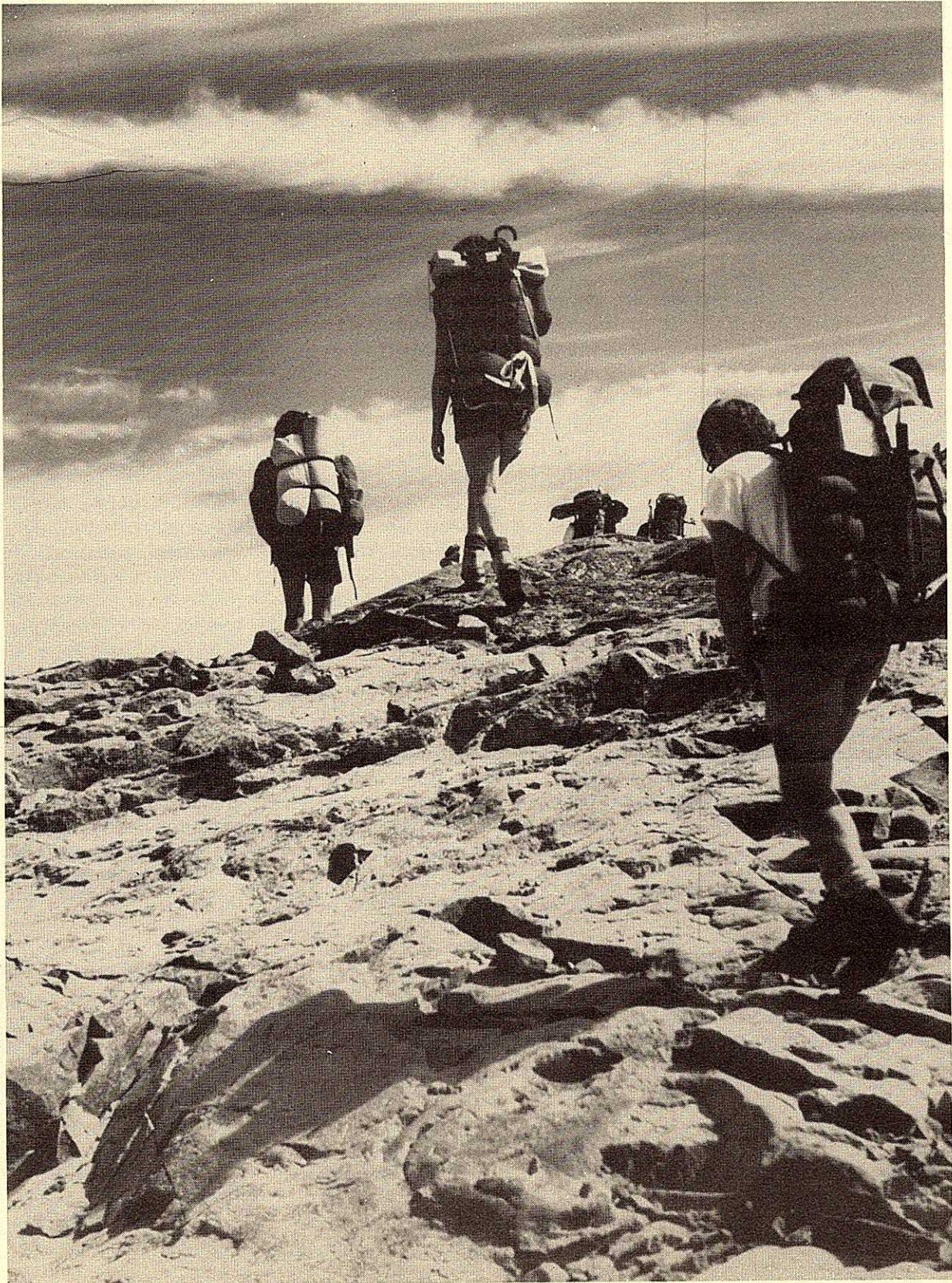


CLOUDBURST

Federation of Mountain Clubs of British Columbia Newsletter

October 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

Cloudburst is published quarterly by the Federation of Mountain Clubs of British Columbia, 336-1367 West Broadway, Vancouver, B.C. V6H 4A9

Phone (604) 737-3053.

Editor: Sara Kammerzell Assistant: Anne Ng
Layout: Sport B.C. Print Shop

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

Hikers on the way from Mount Washington to comox glacier (9 days). This very demanding traverse will again be offered as a Federation guided hike next August.

ASSISTED BY



Executive Director's Report

Jim Rutter

Unlike Europe, New Zealand, the Eastern USA and the Rockies, beautiful British Columbia remains essentially hut-free.

This is entirely consistent with the definition used in the Federation's own Wilderness Policy, produced in 1982, where wilderness is described as "an expanse of land, preferably greater than 5000 hectares, retaining its natural character, affected mainly by the forces of nature with the imprint of man substantially unnoticeable." However, wilderness as a concept suffers from a variety of perceptions which often depend on the vision of a particular agency or the interests of a particular group - including, I suppose, the FMCBC. For example, many backcountry hikers may take umbrage with the term "wilderness heli-skiing" on the basis that it cannot be wilderness if a helicopter is there. Maybe it is wilderness to those viewing from the air. Another group may consider an area to have its wilderness nature violated if people are there, period.

But unlike other parts of the world where hikers visit the mountains, BC still has areas which meet the criteria for "wilderness"; and use decisions need to be made which preserve our wilderness areas - even from their popularity as destinations for recreationists. Clearly, areas "essentially untouched by the hand of man" cannot be blessed with the presence of a hut, so if they are to be visited at all, tents must be used, along with a "no trace" practice.

