Kootenay Mountaineer

The KMC Newsletter July-August 2003 Issue 4 Next deadline: Sep. 17th

Inside

"WE NEED WILDERNESS WHETHER OR NOT WE EVER SET FOOT IN IT. WE NEED A REFUGE EVEN THOUGH WE MAY NEVER NEED TO GO THERE." Edward Abbey.

Paul Stastny, a freelance writer and outdoorsman used this quotation as an opener to his article "The Weaselhead: Resource to Plunder? Or Wilderness Refuge?" in the Spring 2003 edition of Calgary Area Outdoor Council's "Odyssey" newspaper (www.coac.ab.ca). His original intent was to interview people on how efforts to save a tract of land called the Weaselhead could benefit the people of Calgary as "a place of ecological, sustainable balance that could serve as reminder to generations to come that there's more to life than a bigger house, a better job and a more efficient commute". Things however quickly "got off the rails" when he found his interviewees reflecting Abbey's point i.e. why does it always have to be for us? His resulting interpretation of "Anthropocentricity" is presented here in a condensed version.

Anthropocentric "That is to say, it regards humans as the universe's most important entity. In its extreme form, nothing has any value in itself except to serve human interests. Nature is either a resource or a playground. Without getting political, the implications of this thinking are downright frightening when slanted nationalistically in today's "New World Order". As a natural outgrowth of egotism, an anthropocentric view of life can be seen as a stage in human development. But just as when someone gets stuck in adolescent egotism and doesn't come to develop an appreciation of others as equally important, man becomes a menace to himself and everything around him that he plunders with his boorishness. So as the world becomes saturated with human interests, the temptation is to see it as our world, a human world: But at the same time, there is a mass of evidence and a growing awareness that we do better to see ourselves as part of a living planet. In this humbler view, a place… has a right to exist for no other reason than that it is a wild place, and a home to a great variety of creatures. It's not really ours to pave over. It has value in itself apart from the benefits it affords us - including its benefits to our health -. In fact, the effort to preserve the area… by groups and many, many citizens is a sign of a higher order of health than strictly our hunger for personal wellness".

"ADVENTURE"?

To Find Adventure you must first find a place not yet visited. Then you must find a way of getting to that place. Whether this place is a location or a state of mind, adventure requires a step towards the unknown. However in a world where more and more is known it seems that there is less opportunity for adventure. This may sound counter intuitive, but in the modern world – where there is unparalleled access to transportation, gear, information, and established techniques – "adventure" is no longer adventure. Others have posed the same question. In fact many traditionalists have turned their backs on the new forms of rock climbing and view the proliferation of fixed protection in modern sport climbing as a blow to the sport's integrity.

Climbing is only one of the many "adventure" activities that has become more technical and less adventurous over time. Many outdoor activities require tremendous skill, push technical and physical boundaries, and offer unique ways to shorten your life span. Yet, the more that adventure sports develop and evolve, the less adventurous they become. When information is pooled, techniques are established and technical gear is manufactured and tested, few unknowns remain. Understood in this context, the tools that accompany modern adventures – like GPS, altimeters, helicopters, radio communications, film crews, etc. – make the term "modern adventure" sound similar to classic oxymoron like "jumbo shrimps" and "military intelligence". Of course this does not distract from the incredible and bold achievements that continue to take place in a variety of outdoor disciplines. Rather, it helps to show that "adventure" is culturally determined.

Maybe it is time to put down the guidebook, ignore the latest gear review, and try something that is new to you. Perhaps adventure in the modern world is more about reinventing the wheel than doing something that has never been done. I think that in many cases it is possible to invent a better wheel. To do this we may have to improve on the style of those who ventured before us by doing more with less. In a society that is preoccupied by certainty and comfort, adventure allows us to get humbled by forces that are greater than all of humanity. For this reason, very few people feel the need to be adventurous. After all, adventure carries with it great risks. So, learning basic skills is a necessity. But in the application of these skills there is still room to embrace other unknowns and do things that are new to you. In a consumer culture it is only natural to want to consume adventure, but to find true adventure you must let adventure consume you. Adventure lurks beyond the boundaries of accepted practice. It beckons us to explore uncertain places within ourselves. So remember this, adventure is personal. It can be found at the cutting edge of a sport or in the first attempt of a new activity. Adventure is simple and raw, a luxury that cannot be purchased. And, when it is, it is no longer. *Condensed from Justin Mulcahy's "Modern Adventure: An Oxymoron?" in Coast Magazine's Oct. 2001 issue, p.30. www.coastmag.com*

"The amount of wildlife habitat has continued to diminish and is under constant threat...the bottom line is that all threats need to be challenged by a strong network of organizations speaking with a common united voice. The groups at all levels must be linked by a silver thread of sound ethics, with the common good of wildlife and lands in mind...Our best defense is for each of us to set a good, positive example in our actions and only support ethical activities". *Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation in The Outdoor Edge, vol.13, issue 3, May/June 2003*

B.C. Government's "Heartlands" Economic Strategy. The provincial and federal governments have as of yet not committed their two-thirds share of the $14 million dollar price tag. But the provincial government has said that work with the City of Cranbrook has begun as communities in the region will also be expected to finalize the one third share of financial commitment they are to put into the expansion. The Kootenays is a region that has been forever dependent on natural resource industries and the Cranbrook Airport expansion is seen as necessary to diversify into tourism. Five ski resorts lie within a 2½ hour drive of Cranbrook and an increasing number of golf resorts is being developed to make the Kootenays a year round retreat. There is between $300 and $700 million of investment parked and ready to be spent once the airport gets going. Following Sept.11 when other international destinations saw their tourism business shrink, visits to the Kootenays were up 17%. Although the resource sector is still at the top of the region's economic heap, tourism is quickly increasing in importance as an engine for wealth and employment. The project is being heavily promoted by the four Kootenay MLA's who see it as their top economic development priority. A longer runway will welcome a steady stream of wide-bodied jets belonging to international charter companies bringing 200-300 passengers at a time from Europe, Asia or the U.S. The parties involved realize that just building it does not mean that they will come. The region has set up a marketing subcommittee and is working on a $4 million, multi-year marketing plan to reach the international and U.S markets. *Condensed and edited from Derrick Penner's article "Airport Expansion Plan For Cranbrook Gets Lift" in The Vancouver Sun, Feb 27, 2003 edition, on page C7*

