



Kootenay Mountaineer

The KMC Newsletter Issue 2 March-April 2008 Next Deadline: May 21/08

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statements to that effect are wrong." VANOC (the 2010 Olympic organizing committee) states unequivocally that "Our intention has never been to develop a year round training facility for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Games via the proposed Jumbo Resort development." Ministry staff obviously did not take the time to look into this false claim by the proponent before they made their recommendation. What other falsehoods did ministry staff not bother to investigate before making recommendations to the minister?

One wonders how, after 20 years, over 10,000 comments in opposition, a Jumbo Wild rally of over 700 people in the streets of Nelson, nearly 15% of the most affected community, Invermere, making statements of opposition to this proposal, an RDEK-supervised local plebiscite that revealed nearly 80% of locals were in opposition, and everyone from local businesses, hunters, trappers, to NHL superstars, coming out to oppose the resort, how ministry staff can indicate in their recommendations that opposition is only from environmental groups, and is inconsequential?

Greg Deck, the Mayor of Radium Hot Springs, a community that has seen a 304% increase in housing units since 2000, has obviously been steadfast in his support for this unsustainable, proposed resort. On the other hand, ministry staff glossed over the fact that District of Invermere Mayor Mark Shmigelsky has been resolutely against Jumbo. The town council even passed a formal resolution opposing the proposed resort. Mayor Shmigelsky voiced his support for parts of the controversial Bill 11, but disapproved of sections 15 and 16 — the sections that could be applied to Jumbo. At least the ministerial staff were half right in their recommendations. But that also makes them half wrong. If many of the recommendations to the minister were either based only on the erroneous claims of the proponent, or were just plain wrong, it appears we have a major problem. It is a credit to the Honourable Minister that he did not see fit to approve the resort last year based on these poorly researched recommendations, but it begs the question: Why is ministry staff pushing this unwanted proposal so hard? When will facts and science enter the equation? I look forward to answers to these questions.

Dave Quinn, of Wildsight.

From the invermerevalleyecho.com, part of BClocalnews.com

"Till now man has been up against Nature; from now on he will be up against his own nature". ~Dennis Gabor, Inventing the Future, 1964

Heli skiing in a wilderness park?

March 7, 2008 Cranbrook BC

Heli skiing in a wilderness park? The BC Provincial government is considering it. Or perhaps they're not considering it. Right now, they don't know if they're considering it or not.

Speculation that the government is negotiating with a heli-ski operation to have them exchange their existing heli-ski tenure in the Purcells for a tenure in the Purcell Wilderness Conservancy

Jumbo Freedom of Misinformation

An Open Letter to the Hon. Stan Hagen, Minister of Tourism, Sport, and the Arts. March 26, 2008

Under the Freedom of Information Act, local citizens have received documents detailing staff recommendations to you regarding the controversial proposed Jumbo Glacier Resort, including: it represents a great opportunity for local tourism development in the East Kootenay; it will provide a permanent summer training facility for the Canadian ski athletes – and in time for the 2010 Olympic Winter Games; opposition was less than typically received on other projects; the mayors of Radium and Invermere have been vocal about their support.

However, these recommendations are in blatant contradiction of the facts, as detailed below.

Recent newspaper headlines in the Kootenays detail the "Tourism labour shortage" (Daily Townsman/Bulletin November 28, '07), and the March edition of the Rockies Tourism Networker newsletter details strategies to address this, including importing foreign workers. Anyone who has been to Fernie, Kimberley or Kicking Horse wonders where all the people are – empty lifts, runs, and condos are the norm. Why do we need to develop more tourism opportunities if we do not have enough workers or skiers to fill existing operations?

Recently the proponent has tried to convince us that any who oppose Jumbo are opposing our Olympians. This despite the fact that a recent letter from the Calgary Olympic Development Association (CODA) stated very clearly that: "CODA is not involved in, or associated with the Jumbo Resort project, and any

Park is receiving ridicule and derision from the public and local environmental groups.

"I'll take the question on notice," said Stan Hagen, Minister of Tourism, Sports and the Arts. He was responding to an inquiry from Columbia River-Revelstoke MLA Norm Macdonald seeking whether the Government might be negotiating an exchange of heli-skiing tenure that would make way for the development of the Jumbo Glacier Resort.

The proposed resort site is Jumbo Valley, 55 kilometers west of Invermere, BC. Public opposition to the resort has been never stronger, with a recent poll showing 79% of area residents against the project. The BC Government's lack of clarity as to their position on the matter, as well as their possible consideration of repurposing a wilderness park has exasperated many who have long endeavoured to retain area's natural integrity.

"The controversy around the proposed Jumbo City development in the heart of the Purcells has gone on too long. British Columbia, the "Best Place on Earth" and the home of the "Greenest Olympics Ever" already looks ridiculous for allowing this unsustainable proposal to drag on," says Dave Quinn, Wildsight's Purcells Program Manager. "Now we are led to believe the Province is actually considering opening up one of our Class 'A' Provincial Parks to industrial tourism, just to expedite a controversial, crown land real estate grab? The proposed Jumbo Resort has seen unprecedented public opposition but the government has not heard anything

compared to what they will hear if they try to erode the Purcell Wilderness Conservancy."

The Purcell Wilderness Conservancy was established in 1974 and the Master Plan was completed with extensive public input and has been in place since 1990.

The Master Plan indicates that 'All forms of commercial activity as well as the use of combustion engines for recreational purposes shall be prohibited' (page 8), as well as 'The Conservancy will remain closed to recreational air access as prescribed by the establishing Order-in-Council.' (page 24). While the government considers its official position as to whether they should contravene the master plan for the Conservancy and ignore the wishes of the area's residents, the region's representative promised the issue will be aggressively challenged.

"If the government thinks that they can make any changes to the Purcell Wilderness Conservancy Park, then they will have a fight on their hands," declared Macdonald.

From The Wildsight Website, For more information: Dave Quinn, Mobile telephone 250 427 8878, daveq@wildsight.ca

"I'm not an environmentalist. I'm an Earth warrior."
~Darryl Cherney, quoted in *Smithsonian*, April 1990

Green Power Poses Problems for Environment (and Bears in BC)

Colin Payne - Golden Star - March 19, 2008

Last week, The Golden Star presented information on the growing debate about independent power production in British Columbia. Proponents say 'run of river' hydroelectric projects are a source of 'clean energy' that can be built and run more efficiently and economically by private companies. Opponents argue the province's rivers are being handed to private interests without public consent, without concern for public interest. One aspect of this issue which could not be treated in last week's article is the debate over environmental issues surrounding the potential construction of hydroelectric generating facilities on hundreds of creeks and small rivers throughout the province. John Calvert, an associate professor at Simon Fraser University who teaches public policy, recently published "Liquid Gold," a book about energy privatization in B.C. His book takes an in-depth look at the myriad of issues surrounding independent power producers (IPPs) in B.C. One having particular resonance with people throughout the province is the potential for damage to the environment these projects present.

Calvert says the government has argued these projects will cause little environmental damage, but the reality is quite different." If you look in general at what has to happen, most of these projects do dam up a river in one way or another," he explains. "In that regard, it's not like you put a turbine in a flowing stream and get energy out. You have to have a penstock, the tube that diverts water to the power plant. A lot of those involve major tunnels that are six, eight or 10 kilometres long. So you're doing a lot of serious work in terms of digging out all this rock. You have the diversion of the water from the stream through the penstock, which means there's much less water flowing through the stream itself." Calvert points out that taking water out of the stream, and also collecting water in a small reservoir (known as a headpond) can have a warming effect on the stream and has the potential to affect fish and other aquatic life in the rivers.

A proposal for a hydroelectric project to divert water flowing through Glacier and Howser creeks down the west side of the Purcells into the Duncan Reservoir near Meadow Lake, B.C. is currently in environmental assessment process with the Ministry of Environment (MOE). The project is being proposed by Montreal-based Purcell Green Power, which is parented by Axor, an engineering and construction company of Montreal.

According to the preliminary plans filed with the MOE, these projects will involve the construction of two hydroelectric generating facilities; one on Glacier Creek generating 40.5 to 60 Megawatt hours (MWh) of electricity, and another on nearby Howser Creek that will generate 50.5 to 65 MWh. Both of these projects involve the construction of two small dams, 'water diversion weirs,' on each creek, and three secondary weirs on nearby tributary creeks, which will divert water from the creek bed into two 4.5 metre-wide underground tunnels 6.8 and 8.5 km in length. The water will flow into two powerhouses, before being dumped directly into the Duncan Reservoir, without being returned to the original creek bed. Calvert says the actual construction of these power generation facilities, and subsequent operations necessary to run them can also have a major environmental impact. "You have to build a power plant," he says. "There's a lot of concrete involved normally. You have to have roads to get in . . . heavy equipment to actually do the construction. During that period, there's an enormous amount of construction around the stream." Then you also have to build the transmission lines. That's a big-ticket item. Some of these lines are 50 -100 km long, and often go through pristine areas that are often untouched. Where there's no roads, for example. Because normally, they'd like

to have the most direct or straightforward hookup to the main grid. They have to keep the lines clear of potential falling branches, and that normally means a corridor of 50 to 100 m on either side. So that means a big change to the environment.” Calvert notes these transmission lines and roads may give people in off-road and all-terrain vehicles access to areas previously inaccessible. The majority of access to the Glacier/Howser project will be done on the existing Duncan Reservoir and Glacier Forest Service roads. But combined, the two projects could require up to 12.75 km of permanent roads, and 885 m of temporary roads. Purcell Green Power has proposed a transmission line of approximately 91.5 km in length, and a width ranging from 30-100 m to be built across the Purcells to deliver power to the Invermere substation on the east side of the mountains. Dave Quinn, Purcell program manager for Wildsight says his organization has numerous concerns with the Glacier/Howser projects. “The proposals are to divert up to 90 per cent of Glacier and Howser Creeks,” Quinn says. “They (Purcell Green Power) said it will be less than that. But their tenure allows them up to 90 per cent. That will be diverted down through tunnels that will never go back into the creeks.” He notes this can have a significant impact on the aquatic habitat in the creeks. The roads and transmission lines are also a huge concern, Quinn says, noting construction will be

going through areas currently protected for old growth forest and wildlife habitat.

