



CLOUDBURST

The Newsletter of the Federation of Mountain Clubs of B.C.

Fall/Winter 2004/2005



Lesley Behm

ACC party on Asulkan Glacier, Roger's Pass, 2004

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CLOUDBURST

Articles: We welcome articles which inform our readers about mountain access, recreation, and conservation issues or activities in B.C. Don't limit yourself to prose: photographs and poems also accepted. Pieces should not exceed 1,000 words.

Advertising: The FMCBC invites advertising or classified advertising that would be useful to our members. Please contact the FMCBC office to discuss rates.

PO Box 19673, Vancouver, BC V5T 4E7
Tel: (604) 873-6096, Fax: (604) 872-4088
Email: fmcbc@mountainclubs.bc.ca

Visit our website at:
www.mountainclubs.bc.ca

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Membership

The Federation of Mountain Clubs of British Columbia (FMCBC) is a non-profit organization representing the interests of non-mechanized hikers and climbers, and outdoor clubs throughout British Columbia. The FMCBC 1) addresses mountain access, recreation, and conservation issues; 2) coordinates, builds, and maintains hiking and mountain access trails throughout B.C. through its member clubs; and 3) promotes outdoor education and safety. Membership in the FMCBC is open to any individual or group interested in non-mechanized outdoor activities, and access, recreational, and conservation concerns. Those interested in joining the FMCBC have two options:

Club Membership:

Please contact the FMCBC office to receive a list of clubs that belong to the FMCBC (See back cover). Membership is \$15 per annum per membership when a member of a FMCBC Club.

Individual Membership:

Call the FMCBC office at 604 873-6096 for a membership form. Membership for individuals is \$20 per year. Membership forms will be available online soon at the FMCBC website.

Members of More Than One FMCBC Club

When people join a member club of the FMCBC the \$15 FMCBC membership fee is calculated as part of the club membership. People who have memberships in more than one FMCBC member club are entitled to a \$15 refund for each "extra" membership on request. If you don't request a refund you are entitled to a tax receipt for the extra membership fees. To request either a refund or a tax receipt please send the request, in writing, to the FMCBC.

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President's Message

Manrico Scremin

The FMCBC and our member clubs are in the unique position of advocating both conservation and access to our mountains. I think the FMCBC actually does a good job of finding the right balance between these two often conflicting objectives. Unfortunately, these days we are being challenged on both fronts; our members are steadily losing access to the places where we like to hike, ski, and climb, while at the same time our protected areas are under constant pressure to be commercialized or exploited.

First the access issue: I'm sure that many FMCBC members have by now experienced increasing difficulties in accessing the less travelled alpine areas. Logging roads are becoming less and less passable due to lack of maintenance. Also, important roads often get damaged and become impassable. In either case it means long hikes up roads that we used to drive up. Our clubs on Vancouver Island have unique challenges with gated roads on private land. The bottom line is that some of our most important recreational areas are now out of reach for weekend trips. Frankly, I think this is now becoming one of the major issues that the FMCBC needs to focus on. There are several organizations which have a strong interest in conservation but I think the FMCBC is the only organization which has an interest in promoting access for hiking and backcountry skiing/snowshoeing. We have to carefully choose where we devote our limited volunteer and staff energies.

On the conservation side of things the sad reality is that several of our provincial parks and wild areas are under real pressure. Situations that come to mind just in the last few months include:

- ? Extensive logging in both Mt. Robson and Wells Gray Provincial Parks.
- ? Proposed sightseeing gondola in the Stawamus Chief Provincial Park.
- ? Strong rumour of proposed network of commercial backcountry lodges in Garibaldi Provincial Park.
- ? Deletion of a prime part of Garibaldi Park to allow for a Whistler ski area expansion.

- ? Proposed new ski area and real-estate development on the edge of Garibaldi Park.
- ? Proposed new ski area in Jumbo Pass near Invermere.
- ? Proposed hydro electric development in Strathcona Provincial Park.
- ? Proposed sightseeing gondola and "small" ski area in the Tantalus Provincial Park.

Fortunately some of these are stalled, at least for now. The FMCBC has an interest in all of these but, as I noted above, we have to pick our battles.

There is some good news to report regarding conservation. Hopefully most of you know that the FMCBC owns some land in Squamish. To make a long story short, the FMCBC took a strong leadership position in the mid to late 1980's to buy that land in order to preserve the Smoke Bluffs area for rock climbing. We undertook several special fund raising campaigns and bought the land. The good news is that the Squamish District Council now wants to preserve the Smoke Bluffs for climbing and has started a planning process that should result in a significant new park. Of course we are participating actively in that planning effort. More about this in the next edition of the Cloudburst.



Lesley Bohm

Oesa Lake, 2004 ACC Week at Abbott Hut

Executive Director's Report

Evan Loveless

Greetings. As some of you know I joined the FMCBC as Executive Director in April 2004. Since April I have been on quite a learning curve gaining an understanding of the organizational structure, the history of the organization and the many issues the FMCBC are involved with. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the many key Federation members who have been so welcoming and supportive as I work through this learning curve. I am excited about working for the FMCBC and, the opportunities that lie ahead for the organization. Here is a sample of some of the initiatives we will be working on.