"WATER is one of the fundamental building blocks of life on this planet. It is as awesome and pernicious as it is ubiquitous and amorphous. It is a constant in the shifting geographic configuration of our world. Climate change and water are inexorably linked." Doug Leonard, Executive Director of Banff's Whyte Museum in his message on the **International Year of Water** in the Winter/Summer 2003 The Cairn newsletter.

Take a Peek at Trailpeak

Trailpeak is a free trails database for B.C. (including mountain biking and kayaking routes). New information is being added daily. You'll find the Stein Valley, West Coast Trail, Nootka Island Trail, most of the North Shore mountain biking trails, trails in Kelowna, Kaslo, the B.C. Rockies, northern B.C. and **epic** kayak trips such as Desolation Sound, the Discovery Group and Rendezvous Island. *Check out Trailpeak's website at www.trailpeak.corn (from the Province, Tues, May 13 p. B5)*

The key to quickening your pace is increasing the step per second rather than lengthening the stride. Over striding may lead to muscle strains and shin splints.

JUST SAY SNOW

BACKCOUNTRY CRITICS CHALLENGE THE "SCIENCE" OF AVALANCHE TESTING [From EXPLORE magazine, Winter 2002 P15-16]

Last January, five skiers from Washington State were carving turns down an open slope below a backcountry hut on Mt. Carlyle, in British Columbia's West Kootenay region. As they descended, the fourth skier triggered an enormous avalanche that roared down the mountainside, snapping trees and sweeping three friends to their deaths.

After the tragedy, a local police officer reported that the skiers had been carrying the required gear -transceivers and probes- and had been tutored in avalanche safety. "They were doing all the right things," the officer said. But were they?

For decades, avalanche-wary skiers have been taught to dig a pit, study the crystals and look for weak layers to judge the stability of the snow before skiing down a slope. A backcountry Einstein studiously dissecting the snowpack has become the dominant image of avalanche safety in countless magazine articles and TV documentaries.

But Christoph Dietzfelbinger, a German-born guide now working in B.C., warns that the misguided faith in this "science" of avalanche testing endangers the lives of the increasing number of travelers who venture into the Canadian backcountry. The quasi-scientific results of snow tests, he says, encourage people to ignore other more subjective warning signs -recent avalanches, the settling of the snow pack, reports from other skiers - And two decades of studies have proven the unreliability of stability tests when used alone.

"We crave certainty, and these tests satisfy this need or at least create the illusion of certainty," Dietzfelbinger says. "Snow profiles measure what's easy to observe but they don't tell you what you want to know: 'Can I ski this slope?'"

The 20-year guiding veteran takes aim at the Canadian Avalanche Association, for whom he has taught courses, describing the non-profit organization as too resistant to new methodology in avalanche science and education. To counter the received wisdom taught in some avalanche courses, Dieztfelbinger champions the ideas of Swiss guide Werner Munter, who has challenged the use of snow-stability tests as the foundation for choosing a safe route. Munter cites the experience of a group of Swiss Army skiers in 1991: after the troops had performed a rutschblock (a type of stability test) with positive results, the slope propagated into an avalanche that buried and killed two skiers. The area around the rutschblock was the only section of snow left standing on the slope-a tiny island of stability in a sea of instability.

Niko Weiss, former president of the Canadian Avalanche Association and now an avalanche consultant, agrees that Munter's ideas have helped to promote discussion, but he's less critical of the CAA and the established thinking about avalanches. "Is the system dogmatic? No. Did we say it was complete? No," Weiss says. "We have well-respected programs here in Canada, but it's always a process of change."

Weiss says that North Americans take pride in our snow science for a reason -we're good at it. He agrees, however, that in our emphasis on snow tests we may neglect the intricate issues of terrain: Is the slope supported by trees or large boulders? Is it below a cornice or hanging glacier? On a slide path or wind-transported snow? "In the courses I teach, I find that most people are just baffled by where they are in the backcountry and how to quantify it," says Weiss.

Dietzfelbinger hopes that Munter's ideas will provoke discussion in another often overlooked area key to safe travel in avalanche country: the human dynamics of decision-making. Skiing can be an emotionally charged experience, he explains, and the ambitions of a group of skiers or the tendency to defer to strong-willed risk-takers can trump more rational decisions. Appearances can also dupe skiers into poor choices: "A snow slope looks safer in the sun or when someone has already skied it," notes Dietzfelbinger, when such terrain could be far more dangerous than an untracked route through a whiteout.

"Rational decision-making is all good," he says. "But that's not what we do."

An drew Findlay

[Submitted by Pat Thomson]

"You don't know what freedom (wilderness) is, unless you are deprived of it". Author unknown

Executive Notes

Hiking camps: All spaces are filled for all 3 camps.
Website: Software for posting the newsletter and other information on the website turned out to be too expensive. Doug is looking at alternatives.
Library: Thank you to David Mitchell for donating his 1996 Canadian Alpine Journal to the KMC library.
Winter trips: Motion was passed that the club will no longer provide a winter equipment rental service and will dispose of its existing inventory.
Mountaineering School: The course will not be offered this year as Laura Adams is unavailable to run it and a replacement could not be arranged in suitable time.
Because the club' summer equipment inventory is too old to be considered safe, motion was passed that the club dispose of its summer equipment inventory of harnesses, ropes & helmets.
Cabins, Huts and Trails: Firewood for the Steed hut was chopped this winter. A map is being taken in to the Copper Mt. Hut. Both huts need foamies and outhouses, which will be arranged for this year.
Conservation: Kim reported on a commercial tenure application for a snow-cat operation near Mt. Fosthall as well as a ski-hill proposal for Toad Mtn.
Social: Good attendance at the Guy Edward's show made a small profit to the club.
Climbing camp: This year's camp will be in the Gold Range. Details are in this newsletter.