I have visited a great deal of our province over the years and formed the opinion that for all its ruggedness and grandeur, it is basically fragile. Most sites cannot support more than a few camping visits a year before showing the effects of tents, fires and all those booted feet moving around.

Whereas wilderness areas may survive if they are seldom visited, popular areas will not survive their popularity if visitors are campers. An example is the Red Heather Meadows of Garibaldi Park. The Federation has a crew there, on a Parks contract, to revegetate the areas damaged by visitors. But transplanting alpine plants, similarly to how baldness commercials show skin plugs bringing new growth to the bare patches, does not provide a long term solution to the

effects of camping. Neither do wooden platforms.

What the European alpine countries have done to survive a hundred years of heavy use is to give up their wilderness ethic, if they ever had one, and provide huts throughout their mountains. They have chosen to have the finite impact of a building instead of the infinite effect of thousands of campers. Not only are you asked to stay on the well-built and well-marked trail, but in most places you may not tent even if you want to.

"an expanse of land, preferably greater than 5000 hectares, retaining its natural character, affected mainly by the forces of nature with the imprint of man substantially unnoticeable."

Our province is at a point where we have to make choices. We still have wilderness, but we have to learn how to visit and not destroy. But in the "non-wilderness" areas, how do we plan to deal with the increasing numbers of visitors? I don't think we can continue to camp as we do, except in places seldom visited. We are drawn into having to consider huts as a possible solution to the growing impact we have on our outdoor resources.

Curiously enough, and little known, the Federation has a clause in its Constitution which "promotes the development and maintenance of a system of mountain access roads, trails and huts."

At least one member of the Board of Directors, on hearing this, was determined to have it changed. Either way, the Federation will soon be having to consider its position on huts. Will it oppose or endorse? If it is to endorse, will it promote and perhaps develop its own huts? After all, a precedent has been clearly set by the Federation's own member clubs.

As a subject for opinion some interesting replies may be coming in. We will forward your informed comments to a newly-formed working committee set-up to develop a hut policy for the Federation.

P R E S I D E N T ' S R E P O R T

- Suzanne Mazoret, North Shore Hikers member

Since the new Board of Directors was selected at the June Annual General Meeting, the Directors have continued to meet regularly to carry on with the business of the Federation.

The Board of Directors meeting, which was held on Saturday the 15th of September, was the first meeting where a real effort has been made to improve provincial communication by involving the Regional Directors at a regular meeting. Since the June meeting, Rita Holmes of the Kootenay Mountaineering Club has been confirmed as the regional director from that region. She joins George Evanoff who was recently appointed from Prince George and Judy Wigmore who has been representing Vancouver Island for over a year. A main priority of this meeting is establishing for the next year's short term goals according to the guidelines of the Long Term Plan which was approved at the AGM.

It is hoped that, aside from the regular duties that Directors with established positions, such as the Treasurer and the Secretary, hold the Directors will continue to work on a project basis on topics

that interest them. Already, a committee of three, Brian Gavin, Larry Lowden and Judy Needham, has been established to work on an Air Access/Helicopter use Policy, one of the main policies that the members identified as being important to establish. This policy will be developed and presented to Delegates with final ratification at next year's AGM.

Beth Wark, a Director appointed as official Secretary, has agreed to serve as the Federation's representative on the Outdoor Recreation Council (ORC). The Federation is a member of ORC, an umbrella organization which represents outdoor recreation organizations, to the provincial government. The recent Mountain Biking Symposium is an example of the activities coordinated by ORC for its members.

The Personnel Policy has recently been completed and will provide guidelines for both permanent and temporary staff. With extra staff, some consistent guidelines have been needed. In the near future, position descriptions for permanent staff and contract positions will be finalized. Director's positions, too will be described so that they will know what they're signing on for!

An opportunity has presented itself which will allow several Directors to visit Austria to observe another "model" of mountain use. This one-week excursion in October will provide a first hand look at European trail and mountain hut systems, as Directors hike through the Karwentel Alps near Innsbruck. This tour has been arranged by Jim Rutter, at no cost to the Federation, with Lufthansa Airlines and the Austrian National Tourism Association sponsoring the visit. It is expected that future discussions of hut policies in B.C. will benefit from the Directors' experience in Europe.

With the resumption of Delegates and Committee meetings and the continuation of other activities and projects as well, the next few months promise to be busy for Directors, staff and members alike. Please continue to communicate your concerns and provide feedback to the Directors and staff, either through your Delegates, Cloudburst or the Directors. Your new Board of Directors appreciates your interest and involvement in the organization and welcomes your contributions.

PUBLICATIONS

"The Okanagan Brigade Trail"

from The Okanagan Historical Society

Over the last decade, three members of the Okanagan Historical Society, Bob Harris, Harley Hatfield, and Peter Tassie, have explored and compiled the history of the Okanagan section of this important early trade route into British Columbia's interior. This horse portage connected Fort Okanagan on the Columbia River with Fort Alexandria on the Fraser River, by way of Kamloops.

After the US boundary was settled at the 49th parallel in 1846, the Brigade Trail south of Kamloops was rerouted to Fort Hope via Nicola Lake to keep the trade in British North America (now Canada).

Twelve photographs and nine maps locate the trail in the South Okanagan, and show where surviving sections may be found.

Available through the FMCBC office, \$4.00 plus \$.38 postage.

Entertainment '91

The FMCBC is selling Entertainment '91 Coupon books this year. Your \$40 will buy you romance, adventure, action, and education as well as support our environmental endeavours. Please treat yourself to this little number and begin your descent into the world of fine discount dining and dancing. Available from the office October 1st.