We moved our website to a new server and are now in the process of redeveloping our website (see updates). I am hoping this new website will be more useful and informative for members and the general public. Another reason we wanted to move/upgrade to a new server is so we could offer better internet service to our member clubs at greatly reduced costs. We are planning to provide monthly updates to FMCBC members in the form of electronic bulletins. These updates will be sent to members via the listserv. Contact our office if you are not on the FMCBC listserv. Regarding *Cloudburst*, we anticipate that it will be published semi-annually. We would like to have two great issues a year with lots of both exciting and serious content and then offset these with the monthly email newsletter or bulletin. There are certainly major costs, and volunteer hours involved in producing the *Cloudburst* and we might want to look at offsetting these costs with well placed advertising. Funding dependent, we will also redevelop a promotional brochure and display.

We will definitely work to increase our profile and lines of communication with the appropriate Government Ministries, Crown Corporations, and stakeholder groups. Many members have already done an exceptional job in this regard. I will work with the Board and Committees to prioritize issues to take to Government. We would also like to increase interaction and communication among the

clubs and regions. Part of this will entail me travelling to meet with the clubs and regional committees. We also recognize that there is some work to do regarding communication with in the organization and we are working to address this.

With the administration etc. more or less under control (or at least we are moving in that direction) I have begun the challenge of supporting the Committees as they address (and in some cases fight) the issues facing FMCBC members and public members of the outdoor community. These issues are numerous, varied and complex. And as many members already know, they often tend to suck up many hours of meetings and supporting research. Some of the issues the FMCBC are working on are outlined within this *Cloudburst* issue. Many more are looming on the horizon. If there are issues of concern to you contact our office or the appropriate Committee Chairs and get involved. The FMCBC is a grassroots organization and our strength is in our members. Stay tuned for more on what the FMCBC is up to.



Paul Chatterton

Approaching the Clarke Group, Chehalis Range

FMCBC Notices

Check your email and the new FMCBC website for monthly FMCBC bulletins starting in December. Contact us if you have events or notices you would like posted in the next *Cloudburst* issue or in our FMCBC monthly bulletins.

Upcoming FMCBC Meetings

FMCBC Board of Directors meetings are held bi-monthly; the next Board of Directors meeting will be in January (date to be determined). Recreation and Conservation Committee meetings are held monthly September to June. The next Recreation and Conservation Committee meeting will be December. Trails Committee meetings are also held monthly except there is no meeting in December; the next meeting will be in January (date to be determined). All members are welcome to Committee meetings and encouraged to get involved. Contact us for more on meeting dates.

2003/04 Banff Mountain Film Festival World Tour

The 2003/04 Banff Mountain Film Festival World Tour is presently touring British Columbia. Check the British Columbia schedule online at <http://www.banffmountainfestivals.ca/tour/canada/locations/bc.htm>

2004 Avalanche Awareness Series

MEC and the CAA have joined up to help you learn more about avalanche awareness. Throughout the winter six leading experts will be sharing articles on subjects related to avalanche awareness. This is not intended to replace professional avalanche awareness training but will hopefully get you thinking about the right things before you hit the snow. Read the articles, learn about each author, share your questions, and play safe this winter. Visit the MEC website (www.mec.ca) and follow the link to 2004 Avalanche Awareness Series.

Trails Committee Report

Alex Wallace, Co-Chair, FMCBC Trails Committee
Pat Harrison, Co-Chair, FMCBC Trails Committee, VP
FMCBC

Manrico Scremin, Evan Loveless, Alex Wallace, and Pat Harrison have been participating in the Highway 99 Recreational Focus Group set up by the Ministry of Transportation since last December. The purpose of this focus group is to coordinate the Highway 99 redevelopment with the existing recreational activities that take place along this highway corridor. Of particular concern to FMCBC members is the impact of the Highway 99 Upgrade project on hiking trails. MOT has guaranteed that there will be an overpass for the Baden-Powell Trail in West Vancouver, as the new highway section will bypass Horseshoe Bay by going due north from Eagleridge through British Properties private land. Further up Highway 99, the issue of parking for the Sunset Trail is still unresolved, but FMCBC is working with the Municipality of West Vancouver and MOT to create trailheads and a greenway system of trails at the Highway. The Sunset trailhead at Highway 99 will be closed for blasting and construction in the next few weeks and will not reopen for about two years; by which time the proposed solution will hopefully be in place. In the interim, FMCBC will be helping to place signage at the Cypress Bowl end of the trail so that people do not hike down into the construction area. West Vancouver has recently bought land in the area of one of the proposed parking lots. The FMCBC, has also been working with the Ministry of Transportation (along with BC Parks, and CN Rail) to develop a trail that will connect the Brew Lake trail to Brandywine Provincial Park. It is anticipated that this trail will run parallel to the CN rail line and use a planned rail underpass at the highway crossing.

In Cypress Bowl, the current Baden-Powell route up an old logging road to the Black Mountain Plateau will soon disappear under the construction of several 2010 venues (for aerials events, moguls, etc) and the reroute approved by FMCBC is already under construction (funded by the Cypress ski area operator and the 2010 Organizing Committee).

Pat Harrison has been working on additional parking at Lions Bay. He has met several times with the Village Council and they have agreed to a proposal by Pat to use the elementary school 'overflow' parking lot. The School Board of West Vancouver has agreed to this proposal as well. As we go to press, a final review by the School Board on the ground is pending for December. After we receive a go-ahead from the School Board, completion of a trail from the parking lot to the trailhead will begin. The Council of Lions Bay did remove 'no parking' signs at the current trailhead so that 10-15 cars can park there. However, on weekends and during summer, many more people use the area to access the Lions. A few years from now, Terminal Forest will be finished using their heli-logging staging area south of Lions Bay and will turn this over to the FMCBC to be used as a new trailhead location for the trails to the Lions. Terminal Forest will maintain the road.

