

CLOUDBURST

Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC
Quarterly Newsletter

July, 1999 Volume 9 - Number 2 \$2.50

1999 Annual General Meeting report

Logging roads in our Parks - a sign of things to come?!

DEET, ice axe safety, wildflowers and more....



Hiking in the Southern Chilcotin

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CLOUBURST

Articles: We welcome articles which inform our readers about mountain conservation, recreation and access issues or activities in BC.

Word limit: 500.

Advertising: The FMCBC invites advertising or classified advertising that would be useful to our members. Please contact the Editor for a rate sheet.

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MEMBERSHIP

The Federation of Mountain Clubs of British Columbia (FMCBC) is a provincial non-profit organization representing the interests of non-mechanized mountain recreationists and hiking, climbing and outdoor clubs throughout the province. The FMCBC address's mountain conservation and access issues, promotes safety and education through courses of instruction, and builds and maintains hiking trails throughout BC.

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

Those interested in joining this non-profit organization have the two following options:

Club membership:

Please contact the office to receive a free list of clubs that belong to the FMCBC.

Individual Membership:

Call the office at (604) 878.7007 with your VISA or MASTERCARD number, or send \$25 with your name and address to the FMCBC at the above address

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Trails

John Otava

Education and Safety

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President's Report

By Lesley Bohm, President

It has been a tough year for the directors of the FMCBC -many have moved away or have lost interest. Meetings often consisted of Pat Harrison, the president, who wanted to retire this June, Chris Mills, vice-president, since deceased, and me. I have been on the board for about eight years through all the ups and downs, the panic stations and successes, and would gladly step down. I was very pleased to see the new, young and enthusiastic members come on the board in the spring, but many are very busy and don't have much time for ongoing commitments - it requires continuity and commitment beyond what they can afford. This is the same reason that many delegates never want to attend the directors meetings. Even the first meeting after the AGM did not attract a quorum.

The board fills its positions by nomination after the AGM and it became obvious that no one wanted to continue the two day a week volunteer effort that Pat Harrison had been putting in all spring as president. The directors had discussed paying for part-time help in some capacity and decided that that was the only way the executive would take their positions—with part-time office backup. We have hired various people over the years for part-time positions, and in spite of much time, effort and expense, have been quite disappointed with people from the general public. We made a call for suggestions of people in the hiker/climber community but got none, so we jumped at the opportunity to have Pat continue for a year as part time executive director for \$15,000, which seems a most reasonable sum. His job description has not yet been finalized - discussion is planned for the next board meeting - but will include: volunteer coordination; personal liaison with the clubs; generally riding herd on the various minutes, Recreation & Conservation and Trails committee reports, etc.; responding to general emergencies in the office such as government requests for comments (usually due yesterday!); and, financial matters. He will relinquish his voting position as past-president on the board.

We are still finding that the number of jobs exceeds the number of hands available, although Ken Legg has agreed to be treasurer - a very hard position to fill. We could use someone willing to sit on Outdoor Recreation Council on behalf of the FMCBC and we certainly could use people interested in fund-raising. The slate of directors is still not full, a situation that leads to paralysis if there is too much absenteeism - anyone with time and skills to contribute would be more than welcome. The same can be said for the membership of the Rec and Con and Trails committees, and the Adopt-a-Trail program is in need of a computer-literate volunteer monitor, also.

Club members need to become more involved with the organization if the FMCBC is to survive its recent draconian cash/funding cutback. The old faithfuls are getting tired and we need new people with enthusiasm!

Thanks are due to Andrea Agnoloni who, in spite of commitment to North Shore Search and Rescue activities, has been serving as our treasurer for four years, and to Roger Freeman and Jay MacArthur and the Rec and Con Committee, and to John Otava and all the volunteers on the Trails Committee. Have a great summer and come back to FMCBC in the fall with energy and ideas!

Wilderness Education Program

By Lisa Baile

BC's best known mountaineer, explorer and (YES!) wilderness educator, John Clarke, is off doing some serious R and D in the Coast Ranges (destination a well-kept secret) in preparation for the upcoming school year in September. John's Wilderness Education program is alive and well after an amazingly successful third year in the schools of the Lower Mainland. Thanks to all of you for your continued support of Wilderness Education. Watch this space for highlights of this unique program in the next issue of Cloudburst!

Adieu and greetings!

By Pat Harrison, ED and Past President

It has been my privilege to serve as President of the FMCBC for the past three years. I thank all the members for the support they have shown. I wish Lesley Bohm, our new President, the very best during her tenure as President.

I wish to thank the seventeen clubs who sent delegates or their proxies to this AGM. This showing was most encouraging as it demonstrated the belief in the Fed. We needed only eleven clubs for quorum.

I thank the North Shore Hikers for hosting this year's AGM. Much time is required of the host club in order for the AGM to be effective. In particular, Al Cone, Herb Berryman, and Lesley Bohm of the North Shore Hikers contributed much time to the planning and executing of this year's AGM. I thank them for their efforts.

George Smith of CPAWS gave a great talk on the efforts in promoting areas for wilderness and park status. In particular, he showed our group some spectacular areas in the Northern Rockies. Many thanks to George for the slide show tour and for taking time out from his busy schedule to be our AGM speaker.

One of the most important aspects at this year's AGM was the participation by the delegates in the discussion about the future direction of the Fed. We divided the delegates into six discussion groups and asked them which direction they believed the Fed should move. We also asked them what type of office staffing they desired, if any. The results of the discussion groups are as follows:

Five groups wanted access issues and advocacy for hikers and climbers to be the main focus. One group wanted conservation to be the main focus. Four groups wanted a part-time executive director, one

group wanted a part-time office person, and one group wanted us to spend our rainy day funds and hire a full-time executive director.

Our budget this year is in a balance mode (two of the clubs submitted funds late and this money will be reflected in this year's budget). One of my duties and a major goal this year will be to try to raise funds externally. The majority of the delegates indicated that their clubs want to hold the membership dues to current levels. Some delegates, however, did express the opinion that we had not raised the membership fees since the early 90's and that their clubs were prepared to raise the Fed dues by small increments each year.

My second goal is to get out to as many clubs this year as possible. I think it most important to keep in direct touch with our member clubs. I look forward to meeting with many of you in the coming year.