“Upper Howser is currently protected and reserved in what are called old growth management areas,” he says, adding Upper Stockdale Creek, on the Invermere side is totally protected, in what’s called an endangered forest - due to its high grizzly bear values and the fact that it’s intact and doesn’t have any roads or right-of-ways in it. So this proposal is to put a big right-of-way power line right through those protected areas.

With environmental assessments, projects with plans to produce less than 50 MW of electricity go through a relatively simple process, while bigger projects go through a full assessment by the MOE. Because the Glacier and Howser Creeks are being done together, they have the full environmental assessment, says Garry Alexander, MOE project assessment director for the Glacier/Howser project. This process involves the formation of an inter-governmental technical committee which does numerous consultations with the project proponent and the public before an application for an environmental assessment application is submitted to the MOE. The MOE is currently waiting for the environmental assessment application for the Glacier/Howser project, he says. Alexander notes about 15 per cent of all assessment applications submitted get turned down. Because the details have not yet been solidified for this project, he’s unable to comment on exactly how much

water will be diverted from the creeks, and how much will be left. Simon Gordeau, project manager for Purcell Green Power, says they’re planning to allow for stream flow, and they do not intend to divert 90 per cent of the stream flow from the creeks. “The way a project like this usually works, is you establish minimum stream flow requirements with the ministries, and those are minimum flows mandated to be left in the stream before you’re allowed to take any water for power production,” Gordeau explains. “So when there’s more than the in-stream flow requirements in the river, the extra that’s available - if it’s enough to run the turbines - you’re allowed to produce electricity with it.” When it comes to the transmission lines, Alexander says he’s unaware of any protected areas they might go through. “My understanding is those (areas) aren’t designated in the way that parks conservancy areas are designated,” he says. “And there are certainly areas in the Upper Howser that are important to wildlife. We’re aware of that, and the proponent is aware of that in terms of constructing their transmission line to avoid wildlife impact.

From the Bear Matters B.C. website

“The sun, the moon and the stars would have disappeared long ago... had they happened to be within the reach of predatory human hands”.
~Havelock Ellis, *The Dance of Life*, 1923

Petition Pushes National Park (South Okanagan Similkameen)

By Tracy Clark - Penticton Western News - March 12, 2008
(condensed for KMC newsletter)

A petition favoring the establishment of a national park in the South Okanagan was presented in the House of Commons in Ottawa Tuesday. In total, more than 19,000 names were marked on the petition presented by MP Alex Atamanenko, representing two years of work by members of the South Okanagan Similkameen National Park Network who believe a national park is the best way to protect the region.

“(We’re) a group of people who feel the park is a tremendous thing to have,” said Chris Purton, a member of the network. While it will ultimately be up to the provincial and federal governments to decide whether or not to implement the park, Purton said getting the support of the Regional District of Okanagan Similkameen is imperative because they are the ones planning for the future of the region. Purton said he would like to see the national park become part of the Regional Growth Strategy. The petition will be considered at an upcoming RDOS board meeting.

Chief concern amongst the members of the network is the need to conserve the habitat in the area, which Purton said is being lost to growth and development. “The area is in danger of being misused and it is very important to preserve that,” he said.

A national park reserve is being considered in the South Okanagan and Similkameen as a way to conserve the Interior Dry Plateau, one of the natural regions currently not represented in the national park network in Canada. The plateau, which stretches into the U.S. and north to Prince George is considered one of the most ecologically diverse natural regions in Canada, according to Parks Canada.

Some residents of the region, members of the Grasslands Park Review Coalition, are opposed the establishment of the park due to the potential impact and losses the park would pose to farmers, ranchers and commercial recreational users of the area. Last year Atamanenko presented a petition representing those opposed to the park in the House of Commons. The MP for the Southern Interior said while he believes the park is a good idea; the issues and concerns of these stakeholders need to be resolved before it can move ahead. In addition, he said, consultation with local First Nations is critical. “It is absolutely essential that the Syilx Nation be included in every step of the decision-making if the proposed

national park is ever to become a reality," he said. "The bottom line is that the majority of local residents should feel comfortable with the concept of a national park on their doorstep."

Tom Hurd, the feasibility study's project manager, said while Parks Canada appreciates the support of the residents who signed National Park Network's petition, they still have to consider those in opposition to the park and work to resolve their issues and concerns. Addressing the interests of First Nations is a main priority, which Hurd said will likely take time and may push the slated completion date of 2008 into next year. Parks Canada recently hired an independent consultant to conduct both economic and social study on the potential park, which will be followed by an environmental study. That information will be presented at open houses later this year. "I think we will have a substantial amount of new information and critical updates that people will want to see," he said. Parks Canada also recently produced a newsletter that addresses some of the common questions and concerns it receives from the community regarding the feasibility study process.

Victoria shifts away from development of Flathead Valley: But Permanent Protection Still Needed For Rare Treasure.

Nestled in British Columbia's southeast corner is a wilderness area of global significance called the Flathead Valley. The Flathead should be B.C.'s top priority for protection. Instead, it is threatened by a land use plan that favours industrial activity of the most environmentally destructive kind.

One plan the B.C. government is considering is for mountain-top removal coal-mining that would see pollutants and slag from the removal of 40 million tons of coal dumped into a headwaters stream of the pure and free-flowing Flathead River. Two weeks ago, it appeared that another major industrial threat to the Flathead was removed when the B.C. government -- citing the "environmental sensitivity" of the Flathead -- said energy giant British Petroleum was dropping plans to drill for coalbed methane there.

While these are signs of a potential shift in the "business as usual" industrial development strategy for the Flathead, it by no means constitutes a permanent solution. BP says it is not withdrawing from the Flathead, but merely deferring its drilling, and that it intends to pursue coalbed methane there in the future. At the same time, B.C. Energy Minister Richard Neufeld called the Flathead "volatile" and said he couldn't speculate on future plans for industrial development in the valley.

The newsletter can be picked up at public libraries or the regional district office. It will also soon be available on the Parks Canada website.

Why a national park?

This is Canada's only desert ecosystem - one of the highest priorities for conservation in Canada. Shrub-grasslands and ponderosa grasslands are found in no other Canadian national park. The natural environments of the South Okanagan Similkameen are among the most endangered in Canada. -Over 1/3 of BC's threatened and endangered species live here - birds, mammals, and plants found nowhere else in Canada, including the Flammulated owl, Lyall's mariposa lily, and the great basin spadefoot frog. -National parks provide the highest level of protection to public lands. -National parks make economic sense. They contribute \$1.2 billion to the GCP each year.

"We never know the worth of water till the well is dry."
~Thomas Fuller, *Gnomologia*, 1732

Victoria should end the speculation and protect this special place. It is time for British Columbians to do our part and place the missing jewel in what National Geographic magazine calls the "Crown of the Continent" -- by agreeing to permanent protection for our Flathead Valley and safeguarding it from destructive coal mining in adjacent areas. Sierra Club BC and other conservation groups are working hard to keep the Flathead Valley wild and free. info@sierraclub.ca
Monday, March 10, 2008 Sierra Club News Release By Kathryn Molloy. Kathryn Molloy is executive director of the Sierra Club of British Columbia. Sierra Club of Canada National Office.

"Thank God men cannot fly, and lay waste the sky as well as the earth". ~Henry David Thoreau

Coquihalla Pass and Zoa Peak!

The Federation Of Mountain Clubs Of B.C. has submitted its opposition to the proposed Juliet Creek resort development at the Coquihalla Summit. The FMC's position is outlined at: <http://www.mountainclubs.org/E%20Bulletin/2007/Coquihalla%20Summit%20use%20submission.pdf>

This mega-scale private resort development is currently in the process of being approved for development in the Coquihalla Summit area. Located in the Upper Coldwater Valley, the resort would commercialize popular Zoa Peak, used year round by hikers, skiers, and snowshoers.

The Outdoor Recreation Council's list of B.C.'s Most Endangered Rivers in 2008

1. Upper Pitt River 2. Flathead River 3. Fraser River 4. Taku River 5. Peace River 6. Headwaters of the Skeena, Nass and Stikine 7. Kettle River 8. Coquitlam River 9. Glacier/Howser Creeks 10. Coldwater River 11. Okanagan River 12. Salmon River, near Salmon Arm 13. Little Campbell River.