Pat Harrison and Michael Feller have added hiking trails to the Sea-to-Sky LRMP document as recreational features that must be maintained when industrial activities occur in the Squamish Forest District.

Updates

FMCBC Membership Dues

There has been some talk (and a few grumblings) regarding FMCBC membership dues. The Board of Directors will be reviewing our membership policy at an upcoming Board meeting. However the present policy is as follows. Membership dues are \$15.00 for each member of a club belonging to the FMCBC. This is one set fee regardless of age or club status. Individual memberships for people not belonging to a member club is \$20.00. The FMCBC may look at different membership options in the future but for now there is just the one club category and fee.

Insurance

Peter Rothermel has written up a good report regarding the FMCBC liability insurance (see insurance report). Based on this information we renewed our existing insurance policy with All Sport Insurance. This year (2004/2005) insurance premiums will be \$6.00 per member. There is still some work to be done around insurance and some specific questions to be answered. The FMCBC is presently exploring options and confirmation for our present insurance policy and the addition of biking activities. We expect to have a report for the January Board of Directors meeting.

Website

We moved our website to a new server and are now in the process of redeveloping our website presence and utility. The new website is anticipated to have two components: a promotional component and a FMCBC work component. The promotional component will have a fresh look and contain important information about the FMCBC and opportunities for members and the public to engage in the FMCBC and its member clubs. The work component will be an efficient utility for the FMCBC Board and Committees to carry out its important projects and work on important issues. The new site is expected to be launched in late Nov/early Dec. Visit us at www.mountainclubs.bc.ca

Backcountry Ski Resort Proposals: Win Some, Lose Some

The Garibaldi Resort Proposal has received a setback. The proposal for a four season resort at Garibaldi, which was approved by the Province, was overturned by the BC Supreme court. The Supreme court ruled that the Province had breached its duty by not consulting with the Squamish First Nation, which claims the land around Mount Garibaldi as its traditional territory. Now the proposal and its approval have to be revisited.

Meanwhile the Jumbo Creek resort proposal was recently approved by the Provincial Environmental Assessment Office. However, this is just one hurdle in the approval process. Land and Water BC (LWBC) must complete a Master Development Agreement with Glacier Resorts Ltd. (the proponent). Then the Regional District of East Kootenay (RDEK) must review and approve a rezoning application.

Parks Under Threat

There have been several recent developments which threaten to undermine the integrity of BC Parks system. From logging to gondolas to lodges to increased mechanized activity. The FMCBC is very concerned about these trends for opening our parks to commercial development. We strongly encourage members and the public to contact the Provincial Government and specifically the Ministry of Water, Air, and Land Protection to express your concerns for protecting our Parks from development.

North Vancouver Alpine Recreational Strategic Study

Paul Chatterton, FMCBC Director

Conflicts between local residents and recreational users over parking is often a problem near popular trailheads where on-street parking is the only option. For example, many readers will be familiar with the hiker access issues in the community of Lions Bay that have been ongoing for more than fifteen years. In North Vancouver, residents' concerns arising from the popularity of mountain biking on Mt. Fromme led to lively council meetings attended by homeowners and mountain bikers defending their rights.

The District of North Vancouver (DNV) responded to the latter conflict in September 2003 by initiating a consultative planning process with the goal to "provide a framework of principles and a range of strategies for the effective and sustainable management of recreational activity in the alpine area to-

day and into the future." DNV planners identified a number of preliminary issues to be addressed and undertook numerous studies and processes to provide additional guidance

In the Spring of 2004, public consultation with recreational users, residents, and others allowed interested stakeholders to create a common vision, principles and goals to guide the planning process. The vision agreed upon is of sustainability – protecting the mountain ecology while providing for recreational, social, and economic benefits. A detailed baseline environmental report of the study area has already identified areas of significant ecological value that require special management attention.

The DNV has made it clear at the meeting on September 29th that some "unauthorized" trails may be closed if they encroach on sensitive ecological areas or have significant environmental impacts. The North Shore Mountain Bike Association and mountain bikers are very concerned about this possibility and have been active participants throughout the stakeholder process. The hiking community has been poorly represented during this process as they may not perceive their trails to be at risk. It is time to reconsider.

According to DNV staff, the only trails in the study area that are considered official are the Baden Powell and (parts of) the BCMC trail. That's it. How the DNV arrived at this conclusion was not answered at the September meeting, however it was indicated that long-established hiking trails such as St. George's are technically "unauthorized."

A representative from the FMCBC has attended stakeholder meetings this fall to represent hikers' interests. Issues such as the location of new parking areas, designation of trails as single-use (hiking OR mountain biking) or multi-use, possible trail closures and trail maintenance top the list of concerns we are focused on. To learn more about the process and to become involved, check the DNV website at www.dnv.org and look for the Alpine Recreational Strategic Study heading.



Slim Creek

Lillooet LRMP and South Chilcotin

Jay MacArthur

In July, George Abbott, the Minister of Sustainable Resource Management, announced a new draft plan for the Lillooet Land and Resource Management Plan. The most controversial announcement was a 20% reduction in the South Chilcotin Park. This was a poorly kept secret since a press conference was held in March by Tom Perry to draw attention to the proposed new boundaries. The reductions in park areas were announced to appease the mining industry which was very vocal in their opposition to the new protected area that was designated in 2001 by an order in council.

The reduction from 71,000 ha to 56,000 ha, reflects the removal of Taylor Creek and most of Slim Creek from the park. Personally, I am disappointed with the removal of Slim Creek since the mining industry has never been interested in the area. I recently had a chance to hike to the head of Slim Creek and was amazed at the feeling of wilderness, the incredible alpine lakes and the potential for mountaineering.