FMCBC meeting dates & locations

Board of Directors

Dates: Aug. 18, 1999
Sept. 22, 1999
Oct. 20, 1999
Nov. 17, 1999
Jan. 19, 2000

Location: 47 W. Broadway, Van. - FMCBC office

Recreation and Conservation

Date: Sept. 20, 1999
Location: Roger Freemans
Later dates/locations TBA

Trails

Dates: Sept. 20, 1999
Oct. 25, 1999
Dec. 6, 1999
Jan. 17, 2000

Location: 47 W. Broadway, Van. - FMCBC office

FMCBC Lower Mainland Delegates

Date: TBA (Contact FMCBC office)
Location: 47 W. Broadway, Van. - FMCBC office

FMCBC Vancouver Island Delegates

Date: TBA (Contact FMCBC office)

FMCBC Annual General Meeting

By Lesley Bohm, President

There was good attendance this year at the 1999 AGM and we achieved quorum. Dave King reported for the North that the National Hiking Trail is progressing, with choices still to be made in the Quesnel and Barkerville areas, also Mt. Robson to McBride. Richard Keltie detailed Vancouver Island problems with closures of private land, and ski development on Mt. Arrowsmith, which is following the Cypress blueprint and trying to exclude backcountry users.

Shane Koscielniak noted high absenteeism in the lower mainland delegates meetings and said all our dragons are not yet slain! We must continue to fight giveaways of forest land to private companies and influence the care and development of the new protected areas. The results of small group discussions put this year's emphasis on advocacy for nonmechanized recreationalists, reflecting ongoing conflicts with mechanized users in all areas. New methods for involving youth in our activities were discussed, as other outdoor recreation groups such as motorcyclists, mountain bikers, and horse riders spend a lot of time and effort on this, sometimes appropriating trails for their own use.

The dire financial situation of the FMCBC was discussed, but the general feeling was against a fee increase. The budget was approved for this year, allowing the hiring of one part time person—Pat Harrison, our past president—as executive director, a job he has been doing for free for the past few months. Refunded casino money will balance our budget this year but next year there is no guarantee of that \$15,000, which was for two years. Fund raising for what is seen to be a private clubs organization is not easy—companies say go to your members. In spite of this, the delegates voted to continue an inclusive policy which puts time and money into work that benefits the hiking community at large, not just our members.

Lisa Baile thanked us for supporting the wonderful educational efforts of John Clarke in the schools with our tax receipts for donations. Brian Jones of CWMS initiated a \$10 per student FMCBC donation this year and said the mountain school is successfully educating outdoor users (fewer than 5% of whom are FMCBC club members), and search and rescue personnel—about a thousand in all this year.

Our volunteer wish list:

- Outdoor Recreation Council Board Member
- Volunteer coordinator
- Cloudburst editor
- Schools involvement volunteer
- Suggestions for Millenium project
- Environmental Fund of B.C. Board Member

Next year's AGM will be in Prince George at the end of the 3rd week in June. We want to thank this year's hosts, the North Shore Hikers, and George Smith of CPAWS for his slideshow.

Articles for "CLOUDBURST"

By Pat Harrison, ED and Editor

As editor on the last three editions of Cloudburst, it is always a challenge to assemble 20 to 25 articles needed for an edition of Cloudburst. I usually wind up 'arm-twisting' people at the last moment. As events keep happening continuously, it would be most welcomed if people would send me articles at the time of an event. I will make sure the articles are put in the file marked 'Cloudburst - Fall 1999'. Thanks to all who contributed to this edition of Cloudburst.

If anyone of our members has the desire to be involved in the production of the Cloudburst, please contact me at hike@unixg.ubc.ca, 604-576-0403 (phone), 604-576-0424 (fax), 604-878-7007 (Fed Office), 604-876-7047 (Fed Fax), or fmcbbc@direct.ca.

'Food' for thought...

By Pat Harrison, Executive Director

In this time of budget cuts and non-profits losing their provincial funding, I was amazed to see the funding levels of BC Parks compared to other government functions in the recent newsletter from Valhalla Wilderness Committee. I thought it was worth reprinting the information (with permission). I believe we need to be lobbying for a fairer share of the Provincial Budget for BC Parks funding.

BC Parks	\$ 34 million
Sky Train Extension	\$ 1.9 billion
Vancouver Convention Centre	\$ 114 million
Fast Ferry Project	\$ 450 million
Subsidies to Skeena Cellulose	\$ 300 million
Various land deals with MacBlo	\$ 400 million
Money to Western Star Trucks	\$ 60 million

Valhalla Wilderness Committee members fear that continued under-funding of the BC Parks will lead to increased involvement of corporations into the management of parks in BC as has apparently been the situation in the US. VWC thinks that the above will lead to privatization of the BC Park System. Is that the type of park system we want? Write your premier or MLA regarding this matter.

Thank you, and Welcome!

By Pat Harrison, Past President

As each year passes, we lose and gain people on the board and committees. First of all, thanks are due for people who have served on the board this past year. They have devoted many hours of service to the Federation. This includes Lesley Bohm, Andre Agnoloni, Peter Woodsworth, Chris Ludwig, Shane Koscielniak, Richard Keltie, Chris Mills, and David

King from the board.

After four years of terrific service, Andrea is stepping down as our Treasurer. Thanks Andrea. The remainder of the board will be staying on. Lesley Bohm is stepping forward as President to replace me. I welcome Chuck Dick, Ken Legg (our new treasurer), and Judy Leykauf as new directors on the board.

On the Recreation and Conservation Committee, Jay MacArthur, Roger Freeman, Monica Bittel, Mike Feller, Brian Wood, Beth Wark, John Grant, Lesley Bohm, Pat Harrison, and John Thompson need to be thanked for their hours of dedication on pressing issues. They make sure that members of government and industry hear your views.

On our other main committee, the Trails Committee, John Otava (Chairperson), Alex Wallace, Louis Irwin, Gabriel Mazoret, Bill Meyer, June Banwell and Chris Mills (deceased) have efficiently and effectively carried on our trails functions. Most of these members have been serving on this committee for many years. Thank you for your time and service.

Chris Ludwig and Peter Woodsworth have stepped forward to take on the duties of the Education and Safety Committee. I thank Chris Mills for all he did for this committee over the past six years.

I also want to welcome our newest club from McBride, the Fraser Headwaters Alliance. Their big project at the moment is the Goat River Trail, a heritage trail from McBride to Barkerville. They have received MEC funding for portions of this trail and hope to have it opened by September (see article in this issue of Cloudburst).