"When a man says to me, "I have the intensest love of nature," at once I know that he has none". ~Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Journals*, 1857

ENVIRONMENTALLY Pessimist or Optimistic?

This issue of the Mountaineer is heavy on wilderness conservation. Albeit all local concerns. The following is a letter written from a friend, which we'd like to share with you. We appreciate you reading this far. We guess that makes you somewhat "environmentally concerned". eds.

I am a citizen of a country that from most reports is near the end of a boom period (guess some of us missed that part). This will be brought on in part by a strong currency as a result of our neighbor to the south whose economy is already in the tank. This will create as its most extreme consequence the possibility of a worldwide recession. All this while living in a province, which is transitioning or selling off all of its major resource industries.

We are at a time when the greatest challenge to humanity as a whole may be our ability to wrap our heads around the idea that we need to be better Stewards of our planet if we wish to continue enjoying the relatively stable climactic conditions we now have. You may think that last bit was a tad pessimistic so let me clear that up right now. I am completely optimistic about all this, after all, the difference between a pessimist and an optimist is merely this: An optimist believes he is living in the best of all possible worlds and the pessimist is one who is afraid that the optimist might be right. While not believing that we live in the best of all possible worlds, I most certainly know that it is far from the worst, and I most certainly believe that there is a multitude of people and paths that will converge to attempt to make things better, no matter what the situation.

Now do you see why I am so excited? How could I not be, when all that is swirling around us is but the recipe for great things and high adventure? One merely has to participate to make it so. So much for the short rosy version, the longer steely-eyed version is different of course. Everywhere you look you can see systems in varying stages of disarray, from the school systems, medical system, varying levels of government and industry. Both social and natural systems are in trouble mostly through abuses of one kind or another, including but not limited to unsustainable practices, over-utilization, under-funding, in some instances just plain old lack of foresight or interest. There! Right there! That's the exciting part. Lack of interest, for if that truly is part of

this recipe of doom and gloom then it is merely a matter of people such as yourself shaking off the ambivalence that is miring us as a country, picking one of the problematic areas that may stir some interest within your heart or soul, and do something about it. No need to be overwhelmed by all the other matters. If people were to take on the challenges that speak to them, most of this stuff would be put right in due course. It's weird that the answer to both of these pessimistic or optimistic versions seems to be the same. We need individuals to get off their ass and be involved. How about it? Are you up for the game or not?

From an article of the same name by Sherman Power, Pulp Paper and Woodworkers of Canada Forestry and Environmental Chairman. Crofton, B.C.

The X Game, And That's Not X As In Extreme, Or Is It?

I've been marking days off the calendar with a black X, like a prisoner might in a jail cell. Only I'm not counting down a sentence, I'm celebrating days of liberation. Liberation from the alarming gas pump, from town traffic, from sedentary, bad-posture travel. X marks the days I don't drive at all. Days I never turn the car key in the ignition.

It hasn't been easy. At this point, I'm averaging about one X-day a week. On those days I ride, walk or stay around the home. The interesting thing is that it doesn't feel even slightly like hardship. What feels like hardship is when I'm about to claim the satisfaction of an X day and something comes along that I can't get past

without firing up the car. Now that's annoying. It doesn't feel like hardship because there are a surprising number of side benefits to going carless. There's the exercise, for one thing. Walking and riding around town adds to or even negates the need for my exercise regimen. Who needs the club membership, not to mention the drive to get there?

Then there's the head-space factor. The rumination time that is part of moderate exercise is as good as 20 minutes of meditation.

Leaving the car behind also tends to enhance my level of community schmoozing. I actually encounter and interact with people. We have probably passed each other in cars dozens of times, but what's that worth?

I'd like to claim that it's all about living lightly on the planet, shrinking my carbon footprint, a pure strike against climate change. There's a smidgen of that, I guess, but I'm basically as selfish as the next guy. When it comes down to it, I can't stand dropping \$50 on a tank of gas, especially considering that I drive a Honda! So today's a new day with the mirage of a big black X hanging out there on the horizon. I know it'll be a struggle, but I'm shooting for two Xs a week, maybe even three.

Adapted From an article by Alan Kesselheim. Mr. Kesselman is a contributor to Writers on the Range, a service of High Country News (hcn.org). He writes and pedals in Bozeman, Montana.

The Value of Belonging to ORC

by Evan Loveless

Like many other federations, members of the Executive of the Outdoor Recreation Council (ORC) often get questions from prospective member organizations such as "why should we join ORC?" or "what are the benefits of being a member?". As the Executive Director of one of ORC's long standing organizations, as well as being a member of ORC's Executive Board of Directors, I thought it would be useful to share a few thoughts about my experiences with ORC as a representative of the Federation of Mountain Clubs (FMC) and the value of ORC to our organization.

As an umbrella organization, one of the main purposes of ORC is to facilitate communication between member federations whose members enjoy different types of outdoor recreation in the

backcountry, for example; non-motorized pursuits such as hiking, backpacking, backcountry skiing and snowshoeing, snowmobiling, ATV riding, horseback riding, sea kayaking, and yachting. Communication between federations with dissimilar interests has many challenges. However ORC is in the unique position of being able to assist in resolving potential disputes between disparate user groups in the backcountry. For example the FMC may be at odds with the motorized community, in particular the snowmobile sector. However ORC provides a forum for us to raise issues and interests and discuss them openly and respectfully. Often issues arise because the participants in one recreation sector do not fully understand the needs of those in other sectors. Communication between them within the ORC environment can help to resolve such misunderstandings. ORC also has the ability to address issues and communicate with other sectors such as the extraction industries (logging, mining, and aquaculture), commercial recreation and large backcountry resorts, as well as being well connected with key government agencies. Relying on the local

knowledge and expertise of its members, ORC can negotiate with these other sectors and with the government in an informed manner and present a unified position reflecting the interests of the 100,000 or so individual members of its member organizations. This approach, more often than not, yields better results than members trying to address issues on their own. As an inclusive organization representing a broad range of interests ORC also has the ability to participate and provide leadership in government and stakeholder coalition-led initiatives.

Two current examples are ORC's participation in the development of a Recreation Trails Strategy for BC and the prospective coordination of a group which is pressing for action on the development of a West Coast Marine Trail for sea-kayakers. Ultimately ORC is and does what its members make of it. So if you think ORC should be working on a particular issue or pursuing a particular direction it is up to you to get involved and help us get there. ORC strives to be democratic and responsive to the requests and input of its member organizations, and to be efficient and effective in responding to important issues.

These functions require a great deal of effort and time from the volunteers who serve on ORC's Executive Board of Directors. Needless to say we are always looking for more volunteers to help in these important functions.

The FMC has always valued its membership in ORC and has always made a point of providing strong participation in ORC governance and initiatives. In the recent past ORC experienced hard times and at one point there was some discussion about whether it should be continued. However ORC has rebounded and now has a strong and engaged Executive. We have been able to breathe new life in some of the continuing initiatives as well as launching some new ones.

The staff from a number of key BC Government agencies are keeping a close eye on ORC with a view to treating it as their public recreation representative and partner once more. I personally have no doubt that ORC will be a strong voice for

public recreation interests in the future. And with all the pressures facing the public recreation sector today ORC is needed now more than ever!

Evan Loveless is a keen mountaineer and backcountry skier. He has served on the Executive Board of Directors of ORC since 2005 and is involved with a number of government committees and initiatives. From The Outdoor Recreation Report - Winter 2007 - 2008 Vol. 20 No.113.

Visit the ORC (Outdoor Recreation council of B.C.) website for other information and articles. Other articles in the Winter 2007-2008 issue of ORC's newsletter (which is in the KMC library as well) which may be of interest to KMCers include:

- The Proposed South - Okanagan Similkameen National Park Reserve - A Love Story
- Profile of an Outdoor Activist - Ray Pillman
- The Upper Pitt River Valley - Under Threat Again
- Outdoor Recreation Participation in BC - Implications for Land Use Management
- Public Comment Periods - Notification of Members about Public Processes.

Chain Gang B.C. Business, March 2008 has an interesting article entitled Chain Gang by Andrew Findlay. The focus is how backcountry lodges are adjusting their Tenure to better utilize their asset. "A growing number of resort communities have realized the next big tourist cash cow is mountain biking," Baldface Lodge is one featured. <http://www.bcbusinessmagazine.com/bcb/top-stories/2008/02/26/chain-gang>

"We abuse land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect". ~Aldo Leopold, A Sand County Almanac

Did You Know that the leases that the Independent Power Projects (IPPs) are given by the Crown, "revert to them permanently after 30 years. Once the initial license period is expired, the entire facility and the water license revert to the company, not the Crown, in perpetuity (as long as they meet the requirement of providing power). It is the single biggest problem with these IPPs as the government is quietly giving away many billions of dollars of energy to private hands (all disguised by the title "Green")." For more information contact Martin Carver martin@netidea.com

The Coming Ski Resort Wars

B.C. is fast tracking new ski areas costing billions. They'll vie for a customer base headed downhill.