In addition to the South Chilcotin reductions, the government reduced the number of smaller protected areas from what was recommended by the LRMP table. We are concerned that the small number of protected areas will not protect enough habitat for larger mammals, especially grizzly. One plus is the confirmation of Cerise Creek as a small protected area.

This draft plan is on hold until the government does more consultation with the First Nations council in Lillooet. No time frame was announced.

In some ways, this announcement was very disappointing to those of us who have been involved in the planning process for many years. However, it will be good to finally have some more areas designated as protected areas. We need some younger people involved to continue to push for protection of wilderness in the Lillooet area.

BC Parks is starting to work on a management plan for South Chilcotin Mountains Park (officially Spruce Lake Protected Area). This is long overdue and may be controversial because of the large

amount of commercial recreational use of the area.

I encourage you to visit Slim Creek and other areas in the South Chilcotin and the Lillooet area. For further information, you can contact me at (604) 987-1232 or see my website at www3.telus.net/jaymac/spruce.htm

Jay MacArthur is a past president of the FMCBC and is currently President of the Southern Chilcotin Mountains Wilderness Society. He has represented the FMCBC on this issue for 25 years

BC Government to Log Mt. Robson Provincial Park

Press Release

If recent television advertisements have you thinking all is well in British Columbia's provincial parks, then think again. According to a government report obtained by the Fraser Headwaters Alliance (FHA), as many as 6,000 truckloads of logs will be removed from Mount Robson Provincial Park, starting this fall. The scheme, complete with cost/revenue assumptions and cash flow analyses, is part of a larger plan to reduce forest fire fuel and control the mountain pine beetle in the province's flagship park.

"What they've done is figure out what they'd like to burn in terms of prescribed fire, calculated the cost of doing it, then worked backwards to see how many trees they'll need to cut and sell to pay for it," said wildlife biologist and FHA president Karsten Heuer. "It reminds me of the shady practices I witnessed while working in Africa, Slovakia, and other countries with corrupt governments. It isn't conservation in the North American sense of the word; it's greed. And it's coming to a UNESCO World Heritage Site courtesy of the BC Liberals."

"People have expectations when they visit a provincial park," said Roy Howard, FHA's Executive Director, "and the half-million tourists that arrive in Robson every year are no exception. They're not here to see the logging trucks and stumps that blanket the rest of the province."

"What's most upsetting about this scheme is that

there is no environmental assessment planned, and no opportunity for public comment," said Heuer. "It's as if the Campbell government has forgotten that this is public, not private land, and that the trees, grizzly and black bears, elk, moose, wolves, lynx, wolverines, rare birds, salmon, and endangered amphibians within it aren't owned by the government, but are simply in its trust. Mount Robson Park was established in 1929 to protect everything wild in the headwaters of the Fraser River, including the trees."

"When I read this report I get angry," said Howard. "It's long on economics but short on science. In fact, there's absolutely no scientific justification for what they're proposing. Where's the proof that this will even work to control the mountain pine beetle? And where is the discussion about whether or not such drastic measures are appropriate to combat what everyone agrees is a natural process in a provincial park?"

"There's a real lack of professionalism in BC government right now," continued Howard. To prove his point, he compared Robson's 20-page economic analysis to an in-depth 81-page environmental screening for a much smaller thinning program in neighbouring Jasper National Park.

"The feds used peer-reviewed research. They brought in outside scientists to review their draft plan. They held open houses seeking public comment. And the area they were thinning was only a quarter of what's proposed in Robson, and involved logging only 1/30th of the trees "

"If we let this government get away with this then there's no telling what will come next," said Heuer. "They'll be selling permits to hunt Robson's grizzlies before we know it, and using the revenue to pay for more ads telling us everything is fine."

For more information contact:

Roy Howard, Executive Director, Fraser Headwaters Alliance

Phone: (250) 968-4490 Email:

roy@fraserheadwaters.org

Sea to Sky LRMP

Pat Harrison and Michael Feller

The Sea to Sky Land Resource Management Plan Process was kicked off in February 2002 by a speech in Whistler by Minister Stan Hagen of the Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management. Most of BC had had land planning processes. The Sea to Sky Corridor with six million recreational visits per year had not yet had an LRMP. The municipalities in the corridor believe a LRMP was absolutely necessary with the Olympics coming.

The actual process got started in September 2002. Sector representatives from Agriculture, Forestry TFL38, Forestry TSA, Labour, Environment and Conservation, Wildlife, Tourism, Mining, Aggregates, Motorized Recreation, and Non-Motorized Recreation began participating along with representatives from local governments. First Nations will later negotiate directly with the Government of B.C. Unlike previous LRMPs, the process was supposed to last for a year, was supposed to be government lead, rather than stakeholder lead, and it did not have to reach consensus among the stakeholders.

For most of the first year, sector representatives adjusted to one another and to the higher level goals and objectives approach to this LRMP, which was different from previous LRMPs. As we approached September 2003, everyone realized that one year was simply not enough time to accomplish a LRMP. Previous LRMPs with consensus as a requirement often lasted 5 to 7 years. As we approached Dec 2003, most of the sector representatives were simply not satisfied with the non-geographically-based approach that had been used so far in this LRMP. Government finally relented and gave us two months to start geographically-based discussions. Not all sectors participated in the subcommittee that was established to do this. Sector representatives met weekly in Squamish for eight straight weekends. The subcommittee reported back to the full LRMP table in March 2004. Seven of the eleven sectors supported the report.