I want to know whom you want to thank for doing service for the Federation. Please email me at hike@unixg.ubc.ca or mail me at the Fed Office and let me know. We want to make sure they are recognized.

Min. of Environment budget cuts
*Reprinted with permission from The Federation
of BC Naturalists newsletter*

**Who is being cut from the Ministry of
Environment, Lands and Parks staff?**

- A total of 134 staff immediately, with additional cuts probable over the next few months. 45 are from the Fisheries, Wildlife and Habitat Protection Programs, and 7 from Parks. Out of these 45, 43 (95%) were from Regional Operations, not Victoria. 34 (76%) of them were from Habitat Protection, and 5 and one half each from Fisheries and Wildlife. These are mostly front-line positions, delivering vital, protective functions.
- This round of cuts now put the Fisheries, Wildlife, Habitat Protection, and Parks Programs at barely 50% of their former staff levels of 5 years ago.
- Note that the Ministry of Forests has also undergone drastic personnel cuts which will affect many ecosystems, since they have jurisdiction over all Crown forest and range lands outside of parks. Clearly, the Environment is a low priority for the government.

**How will Wildlife, Habitat and Parks Programs
be affected?**

- Habitats, populations, genetic diversity, and species, are now increasingly at risk, due to the cumulative staff cuts. The activities of the staff who have been cut will no longer be done, except for critical functions, which will be added to those of remaining staff, further debilitating their delivery of work previously assigned to them. "Crisis Management" will increasingly be the order of the day.
- **In the Kootenays, ALL Habitat Protection Officers have been cut.**
- Elsewhere, Forest Districts now have less than half the bare minimum of Habitat Protection staff required to deliver on the Forest Practices Code provisions.
- **BC has less than half the recommended staff**

and funding to adequately address Parks management needs. In peak season, there is approximately 1/2 a staff person for each of B.C.'s 700 Provincial Parks and only 256 permanent positions.

- Recently designated Parks, and those planned for designation this Fall, have completely insufficient funding to allow for proper Planning, Management, Maintenance, or Enforcement. This has already led to impacts on fish, wildlife, habitats, and facilities.
- B.C. spends only 40 cents a hectare to manage the provincial park system.
- **Threatened and Endangered (red-listed) species will come under increasing pressure,** as a result of staff cuts in Victoria, Penticton, and many Forest Districts.
- **Delivery of the Forest Practices Code's Identified Wildlife Management Strategy will be greatly impaired as a result of the cuts in Habitat Protection field-level staff.**
- Fisheries functions in the Okanagan and Peace Regions will be lost due to field staff cuts.
- Efforts to identify and protect Ungulate Winter Ranges will be reduced, leading to serious losses to populations.
- Efforts to set aside Old Growth Management Areas will be reduced, closing options to provide for maintenance of biodiversity.

Why have these cut backs occurred?

- Current Government priorities are Health, Education, and the Economy. The need for increased Government revenues from sales of Crown Assets, and liquidation of Old Growth Forests, is currently driving resource management decisions.

**Why Conservation Organizations are
concerned:**

- We represent at least 215,000 British Columbians who value wildlife and natural habitats
- We are speaking for other British Columbians: according to government surveys, 90% of British

Columbians desire diverse and abundant wildlife, and more than 65% are willing to pay more to achieve this.

We want to keep British Columbia beautiful and full of wildlife and natural spaces. There need to be people employed by the Ministry to enforce wildlife and habitat protection laws, to monitor wildlife populations, to perform inventory work, to help the public appreciate nature, to prevent vandalism and abuse of our parks, to carry out the biological components and assessments required under the Forest Practices Code, to ensure endangered species do not become extirpated and many other functions of an active ministry.

What will it cost?

Replacing MELP staff and budget resources back to the level five years ago should be a top priority. To replace these over five years would cost only \$15 Million more per year – a drop in the bucket, relative to the Provincial budget. The Parks Legacy Panel recommended a graduated doubling of the Parks Budget (to \$82 million) from a variety of sources. The current budgets for Fish, Wildlife, Habitat Protection, and Parks, total less than 0.4% of the 1999 Provincial budget. If we restore funding it will still cost less than 1% of the budget.

Recreation & Conservation report

By Jay MacArthur, R&C Chairperson

Lillooet LRMP

The group seems to be stuck on protected areas. There is a big gap between what the recreation/conservation groups want (about 20% of mostly alpine areas) and what the forest industry is willing to agree to (not much). The next meeting is going to discuss access and will avoid protected area discussions. Contact Jay MacArthur or Brian Wood for more information.

Government Budgets

Forest Service infrastructure budget is being cut drastically. Recreation budget is also being cut.

What should our role be, can we make a positive contribution or just complain? We would appreciate your comments.

Forest Tenure and Mac/Blo Reimbursement

Currently, there is controversy regarding a potential land give-away to MacMillan Bloedel. At the annual general meeting, the members decided to ask the government to provide more time for public comment. Roger will write a letter to Dave Zirnelt, the Minister of Forests.

Commercial Recreation in Squamish Forest District

Monica has provided a copy of a letter from Drew Carmichael regarding the proposed planning process to resolve issues regarding recreation use. Some of the main conflicts are between snowmobilers and ski-tourers. Jay will write a letter requesting more information about the issue. Draft sent to Brian Wood and Mike Feller for comments.

Contacts:

Drew Carmichael, IAMC Chair,
BC Parks, P.O. Box 220, Brackendale, V0N 1H0
Darrell Robb, Ministry of Forests,
2100 Labieux Road, Nanaimo, V6T 6E9
Charles Littledale, BCALC,
4th Floor, 10470 152nd Street, Surrey, V3R 0R3

The importance of documenting problems was discussed. A fall meeting with the local heli-ski company is planned.

BC's Park Legacy Project

We discussed the final report of the Legacy Panel. There was general agreement that the report was well done. Jay will write a letter of support to Cathy McGregor.

Leave No Trace

There is a programme in the US called Leave no Trace (www.lnt.org). Have a look.

Outdoor Recreation Council of BC

By Lesley Bohm, ORC Delegate

ORC AGM - June 5, 1999

The Outdoor Recreation Council (ORC) is in similar financial straits to the FMCBC and has chosen to cut the office rather than the executive director - the knowledge and expertise is worth more. Their government block grant is also reduced to zero.

Many of ORC's member clubs charge \$50/member and the volunteer effort of the backcountry horsepersons has resulted in 100 kilometres of trails, and exclusive park stewardship of them in Manning and Skagit Parks.