Risk-takers Light in Key Molecule, Science Says

BY MIKE GILLESPIE, CANWEST NEWS SERVICE

OTTAWA - Next to doing crossword puzzles in ink, running with scissors could be the biggest risk most of us are willing to take. Stepping off a 1,300 metre cliff and plunging at 200 kilometers an hour toward a canyon floor is a non-starter. Unless, of course, you've got an MAO deficiency.

For its tiny size, Monoamine Oxidase molecule (or MAO) could be the mightiest on the planet. It's what helps regulate some of the billions of neurotransmitters in the human brain, specifically serotonin. That's an ingredient in the brain linked to feelings of well-being or anxiety. It's what makes most people run from danger while attracting others to it, like the sky divers and base jumpers who perform in Adrenalin *Rush: The science of fear*, currently playing on-IMAX screens across Canada. These characters will happily lunge from the fabled near-mile high Katthammaren Wall in Norway, swooping like birds away from the wall before popping their chutes and landing only seconds later on the canyon floor.

What makes them do it are insufficient levels of MAO in their bodies. As scientists explain in Adrenalin Rush, extreme risk takers have about a third less of the molecule than the average person. They share that trait with athletes, performers, entrepreneurs and artists (as well as alcoholics and criminals, but that's another story). Experts are quick to point out that reduced MAO alone cannot explain why people will plunge into a void, whether at the end of a bungee cord, from a plane or from some ridiculously tall structure. Personality and social context are at play, as well, shaping the brain.

Ottawa Citizen via The Vancouver Sun, Tues, May 6,2003

Lightning Poses Some Interesting and Unique Problems for Summer Mountaineering

Generally speaking lightning activity increases with altitude. Being below the tree line in dense forests can make it difficult to see the sky and watch approaching clouds. Above the tree line and at higher elevations, thunder rolling through canyons and valleys can make it next to impossible to know what direction the storm is coming from and in some cases if it is even in your immediate area. Finally, storm clouds can suddenly form or pass over the top of a ridge making things nasty for the "mountain topper" in a matter of minutes. Signs of an impending thunderstorm can be high thin clouds streaking overhead, dark rising columns of "cotton balls" with shredded tops or dark bases with jagged torn bottoms. When you start to hear thunder it is time to be alert. Knowing the right things to do during a thunderstorm can help keep your group safe and alive. One of the most common questions people ponder is what are the odds of being hit by lightning. Although some sources have tried to put a statistical number to it, like 1 in 3,000,000, it isn't that simple. Your odds of being hit by lighting vary by the activity you engage in, when you engage in outdoor activity, and where you spend most of your time outdoors.

Physics of Lightning

Lightning arises from a separation of electrical charges, either between clouds, or between cloud and earth. This separation of charge occurs when there are strong vertical updrafts of air acting on raindrops, resulting in tremendous electrical potential differences. The strong upward air currents may occur due to unequal solar-heating of neighboring areas, such as over freshly plowed fields and lakes. This thermal mechanism causes updrafts and resulting thunderheads and electrical activity over plains and other non-mountainous areas, but may also act in the mountains, in differential heating of air over valley floors and mountain ridges due to different ground cover. Lightning storms of this thermal origin will normally occur during the afternoon. Another mechanism creating vertical updrafts of particular interest to mountaineers is the very presence of the mountain slopes forcing otherwise horizontally moving air to flow upwards. A major change of weather such as a front moving through can cause a thunderstorm at any time of day. With appropriate moisture content in the air, electrical charge separation and consequent potential differences will result. Strong and obvious vertical development of clouds indicates a high probability of lightning. Normally air is a good insulator, but in the presence of sufficiently large potential gradients, it will ionize, or break down, and conduct electrical currents quite well. The lightning flash is, crudely speaking, the flow of the separated electrical charges back together, again along ionized air. Since potential gradients are largest near high and relatively sharp points, breakdown of the air and lightning will most likely occur in such locations. The two most important dangers from lightning are the direct hit and the ground currents. The first of these, as mentioned above, is most likely to occur at a sharply pointed feature such as a mountain summit, a sharp ridge or minor summit pinnacle at the end of a ridge. A tree or a standing person is another likely target. Furthermore, a relatively small object such as a person is less likely to be hit when in a large concave terrain feature such as a bowl than on a convex surface such as a knoll or large bench. The current that flows in the lightning bolt does not dissipate itself at the point of direct hit, but tends to flow along the easiest paths of electrical conduction on the surface of the ground. These ground currents will be strongest near the point of direct hit, rapidly diminishing in intensity with distance; but even well away from the direct hit, the ground currents can be deadly.

