



# CLOUDBURST

**Mount Arrowsmith:  
The Campaign for Park Status**

**Annual General Meeting:  
Program and Registration  
Information**

**Club Profile:  
Backroads Outdoor  
Club**

## Cloudburst

Cloudburst is published semi-annually by the Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC. Publication/Mail sales Agreement # 102202. Printed by Infigo Imaging. Circulation 3500.

**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.

### Submission Deadlines:

Fall/Winter - Oct 15  
Spring/Summer - April 15

**Advertising:** The FMCBC invites advertising or classified advertising that would be useful to our members.

### Rates:

\$400 back page	\$300 full page
\$160 ½ page	\$80 ¼ page
\$40 business card	

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## FMCBC

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.

### 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:

Membership for individuals is \$20 per year.

### 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.

### Board of Directors

**President:** Manrico Scremin (ACC-Van)  
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### Staff

Executive: Director: Evan Loveless  
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Cover Photograph

## President's Message

Manrico Scremin

The 2005 FMCBC Annual General Meeting will be on Saturday, June 11. This year the AGM will be in Victoria and all are invited to attend. The weekend schedule is still being developed and will look something like this:

- ? Friday night: social event, likely with a slide show.
- ? Saturday day: AGM and workshops.
- ? Saturday night: social event, likely with a slide show.
- ? Sunday day: hikes and/or climbs on Mt. Arrowsmith.

The AGM day will include four 60-90 minute workshops that we expect will be of interest to many people:

### 1. Roofed Accommodation in Provincial Parks .

The current provincial government has clearly stated its desire to expand the presence of "roofed accommodation" in BC provincial parks regardless of what their park management plans state. This could include anything from simple, free shelters, to low fee mountain huts run by clubs, to expensive lodges run by commercial interests. Participants at this workshop will discuss the issue and help decide what the FMCBC's position should be on this matter.

### 2. Access Related Issues.

Restricted access to hiking, climbing, and back-country ski areas is becoming an increasingly important issue. More and more of the logging roads we use have locked gates, are decommissioned, or are simply left to deteriorate. A different but related issue is the proliferation of commercial tenures on public land being issued by Land and Water BC. Workshop participants will help determine an action plan for the FMCBC to address these important issues.

### 3. National Hiking Trail Route on Vancouver Island.

The purpose of this workshop is to help determine which route the trail will take on Vancouver Island. Not to be confused with the Trans Canada Trail, the National Hiking Trail is exactly what the name implies: a hiking-only trail crossing the country. Most of the route across mainland BC has already been identified. (See <http://www.nationaltrail.ca/homepageenglish.htm> for more information about the National Hiking Trail.)

### 4. Trails Management.

Participants at this workshop will discuss topics relating to all "hands-on" aspects of trails management: permitting, building, maintenance, and evaluation and tracking of trail conditions. This workshop will be of interest to anyone who likes to spend time working on trails.

There will be two workshop "streams" with two workshops going at the same time. The final session of the day will include all workshop participants. The main topic of that session will be setting FMCBC priorities for the upcoming year or two. The AGM day should be a very interesting event; I hope you can attend.

On a completely different note, I will be stepping down as President at this AGM. I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone who supported me in the three years that I have been President. The FMCBC has seen a lot of change in that time, in particular the sale of Canada West Mountain School and the hiring of a new and very capable Executive Director. I believe there are still lots more opportunities to improve the FMCBC and make it a strong provincial organization with a strong local presence in every region. We have a way to go but at least we seem to be moving in the right direction.

# Executive Director's Report

Evan Loveless

## Advocacy

I have been with the FMCBC for a year now and what a busy year it has been. We have met with Ministers Bill Barisoff (Ministry of Water, Land, and Air Protection) and George Abbott (Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management) regarding commercial recreation tenures and park issues. We have sent several letters to government and stakeholder organizations, attended several workshops and planning meetings, connected with clubs around the Province and generally promoted the interests of members and the non-motorized recreation community. The issues and projects are numerous, varied, and complex, requiring countless hours of behind-the-scenes work by staff and volunteer members. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the many key Federation members who have devoted their valuable time to FMCBC issues and projects. The FMCBC continues to be the representative body for non-motorized outdoor recreation in BC. I am excited about working for the FMCBC and the opportunities that lie ahead for the organization. Following is a smattering of updates from the FMCBC office.