It was suggested we keep track of volunteer hours for the government, either leverage (presumptive billing) or payment. The horsepersons counted \$61,000 worth this year.

The Trans Canada Trail is due to open coast to coast in 2000 starting April 7 in Victoria, May 13 in Calgary.

BC Marine Trails is progressing, including Blackberry Point and Valdez Island. MacMillan Bloedel has fenced it for fire control.

ORC would like to double its annual \$120 dues. The FMCBC Directors at the 29 June Meeting agreed to support this option for one year.

Motorcycle group does school presentations for safety education classes.

What ORC has done/been involved with this year

- * Rivers Day
- * Trans Canada Trail
- * Opposing kill fishery of Steelhead up north - BC Wildlife Federation and BC Fly Fishers.

- * Marine Trails of BC - Underwater Council - Sea Kayak Association
- * Mountain bike trail Sechelt to Egmont - Sunshine Recreation
- * Motorbike awareness and safety in schools - BC Hydro
- * Advocacy for species and habitats - Federation of BC Naturalists
- * 100 kilometres of trails and equine campsite at Manning and Skagit Parks - BC Horsemen.
- * Access to marine shoreline study.
- * Elementary school rock workshops (1/wk) - Lapidary Rock Association
- * Insurance Programme - Johnson and Meiers
- * Attended Central Coast LRMP; Lillooet LRMP; Okanagan Shuswap LRMP
- * Mapping of Central Coast Recreation - ORC Mapping Project
- * Native Land Treaties
- * Parks Legacy
- * Vancouver Island CORE
- * Oppose Salmon Aquaculture
- * Fraser River, Lower Mainland PA: gas and oil moratorium for boat holding tanks.

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Trail Committee report

By John Otava, Committee chairperson

Summary of Activities

Peter Woodsworth has received a reply from the GVRD that the groomed trails on Lynn Headwaters Regional Park land adjacent to Grouse Mountain Ski Area are on a test basis only. Peter had inquired why public land was being groomed so that commercial interests could utilize this area. Peter was also reassured that hikers' access will not be restricted and the GVRD will keep the North Shore Hikers informed.

Concerning Mountain Highway Parking (BP Trail), it was decided to adopt option A that would allow 50% resident parking and keep the gate closed. If this does not work, option B would be implemented, which would allow 50% resident parking, open the gate, and provide more parking higher up.

The Bulkley Valley Backpackers have been maintaining the Silvern Lakes trail as part of the Fed's Adopt A Trail Programme. They would like to adopt three more trails.

The Golden Agers have been doing work on the Baden-Powell Trail from Deep Cove to Mt. Seymour Road. They have submitted a report to the Trails Committee.

John Otava was on the lower parts of the Centennial Trail (Pasayten River) recently and reported it is in good shape. It, of course, has much snow.

The Chilliwack Outdoor Club cleared the Pierce Lake Trail. Neil Grainger reports they are working on a new access to Liumchen Ridge (International Ridge) from the trail using an old skid road from the Cultus Lake side.

Gabriel Mazoret produced a report about Green Ways (formerly Green Zones and now reactivated). He has studied the North Shore sector (Deep Cove to Indian Arm). The idea is to connect parks and different areas of special interests with recreational corridors. He envisions a route from the Lynn

Headwaters, north of Seymour Mountain to Elsay Lake and down to Caldwell Beach. The Fed's Trail Committee has endorsed the idea.

The Pro's and Con's of DEET

By Alex Wallace - Trails Committee

"I'm melting, ..I'm melting...." (my gear!)

At this time of year the stores are doing a brisk trade in bug repellent. However, as many of us have found, the active ingredient in most of these products, "DEET", has a nasty drawback in that it melts many plastics, (nylon being stated to be one exception. This means that equipment such as sunglasses, watches, fishing line and many other items are damaged (or in the case of flagging tape or vinyl car seats, turned into a colourful sticky goo) if they come in contact with the DEET on your skin. Some people also have concerns about using it while handling tents, packs, climbing ropes and slings.

On a more serious note, the Consumer's Association reported in 1993 that 3 children in the U.S. had died as a direct result of the use (or over use) of products containing DEET and they recommended that no-one use DEET in concentrations higher than 30% (and it should never be used on kids under two). In fact, when DEET was originally developed in a lab in the 1950's it was found to be the chemical most readily absorbed by the human body; (this explains why you can taste DEET in your mouth seconds after applying it behind your knees.) and it was thought that in future it could be used to deliver indigestible pharmaceuticals through the skin by attaching them to the DEET molecule. At some point it was noticed that mosquitoes avoided the test subjects and an industry was born.

I used DEET for many years as a landscaper and found it very effective. I also found that it gave me a temporary tendonitis in the backs of my hands. For this reason I switched to citronella based

repellents and found them to be quite adequate for mosquitoes and blackflies. My 11 year old daughter also finds that it meets her exacting standards: and I am not sure that I could persuade her to hike or pick berries in a bug suit, (however mesh hats are useful in some areas). Natrapel is the citronella product most widely available and my experience using it in trail work

is that it does lose effectiveness when it dries out on the skin but it can be revived with a splash of water.

After its arrival some 15 years ago, Lyme Disease, borne by ticks, is now acknowledged to be widespread in B.C. (wherever deer are common*) from Sparwood to Vancouver's North Shore. There is some question as to the effectiveness of DEET in repelling ticks, however there are also a number of tick specific products available that contain permethrin instead of DEET.

Is there, then, a place for those products that boast of containing DEET? Most would agree that it's wise to carry it as an essential emergency item: for example if you crash your floatplane (or break your ankle) in the bush you will be glad that, while waiting for help, you had a bottle of '80 proof DEET' in your first aid kit for just such an eventuality. The fact that you may melt holes in your new spandex climbing tights will be the last thing on your mind.

Ed. note: A full article on Lyme Disease will appear on these pages shortly. We invite your letters on this subject!

Trail Days

By Pat Harrison

The first Trail Days of the Fed occurred on July 10th, 1999. Eight people turned out to take on the challenge of creating a trail up the Pokosha River to Mount Jimmy Jimmy. Led by Chris Ludwig, the crew left Taylor Way and Highway One at 7:15 am.

After a brief stop at Squamish to rendezvous with two more people, the crew continued up the Squamish River Road to the turn off to the Ashlu River. Many kilometres later, the crew reached its destination.