Ground Currents

To avoid injury from ground currents, the climber should first of all stay out of the easy paths of current. Such easy paths include anything wet, and particularly wet lichen-covered rocks, cracks and crevasses filled with water, and wet earth. Other easy paths include wet ropes, cables, etc., along the ground. Also, short straight path through the air may be easy compared to longer paths along the ground itself. The body is an easy path, and thus a climber should not get in the situation shown in Fig. 2 (below), or in a similar one, sitting in a depression in the ground across which currents might jump through the person. Avoid contact with the ground, squat on your pack, rope or insulite. Electrical currents are forced through the body by potential differences that are developed along the path of the ground currents. Thus, to minimize current through the body, one's feet should be kept close together, and the climber should be facing along, rather than across the most likely direction of current flow. His hands should be kept off the ground to prevent current from flowing directly through the vital organs as discussed below. The person sitting as in Fig.2 is more susceptible to injury than if he was squatting on his feet alone. Ground currents will be quite small along a dry path and thus it appears that a safe place might be under an overhang or in a cave. The danger of being at the mouth of a cave, as in Fig.1, was mentioned above – a direct spark might occur across the cave opening and pass through the body. There is also danger in being near an interior cave wall, because it is quite possible that an easy path for current exists through the ground to the cave interior, for example along a drainage crevasse. It is then possible for a discharge to occur from the entrance of this crevasse into the cave through a person to the cave. A small cave may give a false sense of security. The best measure to take against being injured by lightning in the mountains is to be off the mountain; thus a speedy descent during an impending lightning storm is appropriate. Such descent is likely to involve rappelling, which may be exceedingly dangerous in electrical activity and rain because a wet rope is a very easy path for current. The potential difference between the rappeller and the rock at his feet may be essentially the potential developed along the ground over the distance from the rappel anchor to the rappeller, and a large current may be easily passed along the ropes trough the body. Even a minor shock may be indirectly fatal, if it causes the rappeller to fall out of his rappel. Thus rappelling involves a calculated risk. It speeds descent and escape from a danger area, but greatly increases hazard in the process. A climber in a location exposed in the climber sense of the word but moderately safe from severe lightning hazards could experience a minor shock that would cause him to fall. Thus he should be tied to a secure anchor. Since his tie-in rope to the anchor will be a conductor to some extent, the rope should lie <u>across</u> rather than <u>along</u> possible paths of ground current to prevent a large potential from developing between the anchor point and the position of the climber. The rope should certainly not go to a chest sling, which would cause any current to flow through the heart and spinal cord (See physiology section).

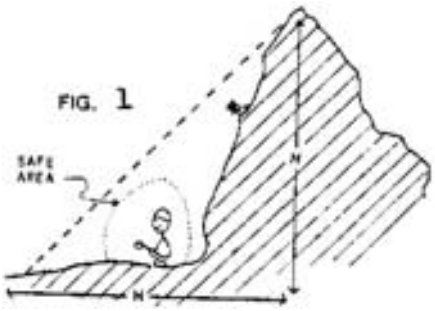
Any measures taken to prevent injury from lightning will involve minimization of potential differences from one part of the body to an other. Thus <u>the best body position is the crouch</u>, in a location as in Fig.1. The feet should be kept close together, and preferably on a small dry rock or other insulator such as a pack or a rope, and <u>the hands kept off the ground</u> (Important). A metal pack frame may be used to great advantage by laying it on the ground and squatting on it – Any currents would tend to pass through the metal rather than the body. An ice-axe certainly should not be worn on a pack pointing up, but there is no reason to throw away the axe or other small metal object including climbing hardware, since these items may be needed later and they do not attract lightning when in the pack or on the body. A lightning discharge is more likely to occur from the body itself than from a small object worn on the person.

Protection from direct hit

We now consider protection from direct hit. Obviously the best solution is to be completely off the mountain. Assuming that this is possible, advantage can be taken of the presence of a nearby

prominent pinnacle or other likely spot of direct stroke. Lightning will tend to hit the pinnacle rather than a person near the pinnacle if the pinnacle is five to ten times or more the person's height and if the horizontal distance from the person to the peak is about half the pinnacle height, as sketched in Fig.1. If the potential victim gets too close under the peak, his body may be an alternate path to that of the ground for the very strong ground currents. If he gets into a cave, as in Fig. 2, he may be sitting in a spark gap and thus be exposed for a minor direct hit if the currents prefer to take the direct path through the air across the mouth of the cave rather than the longer path along the ground. Also, if the person moves far from under the pinnacle, (more than its height), the direct hit might just as likely strike the victim as the pinnacle. A climber might find relative safety just down below a sharp ridge as well as near a peak or a pinnacle or a gendarme. The theory behind a lightning rod on a roof is related to the above, that is, it is hoped that the lightning may strike the rod rather than the roof, and the currents would then be conducted safely to ground. Furthermore, a sharp projection many serve to discharge gradually the charge – holding cloud over it without a lightning bolt perpetually striking, but the mountaineer should never count on this.

Fig.1 Showing location relatively safe from lightning. If the pinnacle height H is too small, then the ground currents at the person may be fatal. Note that the person is avoiding contact with the ground to prevent the current passing through him.



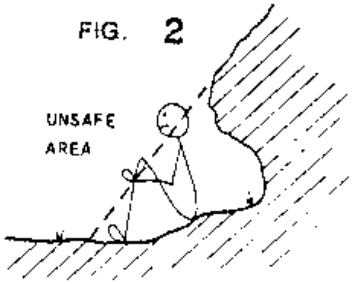


Fig.2 Showing location with high lightning danger

Physiology

Electrical currents through the body may cause not only burns but also involuntary muscle contraction, stoppage of the heart, improper functioning of the brain and other consequent malfunctioning of the body such as cessation of breathing. A person is not electrified after being hit by lightning and a full 80% of people that are hit by lightning recover. The extent of the damage depends on the amplitude and duration of the current sent on the path of the flow through the body. When a person is struck directly, the currents are likely to be so large that no matter what the path through the body may be, the results are fatal. But ground currents are much weaker, and the particular current path through the body makes a significant difference. It is also possible for someone to be hit by lightning and be practically uninjured. For example, current from hand to hand will pass through the heart, spinal cord and vital organs and may be fatal; but the same current from foot to knee of the same leg is not so bad. First aid may include heart massage, artificial respiration, and treatment for traumatic shock, hypothermia and burns. If a member of your party gets hit by lightning start emergency treatment immediately. If a person has no pulse or heartbeat start performing CPR. Treat electrical burns as you would any other. Neurological and internal injuries are possible. Mountaineers should be familiar with such treatments and be prepared to administer them.