Recreation and Conservation

Jay MacArthur

Pocket Wilderness Proposals in Fraser Valley

The Chilliwack Outdoor Club has prepared a wilderness proposal for ten "pocket wilderness" areas in the eastern Fraser Valley. The areas include: Custer Ridge, Radium - Hanging Lakes, Lindeman - Greendrop - Flora Lakes, Pierce Lake - Slesse Peak, Liumchen Lake, Clear Creek Hot Springs, Ling Lake, Slollicum Lake, Chehalis Headwaters and Eaton Lake.

The proposal was presented to the Fraser-Cheam Regional District, the Forest Service and other Groups.

For further information, contact Jim Bowman at 795-6131.

Mount Robson Heli-skiing

The Ministry of Parks has received requests to permit heli-skiing in Mount Robson Provincial Park.

Interested individuals and groups are invited to submit their views on heli-skiing in Mount Robson Park. An impact assessment has also been commissioned.

In the fall and winter, the Ministry of Parks, with the help of public involvement will be preparing a Master Plan for Mount Robson Park. The question of heli-skiing will be addressed in the plan and will incorporate views on heli-skiing in Mount Robson Park.

Please send your written submissions immediately to:
Mount Robson Park - Heli-skiing
Northern B.C. Region
Ministry of Parks
308, 1011 Fourth Avenue
Prince George, B.C.
V2L 3H9

FMCBC **MEMBER CLUBS CONTACT LIST**

Alpine Club of Canada
c/o FMCBC
336-1367 W. Broadway
Vancouver, B.C. V6H 4A9
Contact: Bob Koen 590-1972

B.C. Mountaineering Club
c/o FMCBC
336-1367 West Broadway,
Vancouver, B.C. V6H 4A9
Contact: Jacqueline Bradshaw 733-2350

Chilliwack Outdoor Club
P.O. Box 706
Vedder Crossing, B.C. V0X 1Z0
Contact: Donna Maser 792-6655

Fraser Valley Hikers
Box 3511
Mission, B.C. V2V 4L1
Contact: Doris Brown 853-7060

Y-Outdoor Club
955 Burrard Street
Vancouver, B.C. V6Z 1Y2
Contact: Ian Maclean 274-0600
Dennis Baher 681-0221 (332)

Klister Outdoor Club
2376 Bonnyvale Avenue
Vancouver, B.C. V5S 2B8
Contact: Ann Gytenbeek 433-2537

N.V.R.C. Outdoor Club
#1104 - 444 Lonsdale Avenue
N. Vancouver, B.C. V7M 3H5
Contact: Rick Negus 985-9263

North Shore Hikers
P.O. Box 4535
Vancouver B.C. V6B 4A1
Contact: Annie Danielson 929-2807

Outsetters Club
P.O. Box 33903, Station D
Vancouver, B.C. V6J 4L7
Contact: Marjorie Balderson 682-4951

Van. Outdoor Club for Women
PO Box 2681 Main Post Office
Contact: Pattie Lee-Gibson 421-1797

Vanc. XC Skiers & Touring Club
P.O. Box 34165, Station D
Vancouver, B.C. V6J 4N1
Contact: Gilbert Sage 435-3093
Paula Hart 277-0182

Varsity Outdoor Club
Student Union Building, UBC
Vancouver, B.C. V6T 1W5
Contact: Judy Needham 731-8857

Richmond Outdoors Club
7191 Granville Avenue
Richmond, B.C. V6Y 1N9
Contact: Michael Brand 271-7370

Valley Outdoor Association
#203-15150 Roper Avenue
White Rock, B.C. V4B 2E7
Contact: Eileen Brown 531-6430

Alberni Valley Outdoor Club
4487 Elizabeth Street
Port Alberni, B.C. V9Y 6L4
Contact: Douglas Clifford 723-9930

Alpine Club of Canada
(Vanc. Island)
Box 863, Station E
Victoria, B.C. V8W 2R9
Contact: Ian Brown 727-2480
Murrough O'Brien 479-9127

Comox District Mountaineering Club
c/o Don Apps
R.R. #2
Countenay, B.C. V9N 5M9
Contact: Don Apps 338-5130
Scott Larson 338-7377
Ruth Masters 334-2270

Heathens Outdoor Club
c/o 102-644 4th Avenue
Campbell River, B.C. V9W 3W9
Contact: Chris Barner 287-4611

Island Mountain Ramblers
P.O. Box 691
Nanaimo, B.C. V9R 5M2
Contact: Bill Chapman 758-5020

Outdoor Club of Victoria
P.O. Box 5637, Station "B"
Victoria, B.C. V8R 6S4
Contact: George Kelly 652-6232
Alan Warren 721-3088

Caledonia Ramblers (Prince George)
P.O. Box 26, Station "A"
Prince George, B.C. V2L 4R9
Contact: Dave King 564-8887

Kootenay Mountaineering Club
Box 3195, Castlegar, B.C. V1N 3H5
Contact: Rita Holmes 362-7723

1990 Limited Entry Hunting Draw Results Out

BC Ministry of Environment News Release

Limited Entry Hunting authorizations have been mailed to all hunters whose applications were selected in the random draw held in Victoria on June 26.

The Limited Entry system is used to control the number of people authorized to hunt in a particular area during a certain period of time for a particular type of animal.

There are 677 Limited Entry Hunts this season involving nine species of game animals in 57 areas.

The total number of authorizations available for each species, and the number of applications received for them, were as follows:

Available Applications

<u>Species</u>	<u>Authorizations</u>	<u>Received</u>
Grizzly Bear	72	877
Caribou	180	1,225
Mule Deer	7,893	20,377
Whitetailed Deer	3,989	14,912
Elk	10,109	30,934
Mountain Goat	2,443	8,708
Mountain Sheep	638	6,348
Moose	8,457	38,143
Wild Turkey	75	1,231
	33,856	122,755

Applicants receiving authorizations to hunt were randomly selected with the aid of a computer.