From TheTyee.ca February 23, 2008 By Lisa Richardson

At Whistler Blackcomb (WB), bigger is better. The skiable terrain, its brochures brag, is huge. Its boundaries are expanding. Its lift capacity is growing. Targeted skier visits for this season: 2.7 million. The staff Christmas party happens over four nights with a cast of almost 4000. Whistler Blackcomb's parent company, Intrawest, is North America's biggest real estate developer, and last month closed a deal buying out CMH, Canada's biggest heli-ski operator. There's no denying this kid is brawny – and not afraid to flex some muscle when upset.

Over the resort's record-busy Christmas period, Senior Vice President of Marketing and Sales Stuart Rempel reacted to an advertisement placed in local independent news magazine, *The Pique*, calling editor Bob Barnett to withdraw all WB advertising from the paper. WB, which operates the ski resort, on-hill operations, ski school, restaurants, retail outlets and is affiliated with several property developments and time share operations, has a significant marketing budget. Ten percent of the advertisements in that issue of the *Pique*, excluding the classifieds section, were placed by Whistler Blackcomb businesses.

Rempel's fit of pique was triggered not by editorial content, but by a full page spread from another advertiser, interior ski resort operators Big White and Silver Star, calling themselves the "Place to Go for Lots of Snow." The ad ran at a moment when Whistler Blackcomb's suffered patchy snow conditions. Rempel was so mad he also issued a Christmas Eve internal memo to all mountain staff urging them to dispose of any copies of *The Pique* found on WB locations. Call it one more indication of how cutthroat competition is becoming in B.C. as more ski resorts come on line and chase many of the same potential customers.

Blizzard of new resorts

According to Tourism Whistler, Whistler as a destination generated just over 10 percent of all tourism spending in B.C. in 2001, a whopping \$1.1 billion. The province is seeking to replicate that success across the province with its Resort Development Strategy. This agenda got a boost of optimism recently with the announcement that China has granted Canada approved destination status. ADS means Chinese visitors can reach Canada with tourist exit visas, a move projected to quadruple the number of visitors to B.C. from China, as many as 300,000 arriving here annually by 2010. Tourism Whistler officials see an estimated 1.5 million new Chinese skiers taking up snowsports each year.

That came as good news to an industry suffering diminishing skier and snowboarder visits, the shock resignation of Minister for Resort Development Sandy Santori, and a series of "pineapple express" weather fronts washing away snow bases on many B.C. hills. At Whistler, where drizzle dampened the FIS Snowboard World Cup event two weekends ago, staffers have more reason to feel anxiety. The province is green lighting a number of competing ski resort projects. Some have been in the pipeline for over a decade, like the controversial Jumbo Glacier Resort. Other ventures are just out of the gate, like Juliet Creek ski resort in the Coquihalla Pass, a proposal lodged January 11 with the B.C. government by Calgary-based Westscapes Developments.

B.C.'s 42 existing ski areas represent 16 per cent of the Canadian total (283 ski areas) and 9 per cent of the North American Total (503), according to the Ministry of Resort Development's website. These resorts are projected to create new capital investment of approximately \$650 million over the next 3 to 5 years. Projects causing buzz include the recent purchase of Rossland's Red Mountain by San Diegan entrepreneur Howard Katkov and a recent injection of funds into the development of Golden's Kicking Horse resort. Other resort projects underway include Kelowna's Crystal Mountain, Valemount's Canoe Mountain, Saddle Mountain near Blue River which will be an adjunct operation to Mike Wiegele's 5 star heli-skiing resort, and the fabled Mt McKenzie near Revelstoke, representing more than \$2 billion in new potential capital investment over the next 10 to 20 years.

Government orders: 'double tourism'

Land and Water BC is the government licensing agency that must deal with ski resort land tenure applications. Under the Liberal government, LWBC has been given a mandate to promote development through commercial use of land and waters, and is processing most applications within 140 days. Mitchell Scott, editor of Kootenay Mountain Culture magazine, spoke with Robin Fawcett at the LWBC office in the Kootenays, and discovered that no carrying capacity studies have been done as to whether that region can sustain the flood of applications for backcountry heli and cat skiing operation. Fawcett told Scott, "If we get an application in the door, it's basically up to the client to do his homework on whether the market is saturated or not."

Fawcett explained, "Government has given us direction to double tourism in the next 10 years. And at the present time we are basically accepting and processing applications through the system to see if we can achieve that."

Some see an apparent conflict in LWBC's dual roles as development facilitator and licensing agency. Critics worry that projects won't get tough enough scrutiny, and the market may be swamped with suppliers.

Demand for ski resort vacations, in the meantime, has been steadily declining over the past five years, and pundits project a continued downward slide. Skiing and snowboarding are mature markets, and across North America the absolute numbers of skiers and boarders has not increased in more than a decade. Baby boomers, now aging, make up the bulk of skiers. International skier/boarder visits to B.C. peaked in the 2001/2002 season, according to recent figures from the Canadian Ski Council, and have subsequently declined by 31 percent. Although domestic visits were up in B.C. last season, a State of the Industry Workshop this summer projected that without further growth in international visits, skier/rider visits will drop by over half a million participants to 5.2 million in 2018.

Fierce competition

Even with international growth, the best projections suggest the number of visitors will remain relatively unchanged from their current peak at 5.9 million visits. Competition is projected to become increasingly intense as resorts poach customers from each other. Already, the U.S. market seems to be edging Whistler Blackcomb off its pedestal, with *Ski* magazine's 2004-05 rankings

dropping Whistler from second to fifth, among North American resorts, behind Vail, Beaver Creek and Snowmass, in Colorado, and Utah's Deer Valley.

Whistler Blackcomb's senior executives are cognizant of these market challenges. The resort's website advised staff this fall "that business trends over the last three years have not been very promising. It seems that we have all been working harder and harder to hold our ground. If it's any consolation, we're not alone. The entire tourism industry in North America has experienced the downturn of leisure and business travel... The competition continues to grow and we need to differentiate ourselves if we hope to remain successful. The drop in visitor numbers this past year caused us to be quite aggressive with pricing... We will approach our business environment with a healthy dose of respect while aggressively working to be successful." *The Pique's* editor, Bob Barnett, had put a finer point on the problem in an August editorial: "Where will the people come from to fill all the new and expanded resorts the provincial government anticipates?"

Squamish-based journalist Lisa Richardson is a regular contributor to The Tyee. Published: January 31, 2005. The Tyee is independent daily online magazine reaching every corner of B.C. and beyond. In November of 2003 The Tyee began its swim upstream against the media trends of our day. Its independent and not owned by any big corporation. "We're dedicated to publishing lively, informative news and views, not dumbed down fluff". David Beers, Editor. Please visit and use this website!

Compass Declination site

For those members who are wondering about the up to date local declination for their compasses or are planning hikes in other areas of the province or country. The following site will provide you with an up to date declination for either specific latitude and longitude or the localized declination of the nearest community. http://geomag.nrcan.gc.ca/apps/mdcal_e.php

This US site,

<http://www.ngdc.noaa.gov/seg/geomap/jsp/Declination.jsp> covers our area as well and is useful for further a field.

Once you are there, just input your latitude and longitude and it will give you the appropriate declination. You can calculate your latitude and longitude off your map or you can buy that program Soft map from Walmart for about \$80, which has all the maps of South East BC. This program will tell you the latitude and longitude of any point on the map, based on NAD 83 or NAD 27 data. (it is the one that I use to print all those small maps for my trips).

Mt Sir Sanford has approximate latitude of 51.66 degrees and a longitude of 117.87 degrees (NAD 83 datum). Inputting this information, you come up with a declination of 17.46 degrees for climbing camp. Your present declination in Nelson is 16.56 degrees, so if you are really concerned about pinpoint accuracy, you can change your declination by 1 degree when you go up to Mt Sir Sanford. Otherwise it shouldn't make too much of a difference if you are only traveling short distances from camp. If you change it, make sure to change it back when you get home.

*And then of course, you could also set your GPS unit for True North and place your compass such that True North coincides by adjusting the declination making sure the GPS unit doesn't interfere with the magnetic compass (aka stone chisel).

Thanks for this info from Dave Grant, Sandra McGuinness, Doug Brown and Bryan Reid.

Sources of Weather Information *(Peter Jordan submission)*

Here's a few places on the Internet to get weather forecasts, or data on weather that's just happened. Everyone knows the Environment Canada weather forecast site, but there are a few more.

The US National Weather Service puts out a map-based forecast that includes the Columbia River basin, which therefore includes our little part of Canada.

http://www.nwrfc.noaa.gov/weather/10_day.cgi

It gives maps of forecast precipitation, freezing level, and maximum & minimum temperatures, every day for the next 10 days. (The 10-day forecast is probably no better than the Farmers Almanac or your grandmother's bunion, but it's there if you want it.) The main value of this forecast is the freezing levels, which the Meteorological Service of Canada apparently considers a military secret. Unfortunately the site only gives the data in Imperial (or American, now there's a contradiction) units.

This winter the data from the BC Highways weather stations have been available (finally) along with the highway cams.

<http://www.drivebc.com/> or

<http://www.th.gov.bc.ca/bchighwaycam/index.aspx>

If on the Drive BC site, on the menu on the left you go to "weather information" (<http://www.th.gov.bc.ca/weather/>) you will get a map - zoom in on this, and click on any of the stations - there are many that are not at highway cam sites. The data are not that reliable, especially precipitation, but it's a good way to get a more or less current temperature at useful destinations such as Strawberry Pass.