In the mountains you can greatly prevent your odds of being hit by lightning:

-Get out of open and exposed areas. Ridges and open fields leave you exposed. Sharp changes in terrain like the edge of water, the edges of a forest, rocks to dirt, etc. are naturally more hazardous. Nearby tall objects like solitary trees, communication antenna, or rock spires (tallest object around) serve as natural lightning rods. Find an area with trees of uniform height or an area with low brush and bushes. Never seek shelter directly under a tree. If you cannot find any shelter at all, say when you are above the tree line, get as low as possible.

-If in a region of high lightning danger, individuals should not wait out the storm huddled together. Spread out at least 20 feet as lightning can jump this far and injure everyone in a tight group. The survival of one person whose heart or breathing has been stopped by a stroke of lightning will depend critically on prompt action by companions, and it is quite unlikely that all of a group of separated persons will be knocked unconscious simultaneously.

-If you have metal gear like carabineers, picks, or crampons remove them and set your gear away from you. Sit on top of your pack if you have one with your feet on the ground, crouched down with your eyes closed and your hands over your ears. Sight and hearing injuries are very common among lightning strike victims and near strike injuries. Do not lie prone on the ground; this is no longer recommended as a safe position.

-Lightning can originate from six to eight miles away from its last origin, so it is possible for a "bolt from the blue" on the edge of a storm. This is why if you wait until you see lightning, it may be already too late to take action. If your hair stands on end, you feel a tingling sensation, or if the area around you appears electrified, lightning may be ready to strike. Make yourself the smallest possible target and attempt to minimize your contact with the ground, Hold your breath, some people have been seriously injured when they breathe in the superheated air that surrounds and is expanding out from a lightning bolt.

-Wait for at least 30 minutes after the lightning and thunder has stopped to move on and resume activity.

Reprinted from: Mountain Search and Rescue Techniques, W.G. May, Rocky Mountain Rescue Group. Pp.16-22, 1972

Additional references

- National Lightning Safety Institute
- "Lightning Safety", Outdoor Places.com
- Karabiner 1977

Why do cows wear bells? Because their horns don't work!

The Alpine Club of Canada is to Operate the new Kokanee Glacier Cabin

From the ACC Press Release. May 6, 2003. The Alpine Club of Canada (ACC) has been awarded a contract by BC Parks to operate the new Kokanee Glacier Cabin, as well as the Woodbury and Silverspray Cabins and the Kaslo Lake campground in Kokanee Glacier Provincial Park begining June 2003. The Alpine Club of Canada (ACC) will hire Custodians (working from early June to mid October) for the new cabin. A Facility Maintenance Contractor will also undertake 6-8 cabin-servicing days throughout the summer.

The Kokanee Glacier Cabin was built as a result of campaign efforts carried out in memory of Michel Trudeau and the many other Canadians who have lost their lives enjoying Canada's backcountry. The national Kokanee Glacier Alpine Campaign, spearheaded by BC Parks in 2000, with the support of the Friends of West Kootenay Parks and the family of former Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau surpassed its fundraising goal of $900,000. In total, $974,200 was raised. The funding was used to meet the goals of the Kokanee Glacier Alpine Campaign: to build a new alpine hut to accommodate the increasing demands from backcountry enthusiasts; and to raise national awareness about backcountry safety. Part of the funds will be used to restore the historic Slocan Chief Cabin in Kokanee Glacier Provincial Park as a backcountry interpretive centre. In addition, $40,000 was donated to the Canadian Avalanche Association to help maintain the Public Avalanche Bulletin and ensure it is regularly updated.

Summer Reservations-One of the many ways that the ACC provides excellent customer service is through our reservation system. We propose that Parks allow us to take reservations for 100% of the available summer space in the three cabins. We feel that a 100% reservations system provides far better customer service than a 50% reservation system. With the former, hut visitors do not need to guess if there will be space available for them when they arrive at any cabin. They do not need to carry a tent, nor be uncertain if they will have to hike out again that same day if the cabin is full. Those hut users that do not want to book through the ACC are still welcome to show up at any of the cabins without a reservation. Their chances of getting a space at the cabin will be no more or no less than if there was a 50% reservation system. The Conrad Kain Hut in the Bugaboos was changed from 100% non-reservation to 100% reservations in one year, and Parks and the ACC received only positive feedback.

Reservations for the three Kokanee Glacier Park cabins will be done through the ACC's central reservation service in Canmore, on the same basis that is currently in place for the ACC's existing hut system. As a result, any member of the general public will be able to reserve a space in the hut up to one month in advance by contacting the reservation service desk by telephone, fax, email or in person. The service desk is open 7 days a week, from 9:00am until 8:00pm (mountain time). If someone wishes to have reservation privileges up to one year in advance, they can join the ACC ($24 annually) and pay for the "huts option" ($22 annually). Please see Appendix 1 for our summer fees.

We also propose that the ACC take reservations for 50% of the available campsites. The remaining spots will be available on a "first-come, first-served" basis. The ACC will make efforts to publicize the reservation service for the Kokanee Glacier facilities in various Kootenay newspapers and Club newsletters if our proposal is accepted. Hut and campground reservations are currently made by phone, fax and email. We are planning on implementing an on-line reservation service by the end of 2003.

Winter Reservations-Our Fairy Meadow Hut in the Selkirk Mountains of British Columbia has a winter reservation system similar to the existing Kokanee Glacier winter facility. Reservations are decided by lottery one year in advance of the booking. Guests pay a weekly rate, which includes the hut fees, helicopter transportation and parking. Guests are provided with a comprehensive information package about the hut, helicopter and skiing. We propose that we maintain a similar reservationsystem to what exists, with some improvements in customer service. The Kokanee Glacier Cabin winter rate will include accommodation, helicopter transport and parking fees. Please see the fee schedule in Appendix 1. We are also willing to accommodate the request by local interest groups that at least 25% of the winter bookings be made available first to B.C. residents. Kokanee Glacier Cabin winter lottery applicants will not need to purchase an ACC membership in order to enter the lottery or book space at the cabin in winter.