The trail is marked as A-610 as it was once a logging road a mere 15 years ago. The alder and red-cedar have taken over. The crew started chopping at the trail head around 10 am. It was a good thing that Chris knew the route as we turned at one logging spur that looked no different than the other logging spur. After two hours of bush whacking, a quick lunch was taken. After lunch, the activities resumed for another three and one-half hours. In the afternoon, the humidity of this fine, sunny day began to take its toll as our energy levels began to slip (at least for some of us). By the end of the day, perhaps two kilometres of trail had been cleared. Most of us stayed until 3:30 pm, but Chris, Russ, and Diane stayed till 6 pm clearing trail. Perhaps another kilometre of trail on the logging roads needs to be cleared before hitting the old growth portion of the trail. Another couple of outings will occur this summer in order to try to finish this trail. The Fed would like to concentrate on one trail per summer. Look for further announcements.

Many thanks to Chris Ludwig for organizing this

(Continued on page 12)



Environmentally conscious?

Do you find yourself throwing away your waterproof liner (garbage bag) at the end of the trek?

There is an alternative

Hy & Dry packliners



Available at local retailers or over the web
www.spider.ca/turnpoint10
e-mail: turnpoint10@axlon.net

(Trails Day continued from page 11)

outing. Many thanks to the members of the crew: Chris Ludwig, Ian Hopper, Tim Hoskin, Russ Noel, Diane Noel, and Mike Peel of the BCMC, Lesley Bohm of the North Shore Hikers, and Pat Harrison of the Valley Outdoor Association.

The following is a rough estimation of distance to the trail head starting on the Squamish River Road where it turns off of Highway 99. This is "0" km.

12.8 km	Brackendale Road intersects from left. Keep going straight.
32.5 km	Pavement ends on the Squamish River Road
33.8 km	Left turn over Squamish River to go up Ashlu Valley. Just across bridge is small fork to right. Ignore this branch and keep going straight.
34.3 km	Cross bridge.
34.4 km	Fork to right. Keep straight (left)
35.5 km	Mile 22 Marker
36.0 km	Ashlu Campground on left. Cross two bridges going over the Ashlu River.
37.2 km	Mile 23 Marker
38.1 km	Cross over no named creek.
38.5 km	Mile 24 Marker
39.9 km	Heliport for logging on left side of road
40.3 km	Two forks to the right. Keep left.
40.8 km	Cross over un-named creek.
44.8 km	Road forks, take right fork.
45.3 km	Cross over Pokosho Creek
45.5 km	Arrive at metal gate to Ashlu Mine.
45.8 km	Trailhead to A-610 on left side. Marked with small white sign.

Education and Safety
By Peter Woodsworth, Director

Summer hiking and still an amazing snow pack! Some thoughts on ice-axe use gleamed from several outing with the North Shore Hikers.

An ice-axe is a critical safety tool. Many of our

benign summer trails are covered with hard-packed, steep snow, and should only be attempted with one (and, one wouldn't carry one if one didn't know how to use one - right?).

A club outing is not the occasion to learn how to use an ice-axe, often including only a few minutes of casual instruction. It requires a good half-day of instruction and practice to begin to develop the competence that may save your life. With this in mind, don't lend an ice-axe to an inexperienced friend. You may be putting them at risk.

Also, those long, wonderful and so accessible snow chutes that are such a breeze to kickstep up using your newly acquired ice-axe techniques, are at the top, suddenly, a nightmare to descend. If you have any doubts about a slope going up, be assured those doubts will change to fear going down. The same is true of those casual, little rock-scrambles where you need only a few small boosts to get through. Know your limits and say no!

Finally, a few thoughts on safely packing an ice-axe. Strap it vertically, not sticking out at an angle, thus creating a half metre kill zone around you. A spike protector is also a good idea.

Strathcona Park Update - July 1999

*Prepared by Judy Wigmore - Chairperson,
Strathcona Park Public Advisory Committee*

First for the good news - no backcountry and marine camping fees will be charged this year in Strathcona Park. The \$3.00/person/night fee for people 13 years and over is being charged at Cape Scott; other Island parks will be charging a \$5.00/person/night.

Due to the exceptionally high snowfall this year, there has been extensive damage to backcountry facilities, including the vital Thelwood bridge. Many areas in Strathcona Park will not be open for a while yet, if at all, this summer.

The Bedwell Lake trail is closed - the Jim Mitchell road is gated. A meter of snow remains at the Forbidden Plateau parking lot. This popular hiking area will be opened, one loop at a time, if washroom facilities still exist and the trails are useable. Before going on your hike, it's best to check with the appropriate BC Parks district office for current conditions and fee situation as the situation varies on the Island. For Strathcona Park, contact the Black Creek office at (250) 337-2400. Go prepared to travel and camp on snow.

Land trade negotiations are ongoing between BC Parks and TimberWest for Buttle Narrows lands as a condition of TimberWest's park use permit for road access to log its' Mount Adrian property. The Friends of Strathcona have initiated court proceedings against BC Parks for the issuance of this park use permit.

Six master plan workshops were held in late May to discuss the visions we have for Strathcona Park - preservation of wilderness was identified at each workshop in Tofino, Port Alberni, Victoria, Gold River, Campbell River and Courtenay. A package of these proceedings is being mailed to participants.

BC Parks and the Strathcona Park Public Advisory Committee is preparing a follow-up review package, summarizing major issues and proposed draft amendments to the master plan. Mid-November is targeted for public discussion of this package in the same communities. The follow-up package will be distributed prior to these meetings. For further information on the master plan review process, please call BC Parks' planner, Kris Kennett at the Rath Trevor District office in Parksville at (250) 954-4600; or, via email at Kris.Kennett@gems3.gov.bc.ca.

Have a safe summer in the outdoors and be mindful of the melting snowpack!

Mac-Blo land swap public meeting

By Richard Keltie

A meeting was held in Victoria on June 29. It was VERY well attended. Standing room only in the hall outside the meeting room and a speaker for those who could not get inside.

There were two hours of speakers (10 minutes each) and virtually all were against a land give away to M&B. Their theme was: "keep crown land under public ownership." Several offered alternatives (e.g.: crown land lease near existing TFL's, stumpage rebate to pay equivalent) and some asked that M&B be required to pay back the cost of the legacy of their environmental damage.

There was a poster display by Ministry of Forests and the attendee said that the private land equivalent to the FPC (currently before cabinet) is much weaker than the FPC.