## FMCBC Office

Due to the renovations in the Vancouver MEC store our office has been relocated upstairs to the second floor. We are now located in the MEC Remote Sales office. I am quite happy with this new office layout. With the new set-up, the office will be staffed on a more regular basis. Access is a bit harder with this new location, so visitors will need to make prior arrangements before coming to see us. We also have our own fax now. The new fax number is 604-873-6086. Thanks to MEC for continuing to provide us with free office space.

## FMCBC Website

The new FMCBC website is now up and running. There is still some work to do on graphics and content and we will try to get this done as soon as possible. Please visit the site and provide us with feedback. Website features include the ability to make online donations to the FMCBC and easy access to

member clubs and FMCBC information. We have also switched to a new website host that offers us plenty of space and capacity so that we can host all member clubs' web sites. We are still developing a Sharepoint website which will be used for Board/Committee work and can be accessed by member clubs.

## Electronic Newsletters

We started a new series of electronic newsletters designed to connect members, and the public, with what's going on at the FMCBC. Monthly e-bulletins are sent out via the FMCBC listserv to supply readers with regular updates on significant issues, projects and events that are important to non-motorized mountain recreationalists in BC. Contact our office if you are not on the FMCBC listserv.

## Cloudburst

Regarding *Cloudburst*, we are now back to publishing it on a regular basis. *Cloudburst* will be published semiannually with issues coming out for Fall/Winter and Spring/Summer. There are major costs associated with publishing *Cloudburst* so beginning in the fall we will again be including appropriate advertising, relevant to the FMCBC membership.

## Insurance

There have been a few notable developments with respect to the FMCBC group liability insurance policy. Firstly, All Sport (SBC Insurance) has agreed to offer optional coverage for biking activities. Biking includes those activities which are deemed "low risk" (e.g. riding on rural roads with little traffic, logging and other dirt or gravel roads and "nontechnical" trails). An additional \$2.00 premium will be charged for those clubs and/or members that choose this option. The regular (existing) policy will continue to be \$6.00 per member. We have also confirmed that the term "cross country" in our policy covers all backcountry ski touring activity. Just make sure, if there is an accident, that you are in "touring" mode and not "downhill" mode as our policy excludes "downhill skiing." So, those activities within controlled ski or recreation areas are not covered. And stay away from the couloirs. Any mechanized activity or transportation is

also not covered although all carriers should have liability coverage. Contact me for more information.

### **Roofed Accommodation in Parks**

You may have heard the controversy about the Province's proposed roofed accommodation strategy for BC Parks. As if commercializing all the BC Crown land was not enough. Depending on what reports people heard, you may think that the Alpine Club of Canada (and perhaps in turn the FMCBC) along with some of the moderate environmental non-governmental associations (including Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, Federation of BC Naturalists and the BC Wildlife Federation) are supporting this strategy. This is the general message that was conveyed by Minister Barisoff and Water, Land, and Air Protection staff and reported by other environmental non-governmental associations. The above groups did participate in a government workshop (the FMCBC was not notified nor invited to this workshop) where their input was given, however it is not necessarily the case that they support the strategy. This strategy stems from amendments to the *Parks Act* passed by the Liberal government that mandates roofed accommodation, facilities and access for BC Parks. While the Alpine Club of Canada is looking at a proposed new hut in Berg Lake area of Mt Robson Provincial Park (one of the facilities identified in the strategy), such a structure would be quite different from other potential accommodation developments. This would be a typical Alpine Club of Canada public hut with basic amenities and modest hut fees. In addition, this proposed hut would take pressure off the existing camp sites and alleviate some of the environmental damage that comes with "wilderness camping sprawl." I met with Minister Barisoff in March to discuss, among other issues, this strategy and the FMCBC position with respect to the strategy. The FMCBC will be defining our policy for roofed accommodation in parks at the upcoming annual general meeting. However, our present basic position is that we may be in favour of modest Alpine Club-style, public huts and will evaluate proposals on a case-by-case basis. At a minimum, roofed accommodation should be located in intensive recreation zones in accordance with park management plans (if they exist and high use areas if they don't). We want to