Special Groups- As per ACC policy, certain user groups will be able to make reservations at the three cabins up to 13 months in advance.

These groups currently include ACC Sections and the ACC National Office. We would like to include local user groups such as the Kootenay Mountaineering Club, Selkirk College and the Friends of West Kootenay Parks in this policy. Due to the large number of interest groups, we would need to set a limit on the number of overnights that could be booked in advance by the total of these groups (eg. maximum four weeks in winter, 400 bednights in summer). If the user groups' request for space exceeds the maximum allowance, a decision will be made by a lottery conducted by B.C. Parks. B.C. Parks retains the right to veto the special groups privilege if public concerns are raised. The ACC will not accept a single group booking of more than 10 in the Kokanee Glacier Cabin on Saturday nights during July and August.

Day Use- Day hikers will be welcomed to view the Kokanee Glacier Cabin and enjoy their lunch inside free of charge. Day visitors can only view the upstairs area when they are escorted by the Custodian in order to protect the privacy and property of overnight guests. Extensive day use of the facilities (showers, cooking meals, etc.) will require a $5 day use fee.

For reservations at the Kokanee Glacier Cabin, Woodbury Cabin, Silverspray Cabin, or Kaslo Lake Campground, call the ACC at 403-678-3200, ext. 1 or email info@AlpineClubofCanada.ca For more information on the Kokanee Glacier Park facilities visit the ACC's website at www.AlpineClubofCanada.ca

Subject: Whitewater Ski Hill Road Closure

The Whitewater Ski Hill Road bridge site can be closed to all vehicle traffic for the period July 15, 2003 until September 12, 2003. Stakeholder foot traffic will be accommodated at all time through the site, and across Apex Creek, by means of a temporary footbridge. Stakeholder foot traffic is defined as owners or employees of the Whitewater Ski Resort, Government agencies, logging companies, consulting firms, or any other person with a legitimate regulatory, business, or economic need to cross the creek at this site. This footbridge is not intended for use by the general public.

Forwarded by Drew Desjardins

KMC Trip Reports

Brilliant Overlook, April 27

In spite of a forecast for rain, which never did materialize, nineteen hikers showed up for this hike. Since the Castlegar end of Skattebo trail is now closed, we parked by the golf course and started the hike by climbing up Dove Hill and down the other side which connected us with the Skattebo trail directly above the Brilliant Dam. From here we followed the usual route to the top. On our way back, we had to follow the powerline down to the first road, then followed it to marker 3, which took us on to the old trail behind the golf course. The hike was completed by 2:30.

We were: J.Bargh, R.Belczyk, P.Bidinoff, D.Hagen, D.Harasym, L.Hill, W.Hurst, T.Ibrahim, R.King, R.Lidstone, C.MacRae, S.Nouail, M.Poohachoff, C.Potasnyk, A.&P.Sheppard, J.Watson, M.Woodward and H.Kirkwood, coordinator.

Kootenay Canal Loop, May 2

Ted met me at Granite Road and we biked to the Corra Lin dam. As we left there the heavens opened up and we searched for shelter at the Upper Bonnington Power Station. When it cleared we biked on the canal bank to South Slocan damsite, had lunch and returned via the highway. The heavens opened again when I was biking across the Nelson Bridge towards home. Just two of us today. Mary Woodward.

Columbia River Hike

On **May 7**, eight hikers met in Castlegar for the hike from there to Trail on the East Side of the Columbia River. We drove as far as the Castlegar dump and a little beyond where a gate stops further car traffic. We left the cars there and hiked above the river along meadows and blooming fruit trees to Champion Creek which had a good bridge across. From there the rest of the way was practically always along the Columbia River. Sometimes we were in the trees, at others along the beach or on a hill looking down at the water. Altogether it was a very pleasant walk which we all enjoyed. We reached Trail by 2:30 p.m. and were glad to see Felix Belczyk there with the van. We all crowded in and Felix drove us back to Castlegar where we had left the cars.

Participants were: Mary Woodward, Ted Ibraham, Dave Cunningham, Andrea Belczyk, Renate Belczyk, leader, and three others whose names I can't remember

Passmore to Appledale Return, May 9

This cool spring morning rewarded us with a fine day to be cycling. This is a lovely easy cycle along the Slocan River. We played tourist on this trip and made our first stop the Hungry Wolf Cafe in Winlaw. After a very satisfying lunch we continued on to explore Winlaw Park. We detoured onto Bond Road and stopped at The Rapia Guest House. After giving us a tour of the premises the proprietor decided to join our ride to the Appledale Bridge. After a short stop we returned to Passmore. The trip was 43 km and took 2 ¾ hours of riding time. The cyclists were: Dave Adams, Rapia, Mary Woodward and Carol Potasnyk.

Skattebo Reach Trail, May 10

Seven hikers met at the Glade service station and after a free ferry ride and a short road trip began hiking the Skattebo Reach Trail from Glade to Dove Hill. The lunch stop was at the mouth of Big McPhee Creek. The party divided after lunch with half the group taking the McPhee Canyon & Doukhobor Waterline Trail and the other half taking the Skattebo Reach Trail. The party reunited and continued hiking to the junction of the Brilliant Overlook Trail. Maps were available at this point. Near the Brilliant Dam, at the south west corner of the new sub station, there is an entrance to a new trail. This trail connecting to Dove Hill has a hiker friendly grade and is well marked. The group continued along this trail to Dove Hill and eventually the Dove Hill parking lot. All concluded it had been a good outing.