Forestry had not participated in the subcommittee, but by March 2004, Forestry had a new representa-

tive at the process. His take was that it was to Forestry's advantage to participate and to continue the subcommittee's work. Government granted the request to continue to work on the LRMP document with the proviso that government (cabinet) could terminate the process. Since March, sector representatives from Forestry, Conservation, Tourism, Recreation, and occasionally, Mining, have continued to meet every two weeks to fine tune the subcommittee's report and the main LRMP document.

The LRMP Document has proposed four zones: Front Country, Integrated Forest Management, Parks (not included in discussions) and Wildlands. The last zone, Wildlands, is an important achievement of the second subcommittee that is still fine tuning the LRMP document. This zone will provide for a decent roadless area for backcountry recreationists to enjoy. Much of this area is in the backcountry forum's recommendations. Forestry and Mining have agreed to this zoning. This zone would still provide mining access for exploration provided that the initial exploration would be 'light' exploration on foot. If and when mining were to occur, then roads would be permitted. At the end of mining, the roads would be removed. Forestry has a few areas left to log in the wildlands and then they will remove the roads and not return to the wildlands.

It has been agreed that certain areas should not have commercial backcountry lodges. These are: 1. Boulder – North – Salal Cks., 2. Tatlow Ck., 3. Mt. Currie, 4. Seven Mile Ck. to the Southwest, 5. Twin 1 & 2 Creeks Divide to Joffre Lakes, 6. Lizzie and North Lizzie Ck. areas, 7. Phelix Ck., and 8. 100 Lakes plateau area.

Sector Representatives signed off the subcommittee report as of 20 October 2004. We continue our work weekly on the main LRMP document and hope to have it completed by the end of the year. Most of the Summer and Winter Backcountry Recreation Forum material has been incorporated into the LRMP process.



Crown Mountain, North Shore Mountains, Summer, 2004

Passing on BC's Wilderness Heritage: The Wilderness Education Program (WEP)

Lisa Baile, Director, Wilderness Education Program

WEP is a unique program for school kids of all ages in the Lower Mainland, who have few opportunities, to experience BC's wilderness first hand or learn about their outstanding natural heritage. WEP continues as a legacy for the late John Clarke, providing opportunities for young people to connect with nature, increasing their understanding and appreciation of the natural world, motivating them to act as earth stewards and to become leaders in developing healthy, environmentally-sustainable communities.

WEP provides indoor and outdoor education through in-school presentations, hands-on activities on the school grounds, nature hikes, and workshops for teachers.

WEP's lead wilderness educator is Katy Holm, a professional teacher and wildlife biologist with a love and passion for BC's wild places. Katy's extensive wilderness experience is exceptional. It includes: paddling the West Coast of Vancouver Island, first ascents in Greenland, climbing Mount Waddington, and more. Katy joined the WEP team in January 2004 and since then has created an exciting new syllabus for WEP that is linked to the BC schools' curriculum. In the tradition of John Clarke, Katy brings the wilderness alive in the classroom, through sharing her lifetime of adventures, wilderness experiences, and knowledge of BC's diverse ecosystems.

For more information about WEP:
Phone: 604 732- 5555;
Email Katy: katy@wepbc.ca;
and visit the WEPsite: www.wepbc.ca .

WEP is a program of BC Spaces for Nature.



Courtesy Tami Knight

Ramblings

FMCBC Insurance (In Brief)

Peter Rothermel, FMCBC Director

Have you ever wondered: What do we get for our money?; Why are we paying so much more for our insurance?; and, Why do we even need insurance? I got curious about the topic because as a Fed Director and a club representative I couldn't give a satisfactory answer to these questions. Alastair Ferries, of the North Shore Hikers, has worked with me on this quest for answers.

The FMCBC's present policy is with All Sport Insurance Marketing Ltd; they specialize in providing insurance coverage for sporting organizations. The policy is a Commercial General Liability Policy to protect our members from lawsuit. It is not accident insurance. If you break a leg you don't receive any compensation. We are covered with \$5,000,000 in liability insurance, with a \$500 deductible. So, if someone (whether they are a member or not) has an accident, and the insured member is accused of causing it, taken to court, he/she will be covered up to \$5,000,000 in court costs and settlements.

In another unlikely scenario, a member, on a club scheduled trail maintenance, causes a rock slide

that wipes out a subdivision full of houses. There could be several lawsuits arising from this one occurrence, but the Company would only foot the bill to \$5,000,000. In other words, five million for EACH single accident event. If a club member is needed to testify in court proceedings, the Company will compensate up to \$100 per day to them for loss of work. There is no limit on how many claims can be made in a year. The clubs have a fiduciary duty to the Company to promptly report any accident that might potentially lead to a lawsuit.

Our 2004/2005 premium fees are \$6.00 per member; we pay \$4,500 for the 900 members who participate each year. Less coverage is only marginally cheaper and the Company won't give coverage higher than \$5,000,000. If we have a claim against any of our covered members, the following years' rates would probably increase or the policy may not be renewed. The FMCBC rate is less than what the Alpine Club and the North Shore Hikers (two clubs that maintain their own insurance policies) pay for less coverage, but all three organizations are facing rising premiums. This is a result of the reverberations from 9/11, a general increase in claims, the poor performance of the stock market (where insurance companies invest), and low interest rates. I suspect we won't find a better deal for the coverage we're getting. We are checking into some other companies, to see what they offer.