Editors Note: Do we have 72 grizzlies to spare?

CERTIFICATION PROJECT

MICHELLE FRIESEN

"Backcountry Trip Leader" - Training

As mentioned in the July 1990 Cloudburst, the FMCBC is administering a project to develop a training course for backcountry leaders, which would also meet the requirements of BC Parks if they demand "certification" of Park Use Permit applicants, as they plan to. Volunteer leaders may also find such a program to be very valuable.

This project is currently underway, and is being developed as a series of courses to help train aspiring backcountry trip leaders. It may eventually become a province-wide program. We are hoping that our trip leader program, when completed, will help organizations to train their leaders, so their backcountry travel will be enjoyed safely.

We are utilizing a broad range of resources to put our training and assessment packages together. The British Mountaineering Council, the New Zealand Mountain Safety Council, the Wilderness Education Society (Saranac Lake, New York), the American Camping Association and the Alpine Club of Canada

already have their own leader training programs in place, and we are making use of their programs, manuals and packages to develop a program specific to British Columbia.

Our plan will involve instruction in hard skills including: wilderness training, with its discussion of pre-trip planning, ethics, equipment, campcraft, weather, and survival skills, map and compass knowledge; snow travel awareness; rock protection/climbing skills; and rescue skills. There will also be a strong emphasis on soft skills such as teaching and learning styles; leadership activities; and guiding techniques. Our resources in these areas include the BC Teachers Federation, the outdoor program at Capilano College, and instructors with the Physical Education departments of the Vancouver and Burnaby School Boards.

We are also receiving input from organizations and individuals currently involved in leading trips into the wilderness, and already find there is a keen interest in the development of such a

training program.

The members of the research team include two Federation instructors with extensive mountaineering experience, Geoff Miller and Graeme Taylor, and one member with research and computer experience, Michelle Friesen.

Geoff and Graeme have just recently returned from a trip to the British Mountaineering Councils' Centre for Outdoor Pursuits in Plas y Brenin, Wales; where they were observers and participants in the Councils' British Mountainwalking Leader program. This program is being standardized for use in other European countries by 1992 and observers from France were also in attendance.

We would appreciate hearing from anyone with either resources or suggestions to contribute; or if you simply have an interest in corresponding with us we would be pleased to put you on our mailing list. The project runs until the middle of December when we hope to have training manuals and assessment packages completed.

Our address is:

#400 - 1530 West 8th Avenue
Vancouver, BC V6J 4R8
Phone: 733-9732

Avalanche Centre To Be Buried

By Gordon Hamilton - Vancouver Sun

The National Research Council plans to cut financing for the Vancouver-based Avalanche Research Centre, leaving Western Canada with no scientific research on avalanche prediction and control.

The centre is one of seven programs across Canada to be phased out because of budget cuts.

The data produced by the group is used by ski resorts, outdoor groups, the provincial highways ministry and railways in reducing avalanche danger to the public.

"They provide an essential service which, if it goes, will have to be met somehow," said Jack Bennetto, manager of avalanche programs for the BC highways ministry.

NRC president Pierre Perron said from Ottawa that a shrinking budget is behind the cuts. The avalanche centre is scheduled to be phased out by April 1991.

Avalanche research is essential if public awareness of avalanche hazards is to be

increased in Canada's mountainous regions, said Jim Rutter, executive director of the Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC. He noted that four skiers died in avalanches in BC in the last two weeks. "Given the fact that four people have died in snow-related accidents...I would say we are more confident in our ignorance than we are competent in our expertise (of avalanche hazards)."

The NRC avalanche centre performs

the only significant research on avalanches in North America, according to the Professional Institute of the Public Service of Canada.

In making the cuts, the NRC is seeking new partnerships with governments, universities and industry to maintain programs. In BC, the aim is to get the BC, Alberta and Yukon governments and private sources to pick up the \$250,000 annual cost of the centre.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Our summer season has been a hectic success and the happy customer below is one of many. - Ed

Dear Jim,

Just a note to thank you and the FMCBC for an incredible 10 day Strathcona West trip, Aug. 3-12, 1990. My 1983 trip to the Golden Hinde was not as successful as this trip, and the entire success of this trip was due to Brian Finnie's expert knowledge and leadership. I also think he had something to do with the fine weather we had!

Brian taught us much about map and compass while on the trip and has started me on my way to having "fun" with map and compass while learning a very necessary skill for hiking and mountaineering. The meal planning made meal time a very pleasant occasion. The campsite planning was excellent with swimming every night except two.

The climb to the summit for two of us was icing on the cake. The Golden Hinde has been on my list of things to do for a long time and Brian has satisfied that climb.

I am looking forward to future courses/trips with the FMCBC.

Please thank Brian for a wonderful trip. All the best to you and your family.

Rob Wilson

Outdoor Club of Victoria.

Received from Ken Dawson

Over the last few Cloudburst issues, communication, and ways to improve it, have been the subject of articles.

In light of this, I would like to make some suggestions which I believe would improve the newsletter and thus further inform the general membership.

However, I would like to say that over a period of time, the newsletter has broadened its scope and has even begun to look further afield than the lower area of the province.

My suggestions are these. Information at present on other clubs is sketchy or non-existent. In every issue, I would like to see a complete list of members clubs, listing the contact person, phone number and address (preferably the club box number if such exists). This should be updated frequently, as I have attempted contact in the past, but received no answer.

I even believe that a list of the non-affiliated clubs would be valuable information, and perhaps give clubs an incentive to join.

My second suggestion is this. Each issue, one or two clubs should be featured in detail with submissions coming from the clubs themselves. This could include the territory they cover, the number of trails they use/prepare/maintain, etc., whether they lead organized hikes, how often, and if a schedule is published, whether they publish a trail guide and/or badges, and where they can be obtained, and other details of the club, history, growth and perhaps a description of some of their more interesting hikes and experiences.