Most of the planned land give away is on Vancouver Island and there were maps of the proposed locations (mostly on the east side of the island - Duncan to Courtenay). We got a map.

There were several well-prepared and well-organized speakers - obviously having spoken at previous sessions on forest use.

Letters were welcomed until June 30, 1999.

(Ed. note: The Federation's Pat Harrison and Roger Freeman sent letters opposing the land swap. Most delegates at the AGM felt that the process was being rushed and saw no need to do a land swap (if at all) without a thorough environmental and economic assessment, and more public input).

Timberwest road in Strathcona Park

"The Friends of Strathcona" media release

Park Protectors Take N.D.P. Government to Court

The Friends of Strathcona Park will be taking the provincial government to court over its decision to allow a logging road to be built in the Park. The road has already been built by the TimberWest logging corporation through six hectares of old growth Douglas fir forest. The road provides access to large tracts of Timberwest's private property adjacent to the park.

The area of the Park which was logged has experienced significant blowdown of trees, and the road within the Park was not constructed to the standards required by the Forest Practices Code.

"This situation sets a precedent for park lands throughout British Columbia," says Marlene Smith, spokesperson for the Friends. "In fact, an application to do the same thing in Manning Park is already in front of the government."

The group objects to the granting of the Park Use Permit for a number of reasons. These include:

- That consultation with the public was inadequate and inappropriate.
- That the road allows TimberWest to clearcut a large area of the wilderness viewscape from the heart of the park, when no visual impact assessment was done.
- That the ownership of lands claimed to be on the table in trade for the permit area was not known at the time the permit was granted. Although the government has very recently (yesterday) claimed to have established that TimberWest

owns the lands proposed to be traded for the permit area, no proof has been shown to the Friends of Strathcona or any other group.

- That the granting of this permit sets a precedent to five timber corporations access through any wilderness park lands in B.C.
- That the granting of the permit violates both B.C. Park Act and the Strathcona Park Master Plan.

"We are very concerned about this government's increasing support for corporate interests over public interest," says Smith. "Indications from the Parks ministry are that the bureaucrats feel they had no choice but to grant this permit. In its darkest days with the Socreds, the environmental movement had

more success in controlling corporate lust for precious public lands."

"A park use permit must not be issued unless, in the opinion of the minister, to do so is necessary to preserve or maintain the recreational values of the park..."

B.C. Park Act Section 8(2).

Smith cites the recent proposal by the N.D.P. to give away 30,000 hectares of public land to MacMillan Bloedel, soon to be owned by the American multinational,

Weyerhaeuser, as an unprecedented example of betrayal of the public trust. "This would have unthinkable under any other government we have worked with over the last 20 years," she says.

The Friends of Strathcona Park met on June 8, 1999, with the representatives from the Ministry of Environment, Lands, and Parks (MELP), to try to head off the court case. They put forward three conditions to avoid litigation. These were:

- 1) That MELP rescind the park use permit, as permitted in the Park Act.
- 2) That money from the sale of trees cut in the Park under the permit be allocated for rehabilitation and restoration of the damage, and

- 3) That protocols be immediately established to prohibit industrial use of B.C. Parks and to establish a democratic process for hearing applications for park use permits.

"We believe these requests are very reasonable and in the public interest," says Smith. The Friends asked the government to respond with two weeks. They finally replied on July 2, after the Friends told them they would be starting a public information campaign on the issue. "Their reply basically repeats and reinforces their position that the granting of this permit is of benefit to the park, and to the people of British Columbia," says Smith.

"TimberWest is laughing all the way to the bank," she says. "They have logged through the heart of the Park, and are continuing to clearcut lands which can be seen from the wildest parts of the Park. They received permission to build this road from a government that has received absolutely nothing in return. They have been given a piece of our wilderness heritage in exchange for future, unspecified considerations."

"The Friends of Strathcona Park cannot let this one rest," says Smith. "If we don't fight this with our allies around the province, it will be the Strathcona Park today, Manning Park tomorrow, and the wilderness nearest you the day after that. Once again, it's time to call on the people of B.C. to defend our wilderness legacy for the future."

Key Points against Industrial Park Use Permits

"A park use permit must not be issued unless, in the opinion of the minister, to do so is necessary to preserve or maintain the recreational values of the park..." B.C. Park Act Section 8(2).

"A natural resource in a park of any class must not be granted, sold, removed, destroyed, disturbed, damaged, or exploited unless, in the opinion of the

minister, the development, improvement, and the use of the park will not be hindered by it." BC Park Act Section 9(7).

"...(Parks staff must) review, in a public forum, any proposal for a park use permit which involves land tenure." Strathcona Park Master Plan Section 5(1).

"...(the goal is) to maintain views in and out of the park, so that the visual qualities and wilderness atmosphere of the park are protected." Strathcona Park Master Plan Section 6.7.

"...(the goal is) to provide a pleasant nature viewing experience to those travelling by car through the park." Strathcona Park Master Plan Section 6.6.11.

- Strathcona is a Class "A" provincial park. It has the highest level of protection afforded under the Park Act.....yet this permit has been granted to a timber corporation, the area has been logged, and industrial road has been built, and the land has been permanently alienated from wilderness park use without any meaningful public consultation.
- This permit sets a precedent to allow industrial access through all British Columbia parks. An application to do the same thing in Manning Park is already before the Parks ministry.
- Vast areas of clearcuts, accessed only via this park use permit, will be visible both from the road corridor through the park, and from the wilderness conservancy areas in the heart of the park.
- The area to be clearcut was listed as a "high priority" for addition to the park at the end of five years of intensive public process.
- While the TimberWest corporation has gained access to vast tracts of land on the border of the park, the public has received absolutely nothing in exchange.

Eagle Heights Grasslands

By Don Webb

The M.O.E. Conservation Data Centre has been conducting species occurrence inventories at Eagle Heights Grasslands throughout the spring and summer of this year in an effort to further understand the significance of this site. The CDC has been aided in their studies by Dr. Hans Roemer (BC Parks ecologist), Dr. W. B. Schofield (UBC) and Dr. Judy Harpel. Inventories of vertebrates and invertebrates are still pending, but so far 145 vascular plant species have been identified, 117 species of Bryophyte, and 80 species of Fungi. The largest portion of these species are so called "Southern Elements" typical of Garry Oak habitats, and represent collectively the finest and most species rich example of an ecosystem called Rare Pocket Grassland which is limited to 14 sites world wide. The Nature Conservancy, Cowichan Valley Naturalists, and Koksilah Park Society managed to convince MacMillan-Bloedel to include their portion of the Grassland in the recent Goal 2 negotiations the forest company is have with the Provincial Government. The Ministry of Environment Executives promptly rejected the companies request. In fact, the Ministry is still unwilling to even protect the portion of the Grassland which occurs on Crown Forest Land adjacent to Koksilah River Provincial Park.