All club members are covered on club-sanctioned trips and meetings in Canada and the United States. Activities covered include hiking, kayaking, canoeing (in boats under 9 m), cross-country skiing — including self-propelled backcountry (but not lift, cat or heli skiing) — climbing (including technical roped), and light trail cleaning (no power tools or bridge building). Adding bike touring would increase the premiums to about \$7.50 per member. The Company will not insure for mountain biking. North Shore Hikers pay a \$2.00 per member premium and are covered for bike touring, but not rock climbing, with their insurance company. Trail work in Provincial or Regional Parks, sanctioned by the Park, is covered. Provincial Parks have Accidental Death and Dismemberment coverage and Commercial General Liability, as do most Regional Districts

(check with your own Regional District). Unsanctioned trail work would not be covered.

Only scheduled and sanctioned club trips are covered. So, if insured members do trips together, outside of club functions, they are not covered on those trips. If a trip leader changes a trip due to weather or any reason they deem reasonable, it is still a club-sanctioned trip. Trip waivers do not have any effect on coverage or premium rates. They do serve a purpose though, since by warning participants of the dangers that could be encountered on trips they show that the risk has been explained and the individual signing the waiver acknowledges it. In court, this has the effect of showing due diligence on the part of the Club.

Club members are covered when they pay their club fees to the club officer. In court, the club officer would testify that the fee was paid. We should tighten up or revamp just how club members are accounted for, such as Fed member cards being distributed by the clubs as members join and registered by phone or e-mail to the Fed posthaste. This will result in a better record of membership and coverage and would likely make the processing of a claim simpler.

Members who belong to more than one club that participate in FMCBC insurance only need to pay the premium through one club (\$6.00). The exception to this is members of the North Shore Hikers and ACC who, because their clubs carry their own insurance, don't pay into the FMCBC 'pot.' It is important to note that some FMCBC clubs do not participate in the insurance. Don't assume you are covered.

The Company does have a special policy for guests. They can buy coverage for a single activity for \$1.50, up to three times. This fee can be collected at the point of departure and sent with the club's regular insurance remittance to the FMCBC. In court, the trip leader would testify that the guest paid, although we should keep a written record of fees paid by guests. As a goodwill gesture, the Company will pay up to \$1000 in reasonable medical expenses of guests injured by the actions of club members on sanctioned trips or activities. This cov-

erage is available even if the guests have not paid the \$1.50 day coverage.

There are a number of unresolved and fairly complex issues with young participants and insurance because of their status as minors. Minors can be held legally responsible or partially legally responsible and therefore need to be insured. Until a clear policy is articulated, we recommend that written permission, from the parents, be standard for all minors not accompanied by their parent or legal guardian on club trips.

The policy also includes" coverage for directors or officers of the Fed or clubs, protecting them from lawsuits; tenants Legal Liability for property damage to premises rented or owned by the clubs; and a non-owned automobile policy that provides extra insurance if a club has an accident with a rental vehicle and the rental company insurance isn't sufficient. There are a number of policy exclusions. For example, transportation to and from hikes is not covered and intentional damage is not covered.

After reading all the relevant material, I'm left with the perception that All Sport is dependable and that six dollars per year is very cheap, for what we're getting. I would not want to lead club trips, hold a club office or be a Director for the FMCBC, without an insurance policy or some other contingency plan.

We're not finished yet, as more questions continually rise in the wake of answers, so please get back to us with any comments, suggestions or questions.

How to Avoid Being In the Path of an Avalanche

Editor's note: the following material was supplied by the book's publisher.

From her research on *In the Path of an Avalanche*, which chronicles a deadly slide in British Columbia's Selkirk Mountains and was a finalist at this year's Banff Festival of Mountain Books, author Vivien Bowers has zeroed in on five tips for keeping out of an avalanche's path.

Skier or boarder: know thyself. Blue sky and fresh powder can impair judgment. Understand how human factors such as peer pressure or being excessively goal-driven can affect the decisions you make and lead you into dangerous territory.

"Why do skiers who have the skills to recognize the hazards apparently misread or ignore the potential warning signs and ski into potential death traps? Increasingly, avalanche experts are zeroing in on human behaviour for explanations." In the Path of an Avalanche.

Be equipped. Wear an avalanche transceiver, carry a shovel and probe, but remember that the most important safety tool is found between your ears. Avoiding avalanches is preferable to digging people out of them. Your friends may be dead before you have a chance to pull equipment from your pack.

"Avalanches happen at particular times and in particular places for particular reasons. That means they can usually be avoided." In the Path of an Avalanche.

Develop avalanche know-how. Avalanches are tricky, and learning about them will keep you busy for a lifetime. Take courses, practice, and don't figure you know it all.

"The mountains teach tough lessons. In his book, Staying Alive in Avalanche Terrain, Utah Avalanche Center's Bruce Tremper writes, 'The pros survive by learning to master their arrogance and nurture their humbleness.'" In the Path of an Ava-

lanche.

Think conservative. Keep the odds in your favour by picking routes that minimize avalanche risk. Why climb right up a slide path if there's a safer route along the ridge? That steep, exposed slope is probably okay, but consider the consequences if you're wrong. Save it for days when you know the snow is bombproof.

"Did they look down there and see those trees and imagine what would be the consequence if they did get nailed and then carried right down? Those are the kinds of things you need to be asking all the time." In the Path of an Avalanche.

Talk it up. Discuss the snow conditions with your ski buddies. Don't just follow the leader like sheep, deferring to a fault. Speak up if you don't feel comfortable about crossing a slope.

"The strongest skier, often an alpha male, won't necessarily make wise decisions or take into account the weaker members of the party. Those at the back of the pack may keep quiet despite their misgivings." In the Path of an Avalanche.

For further information about *In the Path of an Avalanche*, contact:

Vivien Bowers: vbowers@shaw.ca or (250) 825-4392 or www.vivienbowers.com.