I believe that this is some of the information that members want and are interested in. Please see pg. 4 & 7 - Ed

Attn: Safety & Education Committee

In the Fall, 1989 issue of "Cloudburst", I read of the accident in which Bob McGregor was killed in the Tantalus Range. I know nothing about this accident other than I read in "Cloudburst". However, since reading the report, I have been thinking about safety measures in mountaineering, especially on glaciers.

All the textbooks and courses emphasize that on any glacier where there might be a crevasse big enough to fall into, a climbing party should have at least 3 members (i.e. enough to effect a crevasse rescue), and they should be roped up.

In practice, however, following this advice seems to be the exception rather than the rule. There is a common attitude that only "sissies" rope up, and that roping is "too much of a hassle". Two-person parties are commonplace, often with one person carrying the rope coiled up. This attitude is justified by the fact that the climbers have ventured on to glaciers many times before without misfortune, the claim that "one can see the crevasses" and the assumption that if anyone falls into a crevasse, it will be someone in the front of the group, and the last person, carrying the rope, can perform a rescue.

What is the FMCBC's position on this matter?

Also, if I should be in a situation where I think the group should rope up but the others refuse to do so, should I go along

with them or just stay put?

N. Thyer, The Kootenay Mountaineering Club

Answer: The Federation of Mountain Club's position is that you always rope up. No exceptions.

Received from

Douglas M. Goodman

Yes I do have a reaction to the article by Mike Nash in July's Cloudburst. I am sure that others feel as I do that helicopter and aircraft access to wilderness areas need to be carefully controlled, or, in some areas, prohibited. Mike makes several key points:

i) The impact of a helicopter, on the ear or the eye, can destroy or severely diminish the wilderness experience that hikers or skiers have come to seek.

ii) The presence of hikers who have come by helicopter to an alpine area can detract from wilderness values because they do not share the physical and emotional experience of hiking the distance to the alpine area. There is a psychological and behavioral distinction here between "tourists" (helicoptered) and backpackers.

iii) Restricting helicopter traffic to certain times might reduce its impact on hikers to a level acceptable to most.

I suggest that restricting helicopter traffic to mid-day hours (eg 1000-1700) would reduce the disturbance, but would still not be acceptable to most hikers. Moreover, this time window might not be acceptable to the helicopter outfit either. Restriction to certain days of the week would be better, and perhaps a restriction to specific weeks of the year would be the best compromise. Of course, within a week when helicopters are allowed, certain restrictions to days or hours could apply.

The question remains, how much time should the helicopters be allowed? This is not an easy one to judge. Considerations should include:

*The overall pattern of backpacking and helicopter use of alpine areas in B.C. There should be appropriate number and distribution of both wilderness and recreation areas in the province.

*The environmental impacts of both uses. What are the affects on wildlife, vegetation, water quality, and air quality? Parks managers are global citizens too,

and should consider broader concerns such as production and burning of fossil fuels, and global warming

*The opinions of interested and informed members of the public, academia, government, and business.

*The profile of users of both types. Are helicopter users primarily non-residents of BC? Where do hikers come from? How would a decision affect these people? Can they use alternative areas?

*The economic value to BC citizens of both uses. Could the value of more out-of-province dollars or out of region dollars outweigh some wilderness values?

*How any decision regarding commercial use of the park by helicopters could affect overall policy regarding com-

mercial use? Could helicopter use lead eventually to tea-houses, gondolas, chalets, etc.?

Whatever the decision, caution is needed in its implementation. If helicopter traffic is to be reduced, it might have to be a slow reduction to reduce the financial impact on the commercial operators. If traffic is to be increased, then i) hikers, backpackers, and skiers need to be informed and ii) the impact on the alpine environment needs to be assessed and limited. It is the responsibility of the provincial government to clearly outline the way in which a decision will be made and implemented, and ensure that all groups involved are kept well-informed.

Personally I admit to being a purist. I

believe we would all be better off if helicopters and planes were banned from parks except for emergency purposes. There are probably lots of areas outside parks that would satisfy helicopter passengers. From a philosophical viewpoint, true wilderness is a diminishing resource on the planet, and I don't think wilderness and helicopter traffic are compatible. I do sympathize with those who want to experience the spectacular alpine areas without the considerable effort of walking there. Another look should be taken at travel by horse or similar animals. With suitable restrictions and precautions, and perhaps alternate trails, I suspect that horse-back use could have low enough environmental impact.

National Trail - from The Bruce Trail News

It has taken a long time, but at last National Trail markers are going up across the country; not many in relation to the vast territory to be covered but nevertheless a significant start.

A generous donation from the Prudential Assistance group provided an adequate-for-now stock of the red and grey on white markers, now distributed to all regions. Watch out for them. Better still, do something to help put them up as all kinds of assistance is needed to blaze this new line across the map of Canada; a green corridor through the more populated southern areas, helping to bring together and unify in physical terms the common interests of environ-

mentalists and outdoor groups.

In Ontario, thanks to the pioneer efforts and generosity of existing trail system groups, the National Trail will complement well-trodden paths for much of the route across the province. Sections of the Bruce, Ganaraska, Rideau and Voyageur Trails will share their courses and may indeed gain some strength as important links in the chain on the Atlantic-to-Pacific route.

The recent formation in Montreal of a group to concentrate on the route across Quebec gives confidence for the early establishment of sections of National Trail. Sentiers Quebec has given strong encouragement over the years and this lat-

est development demonstrates a determination to push ahead.

Progress is slow in the Prairies and Atlantic regions but sections could be marked before year-end.