Local groups supporting the protection of the area are extremely concerned that the area will be lost as Scotch Broom was identified for the first time this year to be occurring in the Grass complex at Eagle Heights.

"If we don't have Management Plan for the area and access to M-B's portion of the property so we can take care of the few Broom plants that are there, its going to become established and will lose the site. We've got Broom in every other example of this ecosystem and there pretty much toast." say's Don Webb, chair of the Koksilah Park Society.

(Ed. Note: This demonstrates the critical need for more field botanists in government)

Time is running out - MLA still confident grassland can be saved

(Reprinted from the Cowichan News Leader - April, '99 by Jennifer McLarty, staff reporter)

Time is running out for the Eagle Heights grassland pocket, despite local efforts to include it in the Vancouver Island Land Use Plan and BC's Goal Two protected areas strategy. But Malahat-Juan de Fuca MLA Rick Kasper remains optimistic the site can be saved before the selection process is complete.

"We've been working very hard to convey the importance of this area to the Minister of Environment, Lands and Parks," said Julian Szostakiwskyj, Kasper's constituency assistant. "Eagle Heights is to botany what the Vancouver Island marmot population is to mammals. It can't be replaced."

Kasper met with members of the Conservation Data Centre and MELP executive director Ken Baker last Tuesday, in an effort to secure the grasslands - home to 51 rare, threatened and endangered species of plants and fungi.

So far, no direct answers have resulted from the session. Instead, there seems to be continued to debate about whether Eagle Heights fits into the government's protected areas strategy at such a late date.

Originally, the ecosystem was slated for consideration in 1996, however a bureaucratic oversight excluded it from the process, says Szostakiwskyj.

Three years later, most of the work has been completed, and more than 12 percent of the Island is already safeguarded - the legislated ceiling for PAS properties.

"That appears to be an obstacle for the Ministry of

Environment," said Szostakiswhkj, adding he fears one exception will open the flood gates. "We're still trying to drive home the grassland's importance."

But the Cowichan Valley Naturalists and the Koksilah Park Society have a much different recollection of events.

The two groups say it was evidently clear that Eagle Heights was on the table from day one, yet it was the province's wish to swap the land with MacMillan Bloedel for road access.

Only after an aggressive lobbying campaign by KFS members, was the property given a second chance for consideration.

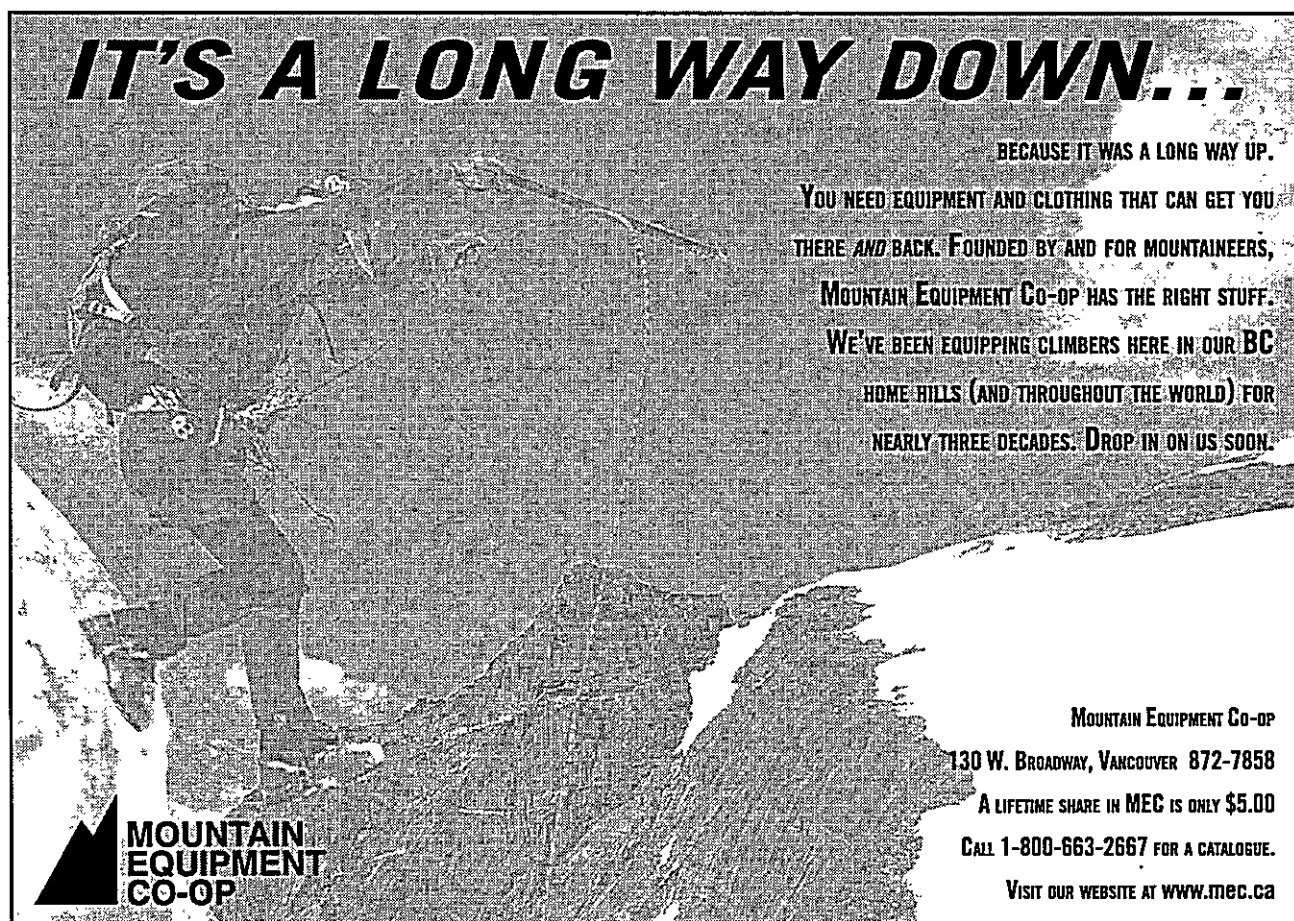
"The government didn't overlook this site, and we have the paperwork to prove it," said society chair Don Webb.