Hikers included Elizabeth Dekker, Ted Ibrahim, Joanne Leslie, Andrew Martin, Phyllis Wanjoff, and Alan & Pat Sheppard, coordinators.

Fry Creek Canyon, May 14

An early start for the drive to Johnson's Landing trailhead had six people underway. The trail has changed to skirt above private logging and is well marked. It took just under 3 hours to the beach past the rockslide. We were delighted to see three goats scrambling up the slide. We resisted the temptation to continue on to Carney Creek. The trail there is quite overgrown and tricky to follow. May be next time!

We were:Ted Ibrahim, Gerda Lang, Robin Lidstone, Stephanie Nouail, Bess Schuurman and Mary Woodward.

Robson-Syringa Loop, May 16

This 39km bike tour was pleasant riding through scents of blooming lilacs along the Broadwater Road, a good rest stop at the Syringa Park beach area and a loop on the return trip, going across the newly constructed roadway at the Hugh Keenleyside Dam, then traveling on the Arrow Lakes Drive to the Castlegar-Robson Bridge and back to our departure point, the Lions Head Pub parking lot. Three bikers today: Carol Potasnyk, Mary Woodward and Eliane Miros.

Old Glory, May 18

Although we knew that we would be walking on snow all the way, we were not sure how much new snow there would be with Whitewater having 20 cm of new snow on the Friday. Nine of us met at the trailhead at 9 am complete with snow shoes. There was not enough snow at the trailhead to need the snow shoes, the old snow being quite firm, so we just tied the snow shoes to our packs. We walked up the longer (road) trail with gradually increasing fresh snow. The maximum depth of new snow we found was about 10 cm, that did not need snow shoes. We started walking in sun, but it clouded over and by the time we were on Unnecessary Ridge, we were getting hail and snow in variable amounts. When we reached the point on Unnecessary Ridge to turn off for Old Glory, it was 12:20 pm, too late to head for Old Glory, so we went to the high point on the ridge for lunch. In future, we will have to start at 8 am rather than 9 am. After lunch, the weather improved for the walk down. We were John Bargh, Dave Cunningham, Brenda Eyre, Don Harasym, Vicki Hart, Robin Lidstone, Andrew Martin, Jill Watson, and coordinator, Ted Ibrahim.

Red Mountain Mining Trails, June 1

Nine of us met at the Rossland Museum and proceeded along the century old wagon roads and rail grades, past the Le Roi, Josie, No. 1 and Gertrude mines, to the more recent molybdenum mining roads of Red Mountain. We had lunch at the summit, as did the local black fly swarm. We enjoyed good views of Rossland, Warfield, Trail and Castlegar on this clear day. Retracing our trail to the gas line, we then checked out the Sasquatch cabin, the old clay tennis court, Center Star load out bins, and followed the rail grade back to the Museum. A smaller group of us then drove and hiked on the back road of Red Mt. to view the head carved in the large granite boulder. Our group consisted of Esther Brown, Joan Gariepy, Don Harasym , Gerda Lang, Elaine Martin, Stephanie Nouail, Diane Paolini, Mary Woodward and Bob McQueen, coordinator.

Other Trip Reports

Great Northern Mtn. (2288 m., 7506'; map Beaton 82K/12) May 24

This truly pedestrian peak is part of the Badshot Range and is located behind and to the north of Trout Lake townsite. David Jones and I climbed it on Sat., May 24th. For very good access, drive about 2.4 km. west of town on Hwy. 31 and turn right or north where a sign says "Garbage Dump." You will need a 4WD, high clearance vehicle with low-range. Turn right immediately after entering the road. Take the next left (right is gated and signed) and prepare for serious water bars. At km. 5.1, go left. We were able to drive to km. 6.6 (about 4500') before being stopped by snow. Leaving at 9:25 and carrying snowshoes, we hiked up the road, cutting off some switchbacks by traveling through a burn. We meandered along the broad SW ridge of our peak, re-joining the road and following it to the end at about 2150 m. (7100') where the SW ridge steepens (about 617-160). By 12:50, we were on the broad, level, cairned summit to enjoy spectacular views of Trout Lake, the Badshots, and the Lardeau Range on this warm, sunny day. After a 50 min. rest, we followed our ascent route back to

the truck in 90 min. Almost all travel was on snow, and conditions were surprisingly good as we never used the snowshoes. This peak could make an easy summer or fall outing, especially if your vehicle is up to this challenging road used by Great Northern Cat Ski. Driving times from Nelson: 2 hr. 30 min. via Nakusp (but that was leaving at 4:30 am); 2 hr. 45 min. return via Gerard and Kaslo. Kim Kratky

Toad Mtn.: On skis and after work (7247', 2209 m., map Nelson 82F/6)

On Wednesday, **May 28th**, Howie Ridge and I left Nelson at 4:00 pm to see if we could ski to the summit of Toad Mtn. and return to the truck before dark. Following Howie's directions from an earlier recce, we accessed Giveout Creek FSR south of Nelson, drove past the km. 15 sign, and turned left onto a spur at a switchback right. We were stopped by snow at about 5300' (ca. 748-759) in the upper reaches of Sandy Creek, about 3.5 km. NW of our objective. Departing at 4:50, we skinned up the road, along a skid route, and through two cutblocks before ascending steep timber to reach a 6950' sub-peak (752-742). By now, we could see Toad to the southeast. Deciding that our turnaround time would be 7:30 to avoid returning in the dark, we quickened the pace, skinned down about 100', traversed a flat stretch, and ascended Toad's northwest ridge, bypassing two hummocks on the right. Boot packing the last 50', we reached the summit at 7:30 for a five-minute rest and the obligatory spectacular views. By now, the weather, which had looked so threatening earlier, had cleared off with the help of a strong westerly. For descent, we retraced our tracks on good spring snow, avoiding the steep timber by traversing right and skiing a steep bowl on the north side of the sub-peak. Then an easy plod back to the truck by 8:40 with plenty of light still left. Times: 2 hr. 40 min. to the top; 1 hr. 10 min. return. Temperatures were pleasantly mild. A ski ascent from upper Sandy Creek is dependent on the perfect combination of snowmelt on the road and retention in the timber. We were lucky that one of the deep switchbacks on Giveout had been plowed. Kim Kratky