In the Path of an Avalanche is published by Greystone Books, a division of Douglas & McIntyre Publishing Group. ISBN 1-55054-518-3



Richard Keltie

Denali National Park, 2004

Protecting our Parks from Overuse

Richard Keltie

Canadians may not agree with everything Americans do these days, but in Denali Park they have definitely got it right.

Denali National Park, halfway between Anchorage and Fairbanks is home of course, to Mt. McKinley, highest mountain in North America. It is also home to a rich wildlife population, tundra, rivers, and foothills. Park planners have successfully restricted access to the 80 miles of east-west road by allowing bus-only entry from the Visitors Centre at the east portal. There are 100 buses a day at peak summer season each carrying 20 – 30 site seers. That bus-only rule saves the road from daily traffic of 1000 cars and campers.

Each bus driver is schooled in park natural history and can pick out wildlife viewing locations that car

drivers would never see. Most visitors do not get off the bus to hike the backcountry and are content to ride and photograph the scenery and wildlife.

In British Columbia's Yoho Park a bus-only rule restricts access in Lake O'Hara to 50 hikers and climbers a day. It is a sensitive alpine environment not able to withstand the 1000s of tourists daily at Lake Louise and Columbia Icefields. But nowhere else in Canada's parks is there any restricted access. The camper home rules and freedom of access would be difficult to challenge.

Park environments are under increasing pressure. Too many visitors damages the sensitive alpine with many ribbon trails. Since there are apparently no funds for park wardens to maintain trails, reduced trail use is the only answer.

How about trying to implement more bus-only access to BC Parks and help sustain their natural beauty for future generations.



Lesley Bohm

Remembering Melda Buchanan

Ruth Masters

Melda Buchanan, long-time Comox District Mountaineering Club member, hiker and friend, left us April 14, 2004, after a short but tough battle with lung cancer.

Melda was an uncompromising environmentalist, having taken on innumerable challenges, an arch-enemy of rip-off artists, and a tireless worker in her passionate defence of fragile habitats, wetlands, endangered wildlife, or threatened parkland.

Her home property above Willemar Bluff at Comox was a feeding station for deer, raccoons and birds. She bought sacks of grain for her deer, bags of dog

food for her raccoons, and she would buy a fish if she thought an eagle might be hungry. Melda was one of the founders of our local SPCA about 30 years ago.

While incredibly generous with her money, especially with regard to animal rights issues, Melda was no conventional, pious saint. Her language fell far short of drawing room standards. I never saw her more gleeful than when came the news that a plane load of trophy hunters had crashed on their way to a park up north to shoot grizzly bears. She loathed everything about tormenting or killing animals for fun.

Nor was Melda steeped in conventional religion. I recall one blazing hot summer day a few years ago, as we back-packed along a heavenly West Coast

beach near Rugged Point: we had failed to pack enough water, and had found no creek for relief. Suffering from dehydration and heat exhaustion, we came upon a loaded picnic basket which must have fallen off a boat. Most of its contents were spoiled, except for one large, unopened bottle of Diet Pepsi. It was the most quickly consumed bottle of soft drink ever. It shows God is looking after us, whoever He is, was Melda's relieved comment.

For years, Melda belonged to and supported the Friends of Strathcona Park, the civil disobedience gang of Park defenders, who in early 1988 blockaded at Price Creek, near Westmin Mine. Cream Silver Mines Ltd. had been given government approval to proceed with mining out Cream Lake, one of Strathcona Park's prize jewels, and another mining company, Casamiro, was preparing to mine at Della Falls, in the heart of the Park. The Social Credit government of the day had passed its so-called Recreation Area legislation, a slippery bare-faced deception, to allow mining & logging in Provincial Parks. Our six-week blockade foiled that scheme. Imagine these scenic wonders today if we had failed—slag-heaps and tailings ponds.

Last summer (2003), Boliden Mines at Myra Creek in the Park planned to draw down Carwithen and Greenview Lakes, both in the Nature Conservancy Zone, to create cheap Hydro for the mine. Friends of Strathcona Park members, including tottering seniors like Melda and me, were gearing up to help blockade at the two lakes, discouraging helicopter landings, when the draw-down applications were refused.

Locally, Melda slaved on Seal Bay Park, having friends make dozens of wooden signs, which she packed in with her ladder to mount high on the trees. As well, for years she worked to preserve Tree Island, north of Denman, pulling up piles of Scotch Broom, and defending the island from vandals. Helping to save Lazo Marsh and Forest was another of her special projects.

Then, in December, 1994, with several other ladies hastily assembled, Melda and I rushed into MacDonald Wood at Comox and stopped the chainsaws, providing the turning point in the long battle over who would pay for this small foreshore park.

At the rate the chainsaws were cutting there would soon not have been much park left to argue about. Now, Macwood is the jewel of Comox parkland, instead of tasteless condominiums.

Melda also made swallow boxes, giving them to friends, and making sure they were kept cleaned out. And she was an expert tree pruner and grafter, and maker of delicious native fruit wines.

She leaves us a unique legacy of fierce environmentalism, coupled with her awesome generosity. Hers will be a hard act to follow. If our whole show sinks or blows, no-one can hold it against Melda. Much of her estate she has left to preserve natural habitats for the wild creatures she loved. Our sincere hope is that she has passed safely through the Pearly Gates to reside in the Saints' Pavilion, where the residents had better feed the birds and take good care of the cats.

Knowing this gutsy dame has been rewarding, and mostly fun. So long, Melda



Meg Stanley

Wheaton Hut, Strathcona Park, Summer 2004.

