, Prince George

One of our most spectacular and prestigious backpacking destinations is the latest to be impacted by commercial helicopter use. The Berg Lake trail starts at the Highway 16 Mt. Robson viewpoint, and heads around the mountain, past Kinney Lake and through The Valley of a Thousand Falls, before climbing past White Falls, The Falls of the Pool, and Emperor Falls to reach Berg Lake on the north side of the mountain. The roar of the glacier as it calves icebergs into the lake will be increasingly mixed with the noise of helicopter traffic. A helicopter company has held a permit for the past 15 years for parks flying and rescue services, as well as transporting small groups into the area. Otherwise the situation was relatively quiet until about two years ago when several companies involved in recreational hiking began switching over to helicopters. The hiker, who sweats under a heavy load for 18 km and 750 vertical meters, will now be accompanied by the sound of helicopters along the way, and will arrive at a destination which could be busy with tourists who have put minimal energy into getting there. District Manager for BC Parks, Victor Bopp, discusses some of the issues in an interview for this Cloudburst article. Following this, are a cross section of views from three hikers who are familiar with the area.

First, the regulation of air traffic in BC parks is a very complex jurisdictional issue, involving the BNA Act. BC Parks have no jurisdiction with respect to overflights, or even of float plane landings unless the aircraft touches the shore. Federal air space restrictions are typically imposed only in matters of safety, including danger to wildlife. Therefore, since sightseeing overflights are part of the problem, it only makes sense to develop a good level of cooperation with the helicopter companies. To the hiker, the helicopter may ruin the wilderness experience, and there have been many letters written to that effect in the past year. To the helicopter passenger, it may be the experience of a lifetime, and one which they may not have achieved in any other way. These factors suggest a com-

promise solution. Alternative routes along the Robson Valley have been investigated, but ruled out for reasons of doubled cost, as well as restricted weather operations and disturbance to other wilderness areas. Therefore, the most likely solution is to fly as high in the valley and as far away from the trail as possible. Taking lessons from the Mt. Assiniboine experience, traffic may also be restricted to certain hours and days of the week, and even to quieter equipment. Immediate studies are being launched by Parks planners in Prince George to look at the questions of winter heliski and summer

inclination should realize that there are some areas where they cannot go. Is it the people who are disabled who are clamouring for access? The key is 'wilderness', and people should realize that there are parts of the park which are not suitable for everybody.

A different view was expressed by a female back-country user: "Apart from some noise disturbance, the fact of other people flying in doesn't disturb me, since I know that I have had a much deeper experience by hiking in."

Finally, from a long-time member of the FMCBC: "Helicopters are a necessity,

"The hiker, who sweats under a heavy load for 18 km and 750 vertical meters, will now be accompanied by the sound of helicopters along the way"

helicopter access for the 1990/91 seasons. In the past, horses on the Berg Lake trail have done tremendous ecological damage, and Victor Bopp wonders if the helicopter might not be a better alternative.

The following views were expressed by three hikers who are all members of the FMCBC. They appear to represent a fair cross-section of backcountry user opinions: The first person interviewed has had more experience in the backcountry than most, and operates his own ski tour operation with helicopter assisted access: "I don't like the idea of allowing helicopter operations in a park area, because the park is being used by hikers and back-country skiers, who will be disturbed. Helicopters create far more disturbance to hikers than horses do, even if the environmental impact is less. The hiker spends hours getting there; a helicopter comes swooping in and destroys the experience - it impacts the walker, but the walker has had no impact on those who are flying in. You should have the opportunity to enjoy the wilderness area if you are capable of getting there under your own steam; the helicopter destroys the wilderness experience. People who are unable to reach a wilderness destination through reasons of disability, fitness, age, available time or

it's not viable to ban them outright; there is a need for some helicopter access. Clubs such as our own have used them on many occasions to get to remote areas; I would hate to see an absolute ban. But flying in groups of tourists for a three hour visit or an overnight stay might be tough to take. There have to be some controls on extensive use; the zones of operation and rate of use should be regulated as part of a park management plan."

In summary, many of us resent the impact of the helicopter on the wilderness experience, but we have used it when it has suited our own purpose. Few would argue for the need to preserve some wild areas, and perhaps the question is whether Mt. Robson is to remain a wilderness for the enjoyment of those who are willing and able to hike in, or to be more widely exploited for its superb beauty. It seems that there is scope for compromise, perhaps by allowing a limited number of commercial and ad hoc group flights on two or three days of the week. Anyone interested in having input into this particular issue should contact Mike Murtha, BC Parks Regional Planning Manager in Prince George, at 565-6270 as soon as possible.

Ed. Any reaction?