Balfour Knob (2253 m., 7392') Map Crawford Bay 82F/10

On Sunday, **June 1st**, Doug Brown, Sandra McGuinness, the dog Kumo, and I climbed this minor peak above Balfour in the Kokanee Group. We accessed it via cutblocks on the south side of Coffee Creek (yes, you can drive into Coffee Creek, but the way is circuitous). Departing at 9:20, we ascended south through timber, passed through a higher block where the road was snowed in, and continued (now on snow) through timber and up a ridge to reach a bump at 013-031. Then we walked southwest on snow over various lumps along a ridge system leading to the base of our objective's north ridge, which we surmounted without difficulty. On top by 1:35, we rested for 20 min. near the prominent green communications cone and tried our best to pick out landmarks in the murky, stormy weather, which eventually overtook us for a bout of light rain. We were treated to fine views of ferries plying Kootenay Lake below us, to indifferent vistas of the Purcells, and to cloud and mist in Kokanee to our west. Retracing our steps, we reached the truck in 2 hrs. 45 min., making for a 7 hr. 20 min. day. Snow conditions were excellent. Cutblocks to the northeast of the summit in the upper reaches of Leake Creek would give easy access to this fine viewpoint later in the year, but the road to these blocks may be restricted (I don't think these cutblocks are the ones heli-logged, since the terrain doesn't seem very steep. I'll leave it to someone else to explore this approach.
Kim Kratky

A Trip To Mt. Tyrrell (Map Lardeau 82K/2)

Paul Allen, Steve Horvath and I spent three days in this seldom-visited area from Tuesday, June 3rd, through Thursday, June 5th. After a flight from Johnson's Landing got us to the alpine, our base of operations was a small lake at 7,150' (161-421) about 1.5 km. west of Tyrrell. We set up camp in our larch-studded, snowy basin and headed out at 1:00 pm to ascend a rocky, flat-topped 8,550' peak (167-426) to the northeast. This we climbed via the south ridge, making three half-leads on good rock of up to 5.4 grade. Reaching the summit at 3:30, we built a cairn but did not put in a record as we had left the packs at the col below. On return, we downclimbed the upper portion, then finished with one 25 m. rappel. Back at camp by 5:50, we remarked on the good weather and the excellent snow quality, two concerns we had about such an early season trip in relatively big mountains. Wednesday, we delayed our attempt on Tyrrell until 8:20 as the snow was very hard and we had no crampons. From camp, we ascended east on snow to an 8,250' col (169-423) and made an easy transition on snow to the wasting glacier north of our objective. By 11:00, we were at the base of Tyrrell's north ridge (165-420). This had looked quite easy from the glacier below, in contrast to the northwest ridge and north face. However, it proved to be quite challenging in early-season conditions. After we had one easy lead on snow, Paul did three strenuous leads on mushy snow and slimy, lichen-covered rock, all with substantial exposure on the east. We rated this at 5.5 but conceded that it would probably go at class 4 in August. Topping out after three hours, we rested precariously on the tottery, blade-shaped summit and inspected the impressive cairn for a record. A thorough search revealed nothing, so we left a KMC tube. While enjoying views of Pambrun, Lees, Clutterbuck, Toby, Hamill, Truce, Cauldron, etc., we debated the return route as none of us relished repeating the north ridge. However, the devil we knew looked much better than the others, so we downclimbed it in three hours, finding it less daunting than expected. Off the mountain at 5:30, we re-traced our steps to camp in one hour for a tidy 10 hour 10 min. day. Thursday, we walked out, again delaying our start because of snow conditions. Away at 9:20 with heavy packs, we passed through an 8,250' col at 151-412 and descended on rotten snow to finger lakes at 145-412, which we followed to their outlet by 12:50. We continued west on indifferent, break-through snow over tiring ups and downs to reach a northwest-tending ridge at about 6,200' and due east of Birchdale. We followed this northwest, then descended west on gentle, open slopes (no snow now) until cliff-bands forced a detour south in unpleasant timber. Lower down, we followed Smallfry Creek north to reach the Birchdale Trail just above the lakeshore. By 6:30 we reached the Birchdale dock, where Paul's brother-in-law picked us up in his boat, something we had arranged in advance. Not quite The Walk from Hell, but a nice, tiring nine-hour jaunt. It made me appreciate Steve and Hamish's three-day walk from the Mt. Stone area to Duncan Lake a few years ago. In sum, it was an excellent outing, with one first ascent and a climb of a peak we had been dreaming of for 20 years or so. Kim Kratky

2003 KMC Climbing Camp

This year's camp will be in the southern Gold Range July 26 - Aug 2 (Saturday to Saturday). The area is infrequently visited and boasts spectacular rock walls and towering peaks. The climbing is varied with class 2 snow slogs, fine moderate mountaineering on good rock, and rock and ice routes way too scary for this camp organizer.

The precise plan for the "camp" is still under discussion. The three most likely scenarios are:

1. A fly-in and fly-out base camp at the head of the south fork of Odin Creek, at about 6700 feet: GR185006 82 L/9 (same location as the 1973 and 1990 KMC camps).
2. A fly-in start with a traverse of the southern half of the range, bagging peak along the way, and walk out to vehicles on a logging road.
3. A walk-in and walk-out adventure of shorter duration.

Due to high chopper costs for the currently small group, option 2 is looking most likely at this point.

Please contact me if you are interested or would like further information. Doug Brown (250) xxx-xxxx xxxx@xxxx.ca