If you're really keen to help, however little time you can spare, and **determination is one of your characteristics**, contact your nearest trail group or write the National Trail Association of Canada, Box 1584, Canmore, Alberta T0L 0M0.

Ed. Note:

The FMCBC and Outdoor Recreation Council have participated with the National Trail Association (NTA) in planning a route across BC from the West Coast of Vancouver Island to Banff.

SPECIAL FEATURE

New Richmond Outdoors Club Joins the Federation

by Mike Brand, R.O.C. President.

I attended the Federation's AGM in June, and enjoyed telling delegates about the Richmond Outdoors Club. For those who heard me then, this column will be an update. For those others, an introduction.

The Richmond Outdoors Club has been around since April of 1989, when Wayne Yee, the outdoor recreation programmer for Richmond Leisure Services Department, held a meeting of Richmond residents interested in forming a hiking club. He noted that there had been previous attempts, and hoped this one would work.

It has worked. Since that meeting,

we've elected an executive (who, for the most part, will stand for re-election at our AGM in October); adopted bylaws; held a Christmas dinner and summer barbecue—and joined the Federation. We voted on the Federation in March and it was unanimous.

The Richmond Outdoors Club is basically a hiking club, but members also ski, snowshoe, climb and canoe. New members are welcome from all over. We meet once a month for club business (followed by slides or video and refreshments) at Brighthouse Park at 7 p.m. on the first Monday of the month. We meet for trips at Minoru Pavilion. Our trip schedule

(along with news, gossip and other items) appears in our Trail Tales newsletter which comes out every two months.

Adopting a trail is a possibility for the ROC, but not immediately. We're just over a year old, and right now we're working on promotional ideas and other jobs. However, I look forward to an enjoyable and mutually beneficial association with the Federation, and I also look forward to seeing delegates from other clubs again at the next meeting.

For more information about the Richmond Outdoors Club, please call me at 271-7370

Tatshenshini Update

by Michael Down - From the Parks & Wilderness Quarterly

The Tatshenshini River wilderness had for years been tucked away in the upper northwest corner of BC, virtually unnoticed by the general public. However, the "Tat" was thrown into the spotlight in February 1990 with the publication by Western Canada Wilderness Committee of an information sheet describing the virtues of this world-class wilderness, and focusing public attention on the threats to this area by Geddes Resources' proposed copper mine and the 100-km road which would give access to it. A flurry of media activity in late April-early May brought the issue to both provincial and national audiences.

The Tatshenshini is listed as one of the top ten wild rivers in the world. The Tat's watershed supports abundant wildlife, and contains significant Dall sheep range for BC. The upper watershed of the Tat is protected in the Yukon (in Kluane National Park) and the lower portion is protected in Alaska (in Glacier Bay National Park); preservation of the central BC section is the keystone to creating the largest contiguous protected wilderness in the world.

Geddes' proposed open pit copper mine will create 200 million tonnes of

acid-generating rock tailings. To contain this deadly waste, Geddes plans to fill a 4 km-by-1 km reservoir behind a 100 m-high dam. But the Tat is in one of Canada's highest-risk earthquake zones. As recently as 1958, a quake registering 7.9 on the Richter scale hit the area—a quake far stronger than last year's San Francisco earthquake. Since this ore has a sulphur content 600% higher than any other B.C. mine, acid drainage or spills would endanger the survival of the international salmon fishery on the Tatshenshini and the grizzly and eagle populations which depend on them.

Despite all these potential environmental threats, Geddes has said that it wants to avoid federal environmental impact assessments in both Canada and in the US. Clearly, this project must get full environmental scrutiny, and the public must press for it. Please write to the federal and provincial Ministers of Environment urging that a complete Environmental Assessment Review Process be done with full public involvement. Also request that no survey line cutting be permitted in the meantime. Last summer, Geddes was caught illegally clearing road survey lines into the Tat. Action to

save the Tat is needed **urgently**. Geddes wants to get on with road survey clearing this summer.

Once the road is in, the pristine wilderness character of the river will be lost forever.

In order to prevent any further line clearing this summer, letters are also urgently needed to Claude Richmond, Minister of Forests, urging him not to issue any line cutting permits, at least not until the Tat has been scrutinized by a comprehensive environmental process with full public input. Please send copies of letters to the Smithers forester: Bob Friesen, MOF, Bag 5000, 3276 Alfred Ave., Smithers, B.C., V0J 2N0.

The government has required that Geddes hold public hearings this spring in various communities throughout B.C. to gauge public concern. You will probably receive this newsletter too late to attend the meeting. However, copies of a brochure outlining the project may be obtained by contacting

Geddes Resources Ltd.,
1080-1055 West Hastings,
Vancouver, B.C., V6E 2E9,
or phone them at (604) 682-2392.

TRAILS COMMITTEE

GARIBALDI MASTER PLAN - summarized by Gabriel Mazoret Co-chairman of Trails Committee

After an extensive public review process where the Federation and its members submitted proposals and information to the Garibaldi Master Plan, the Master Plan is now completed and is being ratified by the Minister of Parks. This process has shown that we can successfully participate in and influence the Ministry of Parks which is to be commended for being receptive to our public opinion.

Here are some of the Garibaldi Master Plan highlights:

Zones

The Park now has four Zones rather than two, as you can see on the accompanying map. Their respective objectives are reflected in their names except possibly the Natural Environment Zone. Its objective is to protect scenic values and to provide backcountry recreation activities in a largely undisturbed natural environ-

ment. Although it is characterized by low-to-moderate levels of use, this Zone precludes any sense of wilderness isolation. Facilities which include trails, walk-in campsites and shelters are moderately developed. The environment of this zone will be less pristine than that available in a Wilderness Conservation Zone.