Around the Province

Caledonia Ramblers Hiking Club

Sheila Fleming, Past President

It is the Caledonia Ramblers 30th anniversary and it was good: we still managed several new hikes. In addition, over the past two years we have started to put on extra hikes during the season. This has been made possible by having 80% of our club members on e-mail. Another bonus of e-mail was the club member ability to share some of their hike experiences and pictures during the season. We have also started to use two-way radios on the hikes, and have found this useful. We did a number of new hikes this year including the Pinnacles, in Quesnel, the Williams Lake River Trail, and Farwell Canyon. We also went to Tumbler Ridge, hiked Al-bright Ridge, and checked out the dinosaur footprints. The annual club week hike this year was at Monkman Lake. Dave King, who led the hike, has a detailed report, but in summary: Overall the trip went fine but the hike was a little more arduous than I had expected. In the end, 11 of us, all members of the Caledonia Ramblers Hiking Club, took part ... eight of the 11 were in their 60's, everyone was fit and most were very experienced back packers. At this time, I would suggest this hike is suitable only for the very experienced bush persons as, if the weather is cloudy and wet, navigation would be a major challenge.

A Case for Mount Arrowsmith Park

Peter Rothermel

Mount Arrowsmith is arguably the most popular non-commercial mountain destination on Vancouver Island and is a focal view point for several Mid-Island communities including Parksville, Qualicum, Nanaimo, and Port Alberni. To the recreational sector, Arrowsmith provides a myriad of opportunities, from easy family hikes to technical rock and ice climbs, and everything in between.

The Arrowsmith Massif is the apex of the United

Nations-designated Arrowsmith Biosphere Reserve. Virtually all of its watershed ends up in either the Little Qualicum or Englishman Rivers; its snowpack has an immense value to these rivers' well-being, by providing a slow release aquifer during the driest times of the year. The well-being of the snowpack on the Massif is of paramount importance to the biosphere's fish-bearing streams, as well as to other wildlife and humans.

With the highest summit south of Strathcona Park, Arrowsmith holds the largest area of alpine on southern Vancouver Island. It is home to rare red and blue listed species of flora and fauna, including the white tailed ptarmigan, Roosevelt Elk, and possibly the Vancouver Island marmot.

Ever since the turn of the last century, there have been calls to give the Arrowsmith Massif some kind of protected park status. Six years ago we brought forward a proposal, to the Regional District of Nanaimo, to create a wilderness-type park of the Arrowsmith Massif. After all this time, there is still high interest in gaining Arrowsmith as a park, yet many obstacles block the way and we need to garner more public and government support. Since that first proposal, the Arrowsmith Massif and its entire watershed has been designated as a United Nations Biosphere Reserve. While this status carries no protective covenants, it does put the area into international light.

Now we are initiating the proposal again. Our first step is to raise public awareness. With help from Don Cameron, of the Alpine Club, we are putting together a Powerpoint slide presentation to present to local local government. As well, we have a bare bones website in the wings. The FMCBC is looking into funding for a brochure and news flyer to use in public places and as mail outs, to keep public interest constant. The V.I. Section of the Alpine Club is contemplating setting park status for Arrowsmith as a goal for their centennial in 2006.

As we stand on the threshold of a new millennium, now is the time to finally make Mt. Arrowsmith Park a reality.



Paul Chatterton

Stein Valley, Summer 2004

FMCBC Mission Statement

"To foster and promote the hiking and mountaineering activities of the membership and the general public through leadership, advocacy and education".

The FMCBC fulfills its mission with a comprehensive approach to mountain recreation and conservation by:

- ? Participating in provincial land use decision processes.
- ? Working to positively change (and in some cases enhance) government agency policies so that non-mechanized outdoor recreation opportunities are recognized and protected.
- ? Representing wilderness as a legitimate land use and a resource of identifiable value to society.
- ? Advocating new parks and wilderness resources, and working to maintain the integrity of existing parks and wilderness resources.
- ? Advocating for continued access to existing recreational resources.
- ? Building, maintaining and protecting hiking and mountain access trails.
- ? Promoting hiking, rock climbing, mountaineering, ski touring and other non-mechanized mountain activities.
- ? Educating the public on conservation issues, related to outdoor recreation.
- ? Educating its members and the public on mountain and backcountry safety and working with member clubs to address risk management issues.
- ? Encouraging new membership in our member clubs.

Acting under the policy of talk, understand and persuade, rather than confront and force, the FMCBC lobbies for the interests of its member groups. Much of this work is done through our two main committees: Trails Committee, and the Recreation and Conservation Committee.



Paul Chatterton

MEMBER CLUBS

- Alberni Valley Outdoor Club
- Alpine Club of Canada -Vancouver Section
- Alpine Club of Canada -Vancouver Island Section
- Alpine Club of Canada - Prince George Section
- British Columbia Mountaineering Club
- Caledonia Ramblers
- Chilliwack Outdoor Club
- Club Tread
- Columbia Valley Climbing Association
- Comox District Mountaineering Club
- Fraser Headwaters Alliance
- Island Mountain Ramblers
- Klister Outdoor Klub
- Mt. Remo Backcountry Society
- North Shore Hikers
- North Vancouver Recreation Commission
- Outdoor Club
- Outdoor Club of Victoria
- Outsetters Club
- Ozalenka Outdoor Club
- Richmond Outdoor Club
- Valley Outdoor Association
- Vancouver Island Trails Information Society
- Varsity Outdoor Club
- Wilderness Education Programme

Contact the FMCBC for Club
contact information.