discourage new developments in otherwise pristine wilderness. The FMCBC does not support commercial lodge-style developments within park boundaries.

### **Member Education**

As you are all aware the FMCBC divested itself of the Canada West Mountain School in 2003. This was probably a good move for the FMCBC for various reasons, however, I think the FMCBC still has an opportunity and responsibility to educate its members and the public in the areas of safe mountain/backcountry travel and "minimum" or "low" impact mountain/backcountry travel. There are many great organizations and institutions in BC promoting education in these areas. I would like to see the FMCBC partnering with some of these organizations and help deliver important information to the members and the public. In some cases, there may be the need for a provincial coordinating body and this may be an area where the FMCBC can take a leading role. Members interested in developing the FMCBC's education/public outreach mandate or setting up a new committee can contact me at the FMCBC office.

### **Annual General Meeting, June 2005**

Finally, I would like to make everyone aware of the 2005 FMCBC Annual General Meeting, June 10 – 12 in Victoria. This year's AGM will be hosted by the Alpine Club of Canada – Vancouver Island Section and will be located at the Dunsmuir Lodge Training and Conference Centre, in Saanich.

You will find a schedule of the weekend activities and registration form in this *Cloudburst* issue. We have programmed some exciting workshops as part of the AGM agenda as well as a forum to plan an FMCBC strategy and direction for 2006 and beyond. We also have two exciting evening presentations planned for Friday and Saturday nights and a gala banquet. The main field trip will be up Mt Arrowsmith led by Peter Rothermel. We have deliberately framed this AGM as a mini conference in part to try and increase member participation. Hope to see you there.

## Recreation and Conservation Report

The FMCBC Rec and Con committee has been meeting throughout the fall and winter, and tackling a wide range of issues including backcountry resort proposals, mechanized tenure proposals, impacts on our parks system, park and wilderness proposals, and provincial LRMPs. Although we don't have many tools at our disposal, other than letter writing, contacting government officials and attending stakeholder meetings, I feel we have nevertheless been very successful at achieving our goals of maintaining access, preserving wilderness, and being a strong voice for our members. Here is a partial list of what we've been doing in the past six months:

### **Mt Arrowsmith Park Initiative Update**

The FMCBC and the Vancouver Island Section of the Alpine Club (ACC-VI) have been working on a proposal to gain park status for Mt Arrowsmith. Mt Arrowsmith is arguably the most popular wilderness mountain on Vancouver Island and is used by literally thousands of hikers, families, climbers, birders and other outdoor enthusiasts every year. Mt. Arrowsmith also plays a vital role for animal and plant habitats and mid-Island watersheds and as such has been recognized by the United Nations as a biosphere reserve.

Over the past month FMCBC members have met with local MLAs to garner their support for the Park proposal. We are also trying to get MLAs to influence WLAP and Cabinet to either deed the Crown parcel of land (which encompasses the Arrowsmith massif) as provincial park or transfer it un-encumbered to the Nanaimo Regional District for a regional park. The next step is to have a meeting with Minister Barisoff and WLAP staff to discuss the initiative. Ideally it would be good to get a commitment from the Liberal government before the election. Heck they can even take all the credit for it. We are not holding our breath. We will keep you updated on this issue and you can also check for more info.