Hiking/Backpacking

Objective: to encourage hiking/backpacking by providing a range of opportunities, from short interpretative trails to longer, high elevation routes. To maximize wilderness atmosphere, many of these longer routes will not be designated trails.

In addition to existing trails and designated backcountry huts and camps, the following facilities/services are proposed.

*Upgrade and secure the trail access, and staging areas at Cheakamus Lake, Singing Pass, Blackcomb and

Wedgemount Lake.

*A high-route trail in the Spearhead Range, linking the Blackcomb ski area and the Whistler ski area, will be studied in detail. The study will include an assessment of potential impacts on mountain goats.

*Develop a trail to Mount Price and Clinker Peak from Garibaldi Lake Campground.

*Develop a trail along the Musical Bumps.

*Develop a trail linking Russet Lake and Adit Lake.

*Develop backcountry campsites at Mamquam Lake, Helm Lake and Adit Lake.

*Develop a trail from Cheakamus Lake to Singing Pass.

*Upgrade all existing designated trails.

Winter Recreation

Objective: To encourage ski touring in Diamond Head and other areas of the

Trails committee cont'd

park, including the Black Tusk, Singing Pass and Cheakamus Lake.

To attain this objective, the following facilities/services are proposed:

*Signs and markers will be installed on winter access trails to Cheakamus Lake, the Black Tusk and Singing Pass.

*The high route in the Spearhead Range, linking the Whistler and Blackcomb ski areas, will be studied in detail as a possible ski-tour route supported by a hut system. An assessment of potential impacts on mountain goats will be included in the study.

*In keeping with the broad visitor-services objectives, snowmobiling will be encouraged outside the park.

Mountain Biking

Objective: To encourage mountain bike access to trail head parking areas and limit cycling to two areas: Red Heather Ridge up to the Elfin Shelter and the proposed South Cheakamus River Trail.

Commercial-Recreation Services

Objective: To encourage commercial-recreation services that are in keeping with the role of Garibaldi Park.

*Heli-skiing will continue to be a recreation service permitted in the park. However, no new areas for additional heli-skiing within the park will be considered.

*Non-mechanized guiding in the park will be encouraged.

Public Information

The Parks Department will institute a degree-of-difficulty rating system for park trails to inform the public about trail conditions.

Proposed additions to the Park are:

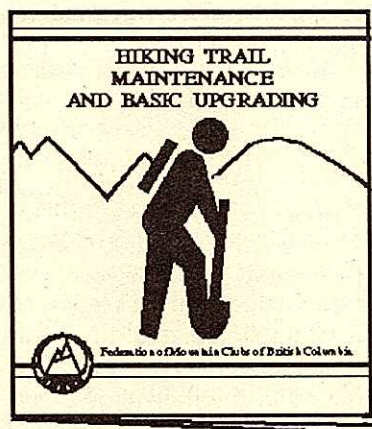
*The Mount Currie and Billy Goat Creek proposal will be studied as potential additions to the Park.

*Liz/Rogers Creek, Callaghan Lake and Pinecone Lake will be reviewed as Park study areas independent of Garibaldi Park.

*Upon expiry of the resource commitments, the proposed addition at Glacier and Fire Lakes will be reviewed.

Trails Committee Report

The new "Hiking Trail Maintenance and Basic Upgrading" Manual is now completed and a complimentary copy



has been sent to the Delegates of every Club. More copies are available at the office for a suggested minimum donation

of \$3.00 each to cover printing costs only.

To try to overcome the perceived reluctance of some authorities to create or maintain trails in some areas due to the potential conflict with future logging, the Trails Committee defines its position:

"We do not see a trail, recognized or not by the land agency, as a reason for denying logging privileges in the area. However, we expect the trail and its recreational use to be considered as an important asset which should be preserved, re-established or re-routed after logging."

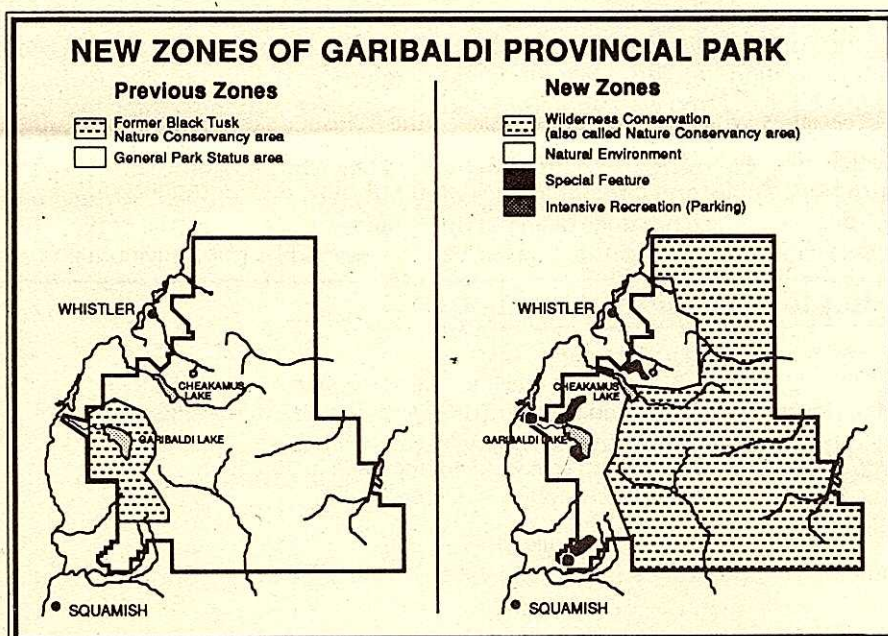
This is not to say, if the area the trail crosses is special in some way, that we cannot try to convince the land agency to preserve it.