The BC Ministry of Environment has for many years collected snow survey data, and operated a number of snow pillow stations. (A snow pillow is like a giant inner tube without a hole, that is full of antifreeze and water, and is equipped with a recording device that measures the pressure inside, which is the same as the water equivalent or weight of the snowpack. The stations include other measurements too such as temperature and precipitation, and sometimes snow depth.) The data are available at:

<http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/rfc/>. There is quite a variety of data available on this site. A useful link to follow is the "near real-time data", and go to the "aardvark" page.

(<http://a100.gov.bc.ca/pub/aspr/>). This is not the easiest site to use, but once you figure it out, you can get an hourly graph of the snow water equivalent, temperature, etc up to last night, for any of the stations. Around here, the most useful station is Redfish Creek.

Data are (usually) downloaded by satellite once per day around midnight to 6 AM. Another useful link is the "snow pillow graphs", where you can get a graph of the snow water equivalent for the whole winter, compared with other years.

Mountain School Tech Tips: Keeping it Together: Some Tips for Group Management

Sandra McGuinness

Investigations of recreational avalanche accidents have shown that group management – or lack thereof – is often a contributing cause in the occurrence of accidents. Group management is neither complicated nor complex, but it does require the cooperation of the entire group, and, ideally, is the responsibility of everyone in the group. The most important part of group management is communication. At the outset of your tour, get together and talk about the plan for the day, the potential problem areas (such as avalanche slopes) that you may encounter, and how you will collectively manage your group throughout the upcoming tour.

Some useful group management strategies include:

- Have a tail gunner - one member of your group who brings up the rear. Ideally, this should be someone with a reasonable level of experience, and you might consider equipping this person with an FRS radio, a repair kit and a first aid kit.
- Set frequent regroup locations. Most trips can easily be divided into legs that make some kind of rational sense, such as the first trail junction, the pass at the head of the valley, the end of the logging road, etc. Make sure everyone knows where the next regroup location is and that they need to stop there and wait for the entire group. Regroup locations should be frequent, say every 15 to 30 minutes of travel time. Regrouping once every four hours, isn't a group management strategy, it's a disaster plan. Choose safe locations away from avalanche slopes, terrain traps, and overhead hazards for regrouping.
- Make it a policy to keep the person immediately behind you in sight. If your immediate follower on the trail is lagging, slow your pace to keep them in sight. If everyone in the group periodically checks to make sure they can see the person behind them, it is impossible for the group to get separated.
- When skiing downhill through the trees, use the buddy system. Each person should have a buddy to ski with and is responsible for keeping their buddy in sight at all times. Don't forget to set a regroup location for getting the entire group back together at the end of the run. This might be the bottom of the run for short runs; for longer runs, try and find some obvious regroup location part way down. Perhaps there's an open area, a transition to logged forest, or a short flat spot or bench that can be used as a terrain marker for regrouping. If there are no obvious regroup locations on the way down, regroup every one to two hundred vertical metres.
- If the terrain and snowpack conditions warrant one at a time travel, make sure everyone in the group is in agreement on which slopes you will cross/ski one at a time, what the spacing between skiers should be, and where the group can regroup safely. Post a look-out to watch each person cross/descend the slope, so that you have a "last seen point" in case of avalanche. Most importantly, don't abandon the last person to ski down or across a slope. It's disturbing, to say the least, if you are the last person in your group to cross/descend a slope to get to the other side and find that everyone else has left.
- If there are particular hazards on the route, for example, terrain traps, cliff bands, or thin, rocky areas, that skiers should avoid when descending, ascending or crossing a slope, make sure everyone knows where those areas are and what options exist to avoid them.

Whatever strategy(s) you choose, make sure everyone in the group has heard, understands and agrees with the plan.

Final Call for ORC Maps

ORC still has a small supply of Outdoor Recreation maps for the following areas: Merritt, Princeton/Manning/Cathedral, Tulameen and Region, Kamloops, North Okanagan, North East BC, Greater Vancouver/Lower Fraser Valley. Cost \$1 each plus postage. Although published some years ago most information about these areas, such as mountains, streams and trails, remains unchanged. These publications will no longer be available after ORC moves its office on March 31. Also available: South Chilcotin Provincial Park Trail Map – Cost \$2 plus postage.

Myra Canyon Trestle Restoration

The restoration work on the Myra Canyon trestles has been completed and

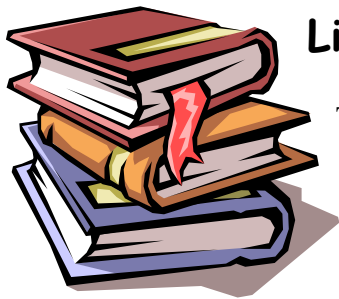
the route will be opened this spring. For up-to-date information on access visit the Myra Canyon Trestle Restoration website at www.myratrestles.com

Polycarbonate plastic water bottle?

Vancouver-based retailer Mountain Equipment Co-op is having trouble keeping stores across the country stocked with new stainless steel water bottles. The steel replacements for a popular type of plastic bottle have been selling out since MEC pulled the plastic bottles from its stores in December over concerns that polycarbonate plastic leaches the chemical bisphenol A (BPA). MEC halted sales of plastic bottles with BPA in response to recent studies, which have suggested the chemical might be linked

to a number of health problems in humans.

BPA has been linked to adverse health effects in rodents, including obesity, cancer and insulin resistance. And there is growing concern that exposure to BPA — which is also present in the lining of food tins, and hard plastic children's cups — even in low levels, may cause similar adverse effects in humans. The federal Health Department is taking a new look at the scientific literature on the chemical, much of which is contradictory or inconclusive. While the initial findings from that study are not due until May, MEC spokesman Tim Southam said some consumers have already made up their minds. As a result, shipments of the steel water bottles to some MEC stores are selling out in a couple of days, said Southam. >From CBC NEWS online.



Library News : Free Stuff

The KMC library has a number of duplicate books and journals (CAJ's and Karabiners) to give away. If you are interested in any of these publications, email me (dog_house@shaw.ca) with the title(s) you are interested in. If I get multiple people interested in the same book/publication, I'll hold a draw to sort out who gets what.

Canadian Alpine Journals :

Volume (Vol) 1967 – 1 copy
 Vol. 1976 - 1 copy
 Vol. 1978 – 1 copy
 Vol. 1979 – 3 copies
 Vol. 1980 – 2 copies
 Vol. 1981 – 3 copies
 Vol. 1982 – 3 copies
 Vol. 1984 – 3 copies
 Vol. 1985 – 2 copies
 Vol. 1986 – 3 copies

Vol. 1987 – 3 copies
 Vol. 1988 – 3 copies
 Vol. 1989 – 2 copies
 Vol. 1990 – 2 copies
 Vol. 1991 – 1 copy
 Vol. 1992 – 2 copies
 Vol. 1993 – 2 copies
 Vol. 1994 – 1 copy
 Vol. 1995 – 1 copy

Books:

The Selkirks – a picture book
 The Bugaboos – a picture book
 Expedition Yukon
 The Avalanche Handbook
 At The Top: 100 Years of Guiding in Canada
 Freestyle Skiing
 Mountaineering: Freedom of the Hills
 The Mountaineers: Famous Climbers in Canada
 Into Thin Air
 Sir Edmund Hilary: Nothing Venture, Nothing Win
 Annapurna (Maurice Hertzog)
 Off the Beaten Track: Women Adventurers and Mountaineers in Western Canada
 The Inner Green
 103 Hikes in South Western British Columbia
 High Road to Hunza

Give Me The Hills
 Pioneers on Skis
 The Puma's Claw
 Canadian Summits
 Seven Years in Tibet
 Eternal Lake O'Hara
 Headwaters
 The Great Divide
 The Cascades
 The High Sierra
 The Himalayas
 Wilderness: The Discovery of a Continent of Wonder
 Paddle to the Amazon
 Backpacking
 Annapurna: A Woman's Place
 Arabian Sands

Karabiners:

Vol. 1 – 2 copies
 Vol. 2 – 2 copies
 Vol. 3 – 3 copies
 Vol. 4 – 2 copies
 Vol. 5 – 5 copies
 Vol. 6 – 6 copies
 Vol. 7 – 4 copies
 Vol. 8 – 6 copies
 Vol. 9 – 3 copies
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 Vol. 35 – 5 copies
 Vol. 36 – 11 copies
 Vol. 37 – 16 copies
 Vol. 38 – 8 copies
 Vol. 39 – 10 copies
 Vol. 40 – 7 copies

Trip Reports

Slocan Valley Rail Trail [SVRT], January 27

Eight of us met at 10:00 a.m. at the upper Passmore Road Park & Ride at the Perrys Back Road SVRT parking area. We left one car there, piled into two cars and drove to the trailhead by the Slocan Lake, where we met 3 more skiers at 10:45. We started skiing with an overcast sky and a low cloud, but visibility was still good. About 3 km south of the lake, we reached the bird sanctuary in the Slocan River. We stopped for lunch and watched the numerous swans, geese, ducks and 2 herons.

We continued on the SVRT in now snow, to Perrys Back Road, arriving at 2:45 pm, too late for the SVRT Society picnic. Six of us squeezed into Renate's car to drop off 3 skiers to the trailhead and pick up the 2 cars.