As a last resort, the Cowichan Valley Regional District has also agreed to consider acquiring the property - near the south slope of Koksilah Ridge - if the province doesn't contribute. Of the total 80 hectare grassland parcel, 31 hectares belongs to MacMillan Bloedel, and 48 hectares to the Crown.

Ideally the KPS wants 100 per cent of the pocket protected in order to keep it intact and separated from contaminants like noxious weeds.

A decision from the government is expected before the end of April.

(Ed. Note - This article was submitted to me in early May by Syd Watts. I have confirmed with Syd that this issue is still ongoing in July, 1999)



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Historic Goat River Trail reopened

By Roy Howard, Fraser Headwaters Alliance

After 30 years of neglect, one of the most historic trails in the headwaters of the Fraser River is being reopened. Under the direction of the Fraser Headwaters Alliance, a conservation society based in the Robson Valley, local enthusiasts have made major progress on a project that will allow backpackers and equestrians an opportunity to traverse the width of the Cariboo Mountains.

A crew working for John Bowron, the Gold Commissioner of the Cariboo, originally cleared the Goat River Trail in 1886. It connected Barkerville to McBride and was used as a major pack trail for years, until the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway was completed between McBride and Prince George. "In 1912, the government surveyed the trail intending to develop it into a motor vehicle road," says Alliance coordinator, Roy Howard. "We just want to re-establish the original pack trail, although the route has been examined in recent decades for use as a scenic highway connector or a snowmobile trail."

Most of the trail runs through the spectacular, pristine wilderness of the upper Goat River. "The government has slated this area for imminent logging under a recent land-use decision," says Howard. "While the Alliance will continue to oppose development in the watershed, those who want to see it in a pure wild state had better hurry," he continued. "Road development could start as early as this summer, but fall is more likely."

Along the trail, old cabins, cache pits, mining evidence and century-old blazes can still be seen. The trail is the only one that was regularly used to cross the Cariboo Mountains, and utilizes the lowest pass in the range. It is also believed to have been a pre-contact First Nations' trade route between the Bowron Lakes and the upper Fraser River.

The Alliance will complete trail restoration this summer. Last year workers cleared brush and deadfall from about half of the 32-kilometre trail between access roads. This season's work began at the end of May with the erection of a new sign at the trailhead on the Goat River Forest Service Road, near McBride.

To contact Fraser Headwaters Alliance:

Roy Howard, Coordinator

250-968-4410

roy@fraserheadwaters.org

Lelani Arris, President

250-968-4401

larris@fraserheadwaters.org

(Ed. note - We welcome our newest member, Fraser Headwater Alliance of McBride. Goat River is one of several routes being looked at to complete the National Hiking Trail between McBride and Quesnell)

North Central Update

By Dave King

The hiking season got off to a slow start in the central parts of the province as so much snow remained in the mountains. It is still possible to ski on north-facing slopes below tree line and, if we don't get a lot of hot weather in the remainder of the summer, some areas likely will never melt before winter arrives again.

At the moment there are not major land use issues taking up time although the conflicts with motorized users is in the background. The Caledonia Ramblers in conjunction with other groups that belong to the PG Backcountry Recreation Society are in the process of identifying all backcountry hiking and skiing trails and these will eventually be entered on the Federation database. Getting all trails properly mapped will take several months but basic descriptions should be completed in the fall. The

prime intent is to make them known to the Ministry of Forests, BCAL and to forest companies so that they will be given better consideration in planning processes.

Work also continues on identification of a route for the National Hiking Trail. I have had recent discussion with folk in both McBride and Quesnel. There is no good route from the Bowron Lakes/the Cariboo Mtns to Quesnel as the entire area is laced with logging roads and this may be the biggest challenge to overcome in identifying a route for the National Hiking Trail.

Book review

By Chris Ludwig, Director

Book Title: Bush Basics Author: Glen Stedham, 1997, Orca Book Publishers

This guide to backcountry travel offers an excellent overview of the skills necessary to hike safely in the backcountry. As the author is local, it has a distinctly coastal slant, which makes it especially useful for Vancouver readers.

The first half of the book focuses on staying warm and conformable outdoors, as well as navigation (maps, compass work, and route finding). The author's initial focus on hypothermia I believe is well warranted, bearing in mind that the vast bulk of outdoor-related injury are cold related. I found the chapter on maps to be particularly well thought out as the author discusses not only map reading techniques, but goes one step further to discuss some of the limitations of topographic maps.

Meanwhile, the chapter on compass work provides clear step by step instructions as to how to deal with problems such as magnetic declination, bearings, and triangulation. Being that compass work is an area of weakness for many hikers, the 50 pages dedicated to it and related topics are definitely worth the read.

The second half of the book features a more-wide array of topics ranging from fire making to bears. Some chapters, such as those on food, and winter travel are very much introductory chapters, and left me with the desire for a more in-depth discussion. The recommended reading list at the end of the book, however, does offer a means in which to explore a specific topic in greater detail.

Overall, I do feel, however, that there is room for greater discussion on camp craft and equipment. This is not to say that these topics are not covered. There is in fact a chapter dedicated just to equipment. In that chapter, there is discussion about rainwear and headgear, however, one will not find discussion on the merits of one type of boot construction over another for example.

Some of the chapters I learned something new were the fire making chapter and the general hiking technique chapters. In these chapters, I found the breakup of information to be concise and easy to understand.

One final point that I enjoyed about the book was the insertion of the occasional reference to stories such as the early outdoor adventurers of the American Geographical Society expedition of 1878 mentioned in the first chapter of the book. In conclusion, I found **Bush**

Basics to be approachable, easy to read, and informative; a good choice for the beginning outdoor enthusiast, or the more seasoned backpacker.

The Hiker

Chris Ludwig, FMCBC director

From the start
I knew I would be slow
each step a procedure
along the way

and in this process
I could find the destination
perhaps

by seeking
the faith of one's youth
each thought might mend
and eternal optimism
laid waste
in the dreariness of sweat and insects

the battle to keep up with it all
to make ends meet beginnings
they all drag you along
with only the trail as your guide

WHO WE ARE!

.....

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Island Mountain Ramblers

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