The Trails Committee is now collecting Topographic Maps of any scale that show trails. These maps will be used to help us produce maps of scale 1:25,000, to show in detail each trail. This will increase our knowledge of the trails and help us later to protect them if needed. The B.C. Forest Service has already contributed by sending to us all their available maps. We are also investigating what is available through the B.C. Parks and the Outdoor Recreation Council. If you have any information that would assist us in this project, please send it to the Trails Committee at the Federation's office.

The sign is now starting to appear at some of the trail heads. It tells you the trail is Adopted and who to contact if the trail is in need of repairs.



Sincere thanks to everyone, official Adopt-A-Trail participants, and others, who have worked on trail maintenance or construction over the past spring or summer. Some trails are showing significant improvement due to your efforts!



N O R T H E R N P E R S P E C T I V E

Mike Nash (Caledonia Ramblers member • Prince George).

High Elevation Logging

In the past, logging in the Interior Mountains of British Columbia has been concentrated at lower elevations, where the economies of access, timber quality and reforestation are good. For the recreational mountain user, this has afforded access to a wide range of alpine and sub-alpine wilderness areas. Although there has been some environmental and wildlife impact, it has generally not been severe. But, the demand for timber is now forcing the Forest Service and companies to look at higher elevations and causing some people who are concerned for the mountain resource to question what is happening.

High elevation in the interior is defined as the start of the sub-alpine zone. This is usually around 1200 meters, but will vary depending on aspect and angle of slope. There are severe reforestation difficulties above this level which have not been adequately solved anywhere in the province. One of the earliest efforts was at Mt. Washington on Vancouver Island. It was logged in 1962, and has been subject to various unsuccessful planting attempts since. There have been successes at lower elevations, typically on south facing slopes in the Engelmann/spruce/sub-alpine fir zone. Seedlings and young trees need shelter from frost, so that it is necessary to log selectively in strips or by diameter selection to leave clumps of shelter trees for the new growth. On the plus side, past management is less of a problem due to the harsher environment. In terms of wood value, the predominant alpine fir species produces more waste and is of lesser quality than lower elevation species. Given these factors, forest companies are naturally concerned about the economics of logging and reforestation at higher elevations.

The growth time to maturity for a sub-alpine tree is upwards of 300 years; experimental work has shown that it can take 50 years to grow a tree a height of two meters. Much depends on site characteristics, exposure and snow-pack. The deep snow packs this year in the Upper Fraser areas have resulted in almost no growth at higher elevations. Should we even consider logging a forest with a 200 to 300 year rotation and producing only 150 to 200 cubic meters per hectare compared to a rotation of 80 to 100 years and a yield of 250 to 300 cubic meters per hectare at lower elevations? How does this weigh against the wildlife, esthetic, recreational, hydrological and tourist values of the land?

Apart from the short term disturbance of actual logging, the main wildlife impact is the loss of Caribou habitat, although some small animals such as Pine Martens and Squirrels are also affected. Normal lichen recovery in these zones is believed to be 150 to 200 years, although experiments are underway to artificially improve this by aerial seeding.

Logging can result in other recreational improvements apart from access, for example mountain ski touring. At Lucille Mountain in McBride, the Forest Service are talking about the possibility of logging to create openings for telemark skiing, small enough to protect the snow from the development of wind and sun crust. Unfortunately, the steep side of Lucille Mountain above the Dore River is also the site of one of the worst examples of the Forest Service's ability to manage high elevation logging. The mountain side is badly scarred with numerous skid roads, severe washouts, a controlled burn which escaped and destroyed everything into high alpine, and large quantities of waste wood which has since been put up for salvage sale. In short, a small scale

disaster. The Forest Service has identified three priorities in the management of such areas. These are the increased utilization of waste wood; reduced site disturbance and soil erosion; and identification of sites which cannot be regenerated successfully unless logged in a different manner, or just left. At the present time, the first of these priorities is receiving the main attention.

Finally, a recreational issue often discussed is the problem of snowmobiles and ATV's. Non-mechanized mountain users welcome the access to the trailheads, but see a need to protect designated areas from vehicle use. Traditionally, this was not a problem as the trails were generally too rugged for any mode of travel except on foot, or in some cases horseback. The increasing number of higher elevation haul and skid roads has changed that picture. To use the example of McBride again, the McBride Hiking Club is currently fighting to keep the Ozalanka tributary of the Dore River in a pristine state to protect an unusually beautiful alpine area. A hiking trail and cabin was recently built by the club, and funded by the Forest Service. Their objection is not necessarily to logging, but to a perceived snowmobile threat, which has become an issue in other parts of the McBride Valley. Closer to Prince George, our experiences with the Tabor Mountain and Grizzly Den/Raven Lake recreation areas has shown that section 105 of the legislation used to restrict snowmobile access is often implemented with no teeth.

The issues surrounding this complex question do not appear to have been adequately addressed relative to the increased levels of activity. In talking privately with government and industry foresters, one senses that they have the same concern as that which is being expressed by the lay mountain user.

Dates for Committees' Meetings

Board of Directors

For the year 1990, the dates for the Board's meetings are as follows:

October 17, Wednesday, Room 106; November 21, Wednesday, Room 106; December 8, Saturday, Room 104.

Safety and Education

They meet every 2nd Wednesday of each month. Following are the established dates:

1990: September 12, October 10, November 14, December 12.

1991: January 9, February 13, March 13, April 10, May 8,
June 12, July 10, August 14, September 11, October 9,
November 13, December 11.

Recreation and Conservation

Meetings are scheduled on Monday, October 15, 1990; and Monday, November 19, 1990.

Delegates

Lower Mainland Region, December 5, March 27, 1991

Annual General Meeting

June 15, 1991