We all had a great ski with great company.

Participants were: Ted Anderson, Renate Belczyk, Suzanne Blewett, Janis Gilbert, Barb Hanlon, Vicki Hart, Irme Mende, Dianne Perry, Tara Smedbol, Anna Thyer and Hans Korn, coordinator.

The Skin Track Less Traveled: Bridal Lake To Heather Lake, February 23

Where do you go to find untracked powder when it hasn't snowed more than 15 cm in the last 10 days, the alpine weather has been hot and sunny, and a north wind has trashed most of the slopes above treeline? Frankly, it's tough, and you might have to suck up a bit of sun blasted breakable crust to get there, but there are some options for good, if not outstanding, skiing. After spending a few hours with various maps and my latest favorite time waster – Google Earth – I came up with a plan to ski a semi-circle around the Craggs at Kootenay Pass, to exit on the east side of the Pass and hopefully catch some good turns on north slopes in between.

It seemed too difficult – or perhaps I'm too lazy – to explain my plan to the people interested in this KMC trip, so I just sent them all the map with a rough red line on indicating the route. As I become completely bamboozled by the logistics of arranging car shuttles, I left that to Ken Holmes (apparently arranging efficient car shuttles is a skill required by river paddlers), who expeditiously arranged for us to have two vehicles capable of carrying lots of skis and people parked at the end of the trip on the east side of the Pass at the usual Windy Ridge parking area.

From Bridal Lake, we followed a track Doug and I had put in a day earlier up to the pass at GR987331 (NAD27), which Kratky-san and Howie Ridge – the two people who know pretty much everything you need to know – call Signpost Pass (there is a small signpost tacked to a tree). On the south side of the Craggs, the snow was as you might expect, bulletproof suncrust with some breakable sections thrown in just to make things more entertaining. The sled heads had also been amusing themselves running their sleds up and down the slopes (clearly while they were sun-drenched), so there were also some nice large, deep gouges overlaying the general crud. Luckily, it's only about 100 vertical metres down to a good logging road.

This logging road heads generally northeast around the south and east side of the Craggs and forks shortly. We took the

uphill (left) fork and followed it around to its end near 1960 metres on the east side of the Craggs. A short skin up to ridge that runs east of the Craggs brought us to the top of a short, but pleasant slope. In the trees the snow was as good as you can get at the end of a February drought and we skied down until the terrain became a bit too flat for fun (a run of perhaps 150 metres).

Next leg of the journey was to ski up to a low spot on the east side of Peak 2168 (GR999352). With my usual inimitable navigational prowess I accidentally put the up-track a little to the west and we ended up only 80 vertical metres from the top of Peak 2168, so we continued on to the top. This however, gave us a couple of other ski options, each involving very steep descents, which, unsurprisingly, no-one was really interested in, so we stuck with our original plan and skied down the wind-rolled east ridge of Peak 2168 to a notch above and south of Heather Lake. Here we had a very pleasant run of about 200 metres down to Heather Lake on good snow with a nice atmosphere as the cirque around Heather Lake is ringed with cliff bands

We shuffled the short distance across Heather Lake, then split into pairs for the longer ski down agreeing to meet at the cutblock near 1600 metres. After a very pleasant ski down through open forest on good snow we met up on an old skid road in the cutblock about 100 vertical metres above the more main road that runs southwest up Summit Creek. Unfortunately, the new growth in the cutblock here is too thick for optimal skiing but we all managed to navigate the next 100 metres without mishap. The final section down to Summit Creek is open and was a pleasant finish to the run on huge tinkling surface hoar. For once, my navigation had been pretty spot on and we were a mere 100 metres from our parked cars.

Back at Bridal Lake where we picked up the final vehicle, the parking lot was full of skiers and all jockeying to find fresh lines. I felt kind of lucky that we'd had fresh tracks all day and hadn't met up with a single other person, all just a short ski away from the gong show going on around Bridal Lake.

Coordinator, and reporter: Sandra McGuinness, skiers: Ken Holmes, Dave Jack, Graham Jamin, Jen Kyler, Jeff Roberts, Annie Taitani, Cindy Walker.

Saint David's Day Ski Tour: Mount Lepsoe, March 1

Saturday turned out to be an ideal ski day; new snow overnight and a bluebird sky. Because it was Saint David's Day, only men called David were allowed to participate. Three David's and two not-David's met at the Nancy Greene summit parking area for what was to be a leisurely cabin tour on the north side of the highway. There was some discussion of whether or not it was north or east...not a good start.

Because the snow is generally better on the south (west?) side we decided to go as far as the Sun Spot Cabin, and re-evaluate our destination. From there we headed up the Seven Summits trail to the summit of Mount Lepsoe. By then it had clouded over, and began to snow. After we left, it cleared and we had lunch at the Berry Ridge Cabin. After a couple of laps in the trees, we went back to the parking lot and home.

We were David "Tiny" Cunningham, Vicki Hart, David "the Paper-Boy" Watson, Jill Watson, and myself, David Mitchell.

Sunshine at the Huckleberry Hut

On **March 6 and 7**, I organized a mini work party into the Huckleberry Hut to unpack some firewood that Dan Reibin from MoTSA had kindly paid for (not only the firewood but the helicopter time to fly it in). I offered any one who helped out three free nights at any of the Bonnington Cabins, which seemed to be not a bad deal for about an hour or two of work.

We had the firewood delivered to Porto Rico Road where Doug Brown (all by himself as I could not secure a helper for him) loaded it into two nets for long-lining in. Early in the morning, just after 7 am, Shannon Naylor, Brian Kooi and myself skied up the road to the cabin arriving in just under four hours despite taking a leisurely pace (no trail breaking). About an hour later Will Neusteadter and Eva Boehringer arrived, and a lone skier, a friendly chap, called Jay from Ymir, also skied up.

We spent the hour or so before the arrival of the helicopter with the wood digging out under and beside the cabin so we had room to stack the new load of wood. Duncan from DAM helicopters delivered two sling loads of wood sometime after noon, and within about half an hour we had stacked it all away and were sitting down to lunch.

After lunch, Eva, Will and Jay skied out, while Shannon, Brian and I skied up to Cabin Peak ridge. We had a very nice ski down an east aspect slope, coming down the shoulder of the gully that drains the creek just past the cabin. Despite there being a lot of crusty snow around, we had nice soft snow for our run down and, as a bonus, popped out less than 50 metres from the cabin.

The three of us stayed overnight and were very comfortable in the cabin. Next morning, the weather was in and out sun and we went for a tour up to the top of Midday Peak. Our plan to ski northeast slopes down to the creek below was scuppered by lots of whumpfing and poor CT results on the February surface hoar. Instead, we returned to the cabin the way we had come. As usual, the ski out was quick.

Thank you to all the helpers, especially Doug Brown and Dan Reibin, without them the whole thing would have fallen apart.

Participants: Eva Boehringer, Doug Brown, , Jay from Ymir, Brian Kooi, Shannon Naylor, Will Neustaedter and Coordinator: Sandra McGuinness.

Tip Toeing Around Monk Creek: March 15

My ambitious plans for the KMC weekend ski trip were scaled down severely after a March snowstorm loaded up an already unstable snowpack and resulted in a number of skier triggered avalanche events. Instead of searching out 38 degree alpine runs, I was suddenly searching for safe (less than 30 degrees) skiing without overhead avalanche danger or the fear of crazed powder hungry skiers loosing slabs down on our heads.

With those thoughts in mind, I settled on a trip to some gentle terrain on the south and north sides of Monk Creek south of Bridal Lake. We started this trip from Bridal Lake at the far too late hour of 9.30 am (blame highway delays), by skiing up to the pass between Baldy Rocks and Ripple Ridge. A 400 metre descent down south facing slopes to Monk Creek followed. Most of this terrain is gentle (around 25 degrees or less) and nicely gladed. The snow was excellent – light, fluffy

powder – but, just a bit too much of it for such a low angle slope.

After a snack at Monk Creek we climbed 300 metres up to a long, low ridge that runs east from the south end of Ripple Mountain. There is some very pleasant touring terrain here, with big open trees and pretty valleys. We walked east along this ridge a short distance, and, while everyone else snacked, Graham and I dug a snowpit to check out the two recently buried surface hoar layers. Our results were not encouraging so we retreated back towards gentler terrain to ski down. Although the top of our run was only 30 degrees, we skied it very carefully, one at a time to a safe location and each person keeping in the original ski track. After about 50 metres, the slope became even more gentle and we felt comfortable to ski down together.

Around 1800 metres, this valley becomes more gentle so we climbed westward for about 100 vertical metres to gain a north running spur ridge. Here we were back above the valley we had skinned up, and we skied all the way down to the creek, again keeping to gentle terrain.

The final 400 metre climb back up to the Baldy-Ripple pass was a bit tiring, but we all made it arriving at about 5.30 pm, for the final quick ski out.

Participants: Eva Boehringer, Graham Jamin, Jen Kyler, Megan Long, Marissa Smith, and coordinator, Sandra McGuinness.

OTHER TRIP REPORTS

These reports of “common adventure trips” are submitted by club members; they are not on the club schedule.

Ripple Mountain Circuit (AKA Slide Alder Slalom), February 24

This was not a KMC trip but, as it may not have been done before, I have written it up for the benefit of anyone who may be interested in an alternative way down Ripple.

After trying for three years to test the feasibility of a descent from the summit of Ripple Mountain down the W ridge to the highway, I finally conned a small group into making an attempt. Snow conditions were generally poor but the avalanche forecast was low throughout the whole vertical range, so we set off from Nelson at 7.00 am. We left a vehicle at the exit point (a gravel storage area about 8 kms. W of the Pass summit just E of the western gate) and set off for Ripple from the Pass parking lot about 8.30 am in light snow and poor visibility. The trip to the summit of Ripple was routine and took about 4 hours, arriving in blowing snow and near zero visibility for a conference about where to go from here.

Surprisingly, the group decision was to follow the plan and go out down the W ridge. Because of the poor visibility and the steep north face of Ripple at this point, for safety we dropped a couple of hundred feet down the SW slope before angling NW at an easy angle until we rejoined the W ridge about 700 vert. ft. below. The rock hard sun crust was covered by a few inches of fresh snow and the kilometre or so of this traverse provided an almost surreal sense of effortless flying

through the skeletons of sparse, long dead trees. The next 500 vert. ft. was on a well defined ridge open enough to provide easy descent, but this ended with the first bump on the ridge. This was avoided by traversing around to skiers left over a very steep open avalanche slope and so back onto the ridge.

At this point we briefly skinned up to surmount the second bump, and from this point forward, we navigated by compass and altimeter (reinforced by GPS readings at turn points) since the trees and weather obscured almost all topographical reference points. As we dropped the remaining 2500 vert. ft. to the creek, the bush thickened and thinned, the alder grew more healthy and the snow got softer and shallower. We eventually arrived at Stagleap Creek, at which Micha providentially located a beaver dam enabling us to cross on skis. From here it was a 15minute skin up to the exit point on the highway. The descent took about 3.5 hours including a stop for lunch. The total vertical descent was about 4300 ft.

A few words of advice for those interested in this way out:

1. Keep the group small, the biggest hazard is losing someone, and the probability of this doubles with each additional person.
2. There is only one real avalanche hazard on the descent, and that can be easily avoided.
3. On the last 2500 vert. ft., have planned turn points with elevations and linked bearings because, for the most part, you will have no idea where you are and if you get off the ridge, you will get lost.
4. January or February are probably the only months in which it is feasible. The creek crossing should not be a problem in these months.

My thanks to the rest of the group who were Micha Forestell, Jen Kyler, Kim Shea, and Peter Tchir (on tele !). Maurice de St. Jorre.

Skiing the Borderline

South of Monk Creek, which itself is south of Bridal Lake at Kootenay Pass, there is a nice looking **2282 metre peak** that lies just, only just, north of the US border. As I've skied to the summit of pretty much every other peak, peaklet or ridge-line within a days travel of Bridal Lake, and, the forecast was for a sunny day, and my friend Roland, who can break trail like a moose on amphetamines wanted to go skiing for the day, a tour to the top of this unnamed "border" peak, seemed like a good idea.

We left Nelson at 7 am, a time guaranteed, if the roads are good, to get you through the regular winter closures west of Bridal Lake about 2 minutes before they set up the road blocks. True to my carefully calculated statistics, we were crossing the road to start skiing right as the road block vehicle was getting into position.

There's always a well beaten trail to the pass below Ripple Ridge, as the Ripple Ridge cabin, despite being a scant one hour (or less) from the trail head is incredibly popular. There was some nice fresh storm snow covering up the old snow surface, perhaps 20 cm, and remarkably dry considering the temperatures at which it fell. A good overnight drop in temperatures can do wonders for improving snow quality by facetting the surface snow.

From the pass at 1980 metres, we skied a gentle cruiser run for about 400 metres down to Monk Creek. Despite being

south facing, this slope provided good skiing on the fresh storm snow. Monk Creek was completely snowed in – a condition I would rue on our return when I had run out of drinking water – and was easy to cross. We skinned up through light forest and a replanted cutblock to arrive at a pass on the ridge at about 1860 metres.

We skied east, climbing gently through open forest to reach the north ridge of our border peak, and then turned south and skied right to the summit in, unfortunately increasing wind and cloud. I had hoped to have a view of Snowy Top, the highest peak along this ridge that lies right on the northern end of Idaho, but everything to the south of us was clogged in by the time we topped out. Just over four hours to the summit, all easy skiing and, with reasonable route finding skills no avalanche hazard.

Instead of retracing our route, we decided to drop down the north ridge until we could ski off the west side down to a marsh at 1800 metres. The first part of the descent was fun with good snow and a slope angle of perhaps 30 degrees. However, lower down we got into some steeper terrain on which the storm snow had absolutely no bond to the underlying melt freeze crust and was sluffing easily. A gully would have provided nice skiing right down the flats below had the stability been better, but we had no plans to expose ourselves to such a terrain trap and instead picked our way down from safe island to safe island skiing carefully one at a time. Below the steep stuff, we swooshed down the rest of the run on good snow and had lunch in a sheltered glade.

Another gently rising contour to the north put us back on our tracks of the morning and we had one more good run, shorter this time at about 250 metres back to Monk Creek. The final 400 metre climb back to Ripple Ridge pass felt worse than it was because my tongue was stuck to the roof of my mouth from thirst. Back at the vehicle I croaked water, and downed a half a litre in one gulp.
Sandra McGuinness.

Seeking Summits up the Sheep

For the last few winters (at least), the Sheep Creek road has been plowed - amazingly, it seems, by a resident living at an old mine site up Clyde Creek. The road seems to typically be plowed to km 12; while this means starting skiing at a fairly low elevation (1000-1100 m), it does offer peak baggers an opportunity to tick off a couple peaks that would otherwise be a summer thrash.

Yellowstone Peak is one of those peaks I used to wish had never been named. A certain member of my family feels compelled to ascend any West Kootenay geographic high, however lowly, that has been graced with an official moniker. Yellowstone is not one of the loftier local peaks, as even the summit fails to rise above treeline - allow the top is clear of trees, no doubt due to battering from the savage storms the peak is known to spawn. What the mountain lacks in relief and ruggedness, it makes up for in thickness of bush. A direct attempt on the summit from Sheep Creek would require tackling the lower forest, which is comprised of 20cm diameter trees spaced every 15 cm. To make matters worse, the bridge over Sheep Creek on the Curtis Creek road has been pulled, thus complicating access to the decommissioned logging roads on the west side of Yellowstone.

With the heavy valley snows of this winter, it seemed possible that one could find a snow bridge on which to cross Sheep Creek and then follow logging roads to the high valley between Muskrat Creek and Yellowstone, which should provide easy access to a point high on the south ridge.

So it was, on February 25, Sandra McGuinness, Roland Perrin, and I drove to km 12 of the Sheep Creek road – the last 2 km being high clearance 4x4 due to the deeply rutted compact snow. With high snow levels and low water levels, crossing Sheep Creek on the Curtis Creek road was a nonevent, and we were soon on our way up Curtis Creek – there is a snowmobile closure for caribou, so there was only trapper sled tracks on the Curtis road, and even these were gone once we turned south, crossed the creek, and headed for mighty Yellowstone towering above the valley like some Himalayan monster. We followed the road to its end at the bottom of a cut block in the aforementioned high valley; here Sandy and I had a snack while Roland had his usual full-on buffet complete with tablecloth.

The bottom of the cut was at about 1540m, and the healthy snowpack meant the bush was not a problem, so we easily made our way up to a low spot on the south side of Yellowstone at 1770 m. A quick scoot up the mostly open south ridge, and the mighty Yellowstone was ours! The relief of ticking this sucker off without dealing with the bush in summer nearly brought me to tears.

After some more lunch, we returned the way we had come – enjoying some excellent skiing from the ridge crest to the road – reaching the truck 1:10 after leaving the summit. A six-hour day including two lunches and a couple wrong turns.

The following Saturday was my **club trip (March 1)**, and having so enjoyed Sandra’s and my ascent of Mt Waldie the previous April, I elected to return with a KMC crew. Seven of us drove the Sheep Creek road again, this time stopping at the plowed parking area at km 10.

We crossed Sheep Creek on a very substantial bridge, skied about 300 m up the Waldie Creek road (again, only trapper sled traffic), and turned west onto the old mining road heading up Billings Creek (again, no sled traffic at all). We made our way up the mining road to the old mine site at around 1640 m. We crossed the creek and headed west on a main road (that I have not seen marked on any map) which switched up to around 1760m – where it started to drop down, we left the comfort of the road and climbed up the prominent treed ridge to where it met the west ridge of Waldie at around treeline.

The morning’s sun had given way to overcast skies, and with squalls all around things promised to get worse, so I hurried folks through lunch hoping to summit with good visibility. But it was not to be. While we were picking a careful route up the wind-rolly ridge, the fog rose and the clouds descended, so we reached the top in a windy whiteout. The clouds lifted a little for us, but our views were mostly limited to the upper Weasel Creek cirque.

After not long on top, we picked our way down west ridge in very flat light. The skiing improved considerably once we descended below tree line (the new snow making all the difference – 10cm the night before); we made our way down to where we left the road, and promptly stopped for the fourth (yes fourth!) food stop of the day. From here, the road was a very quick scoot down - initially very pleasant in dry new snow, then a bit dodgy in crusty moist snow, then middling in wet snow. We were back to the vehicles by 2:50 - from summit to truck was probably no more than 1 hour on skis – making for a 1280 m and 5.5 hour day.

We were Micha Forestell, Jen Kyler, Sandra McGuinness, Shannon Nyler, Roland Perrin, Delia Roberts, and me, Doug Brown.

The KMC 2008 Executive:		Contacts:
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“There is a sufficiency in the world for man's need but not for man's greed”. ~Mohandas K. Gandhi

“It is horrifying that we have to fight our own government to save the environment”. ~Ansel Adams

The imprint of consumption is everywhere liberal states flourish. Given its integral role in modern life, it is surprising how little attention is paid to its collective environmental and social consequences; and while there is no shortage of viewpoints about the virtues and pathologies of consumption, divergent concerns are rarely prominent or sustained in public discourse. Meanwhile, worldwide consumption continues to grow without a pause for its critics' warnings. While social critics and environmentalists lament consumption's ill effects, and the disproportionate consumption taking place within market society, there is little likelihood that their cries to curb mankind's taste for material goods and services will be heeded. Quite the contrary, for contemporary consumption practices are best characterized as hyper-consumptive.

Greenberg, N. (2004, Mar) *Paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Studies Association, Le Centre Sheraton Hotel, Montreal, Quebec, Canada*

Can consumption-based capitalism survive environmentalism?

A radio journalist called to talk to me about this question yesterday. I think it is one of the most important questions going, since so much of the eco-discussion centers around how we can save the planet while keeping the way our economy and society functions exactly the same. But the question is, do we really want more of the same?

I've heard that the Chinese character for "crisis" is the combination of the characters for "danger" and "opportunity." I think about this a lot: how the fact that our current environmental crisis is an opportunity for us to take a step back and take stock of the way we live and whether we are really heading in the direction we want.

The assumption in western politics seems to have been, for the longest time, that economic growth is what's most important. The priority, on both a societal and personal level, in other words, is to get more efficient, do more work, produce more goods, and get more money.

On a societal level, the idea is that a growth in economy will trickle down to the poorest of the poor and that the quality of life for all of us will improve. On a personal level, the idea is that more money means more comforts. We've used the idea of growth in income—and resource use—as a surrogate for growth in personal and societal happiness.

The problem is that this is not working on either level. More and more, studies are showing that growth is not trickling down. Despite the growth, the poor are getting poorer, the middle classes are getting middler, and the rich are getting richer. Here in the USA, people have begun to question whether our huge economy really does make for our being the land of opportunity. So, does further economic growth really equate to societal happiness?

As for the personal or individual level, members of the new branch of the psychological profession who call themselves "positive psychologists" say that we are on a "hedonic treadmill." We earn more to spend more and then have to earn more to spend more and then... We get a quick burst of pleasure from our purchases but no long term increase in happiness. Meanwhile, many are stressed by working all the hours to do jobs they don't believe in with people they don't care for.

Increases in the baselines of our happiness, it turns out, don't come from money once you've achieved an income equivalent of something like \$40,000. What the positive psychologists say happiness does come from, on the other hand, is strong interpersonal relationships, doing what you are naturally good at, living a life that is in accord with your values, and achieving meaning by connecting to something larger than yourself.

What this all adds up to, in my view, is that the economic growth paradigm is making happier neither the people nor the planet—which can't afford the resource use. If we use the current environmental crisis to change our priorities, maybe the world could be a better place in a lot more ways than one.

Having said all this, to allay suspicions to the contrary, I want to say that I am a total pro-progress person. I don't want to take a single step backwards. I'm go straight ahead all the way. But I do question the definition of progress and going forward. If, for 150 years, we considered economic growth and technological advancement as our means of moving forward, is doing more of the same progress, or is it conservatism in the extreme?

A lot of the western world is now living a decent standard of living. That was real progress. But real progress does not mean moving from three TVs a household to four. Real progress may not be developing our left-brain techno-financier capabilities any more. Real progress, to me, means turning our attention to the world's real problems and solving them, not in some trickle down way, but directly.

Let's take a step back and ask these two questions. First, can we take all that we've learned and use it, not to figure out how to get teenagers to buy more cell phones, but how to get it so much of the rest of the world is not living in poverty and disease? Can we use our big brains to make pumps for wells in villages that have no water and solar panels for villages with no electricity, for example? Can we change our societal priorities from me, me, me to us, us, us?

Second, can we in the developed countries take a step back and ask ourselves what would really make us happy. Could we consume a little less and spend the time building stronger communities? Could we get off the earn to spend, hedonic treadmill that traps use in the stress cycle, and maybe find meaning looking for ways to help those who are way less fortunate than us? How much happier would we all be if we were able to say we were helping the less fortunate instead of quietly worrying that we were hurting them?

That to me, would be a real measure of progress, both for the planet and its people, because being kinder to the planet may well turn out to be the same as being kinder to its people. That's the opportunity part of the crisis. So the question may not be *can* consumption-based capitalism—with growth as its exclusive goal—survive environmentalism, but *should* it?

Posted by Colin Beavan on the No Impact Man website *NIM* 6/23/09]

"The problems that exist in the world today cannot be solved by the level of thinking that created them" Albert Einstein

ATTENDING CLUB TRIPS

RESPONSIBILITIES OF TRIP INITIATORS

Before the trip:

1. Do not undertake organization of a trip beyond your capabilities. Change the objective or arrange for another coordinator.
2. Be familiar with the area (unless the trip is exploratory in intent). If you have not done the climb recently, a recon a few weeks before the trip is an excellent idea. Talk to people familiar with the area; check the guidebooks, old Newsletters, old Karabiners, CAJ journals, Parks Branch, Forest Service, etc.
3. Download or photocopy the daily trip registration form. Pick up or ensure the necessary equipment is on the trip: Ice axes, crampons, Pieps, first aid kit, and repair kit. Make arrangements for huts, campsites, and registration as required.
4. Notify a responsible person where you are going and when you will be coming back. Tell them when you return!

Choosing and organizing the party:

5. The coordinator has full authority to reject anyone he or she feels is unsuited for the trip. For more difficult trips ask people unknown to you what their qualifications are and who they have climbed/hiked with.
6. Explain to people what the trip entails: how difficult, how strenuous, what equipment is needed. This is especially important for newcomers, who may not understand the need for proper boots or even rain gear.
7. The coordinator arranges the most economical use of cars. Each passenger should pay a reasonable proportion of the gas and oil expenses of the trip.
8. Make clear arrangements for the assembly of the party at an easily recognizable place at a definite time. Wait a reasonable time for latecomers.

On the trip:

9. Before leaving the cars, check that everyone, especially anyone inexperienced, is properly equipped. Those who are not should not start out.
10. On many trips it is a good idea to appoint an end person who comes last and makes sure no stragglers fall by the wayside. The end person generally carries the first aid kit. In a large group a second coordinator may be desirable to cover the stragglers.
11. Set a pace that allows the party to stay together, both going up and coming down. Space rests so as to prevent straggling! With large parties, count numbers once in a while to make sure everyone is still together.
12. The coordinator doesn't need to remain in front providing he or she can maintain control of the party. The coordinator and all experienced members have a responsibility to give instruction to the less experienced. Team less experienced members with more experienced members.
13. All decisions should be made with a margin of safety. When in doubt, use common sense and accepted normal procedure.
 - allow enough time for the trip; start early.
 - rope up before a difficult section.
 - turn back when necessary: difficulties, a weak party, lack of time, weather, fatigue, etc.
 - watch for avalanche and rock fall hazard, and act accordingly.
 - in wet or cold weather watch for hypothermia in poorly clad individuals.
 - stay in touch with the group's feelings and respect them.
14. The coordinator should stay at the cars until everyone is down.

After the trip

15. Return club equipment promptly so next party can use it.
16. Send a trip report to the newsletter editor.
17. Send the daily trip outing waiver form to the Trips Chairman

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARTICIPANTS

1. Ensure your abilities are up to the trip's difficulty. Use the trip grading system on the schedule.
2. Phone the coordinator 48 hours in advance to confirm your attendance.
3. Show up on time and be prepared physically, mentally, and equipment-wise for the outing you are going on. Sign the daily trip waiver/ registration form.
4. Return rented/borrowed equipment promptly.
5. Share expenses.

IN CASE OF AN ACCIDENT

1. The coordinator should consider the severity and implications of the accident, the remaining hazards, the terrain, and the availability of resources when deciding what to do next.
2. The coordinator should ensure that everyone's present safety is maintained and danger is minimized as is consistent with emergency activities.
3. If help is needed, the coordinator should organize an orderly expedition.
4. If conditions permit, witnesses should stay in the area to provide any necessary information to rescue personnel.
5. All party members should (1) inform the person(s) in charge of any special abilities; (2) ensure their own safety and, if their help is not required, stay clear of rescue activities; (3) cooperate with everyone involved in emergency operations.
6. If the accident is serious enough to warrant aerial evacuation, contact the nearest ambulance or RCMP detachment who will dispatch a helicopter with a first aid attendant.