### **Logging the Comox Glacier Trail**

Timber West is proposing to conduct some of the significant logging above Comox Lake. This logging has the potential to wipe out the lower section of the Comox Glacier Trail, which was originally developed and promoted with the help of the FMCBC. This is a world class trail and a major access to Strathcona Park – BC's oldest provincial park. The Comox District Mountaineering Club (CDMC) has contacted Timber West and has asked that they incorporate a trail buffer in their block layouts. The FMCBC will be meeting with Timber West next week to discuss issues and options. This issue will also be discussed at the next FMCBC Island Delegates meeting. For more information please contact either the FMCBC or the CDMC

### **Bear Paw Heli Ski Proposal**

A 465,000 ha heli ski tenure is being proposed for the McGregor Plateau area (north east of Prince George) by Bear Paw Heli Skiing. This is an area which has great recreational value for the residents of Prince George and surrounding area. A heli ski tenure of this size and scale pretty much assumes all the potential recreational land base of the McGregor area and will certainly impact present and future recreation and other tourism opportunities. This area also has the last significant herd of mountain caribou (approximately 1/4 of the world's last remaining mountain caribou - the Hart Herd), now an endangered species in BC. There is great concern that helicopter activity in areas of the proposed tenure will be incompatible with mountain caribou recovery, and will impact the survival of the species. This land area also includes almost all of the critical winter range and habitat for the mountain caribou

Dave King, a retired provincial biologist and FMCBC Director, who spent 20-plus years studying this same caribou population, has no doubt that the caribou population in this area will decline if the tenure is granted. Furthermore, Dave feels that, in core areas used by mountain caribou in winter there are mitigation strategies a heli-ski operation can implement that will not result in loss or abandonment of habitat, and consequently, a loss of caribou.

LWBC held a stakeholder meeting in Prince George on March 1 to discuss tenure application and receive input. Several issues and concerns were brought forward, including caribou impacts, ski runs in Parks boundaries, impacts on existing multi-use agreements in the tenure area, recreational access, potential lodge locations, the overall size and scale of the tenure, and economic considerations. The FMCBC was well represented at this meeting including Evan Loveless (FMCBC ED) who flew up to meet with the local clubs and attend the meeting. Evan also attended a meeting with Minister Barisoff and senior WLAP staff where he discussed the issues and concerns of FMCBC and other stakeholder groups.

LWBC is now in the process of evaluating this tenure and the FMCBC will monitor the situation. For the sake of our recreational interests and the survival and recovery of the mountain caribou herds, we hope this tenure is not approved. History shows that it is extremely costly to try to recover a species nearing extinction, as BC residents have learned through efforts to reintroduce the Vancouver Island marmot and the Telkwa caribou herd. In addition, if the tenure is granted and the Mountain Caribou Recovery Plan is then legislated and found to be in conflict, the tenure holder (in this case Bear Paw Heli Skiing) may likely be entitled to financial compensation.

### **Juliet Creek Resort Proposal**

The FMCBC has learned of a new proposal for a large four season resort in the Coquihalla Pass area. This 8897 hectare resort proposed by Westscapes Development Inc. will be located in the vicinity of Juliet Creek and Upper Coldwater River and will have a controlled recreation area that will extend south as far as Zoa and Bighorn-Alpaca-Llama Peaks (see BCGS mapsheet 93H.065/.075). The area that the proponents have outlined on the map in their letter of intent includes several locations that are valuable to the non-commercial recreational community and commercial activity would have serious impacts on these existing users. At a minimum the proposed tenure area would need to be downsized and the southern boundary moved north so it does not include popular recreation areas like Zoa and Bighorn-Alpaca-Llama Peaks. Beyond



**NEEDS CAPTIONS**

this, the FMCBC has general concerns about new resorts in otherwise remote, pristine wilderness areas. A resort like this one proposed by Westscapes Development Inc. will have serious far reaching impacts on communities and ecosystems. At build out, the resort will include 2500 dwelling units, ski lifts, 18 hole golf course, and a base village with spa, aquatic centre and conference facilities. While the FMCBC understands that there is a need and corresponding opportunity for some tourism and commercial recreation development in the Province, the size and scale of such developments must be carefully weighed against other present and future values and opportunities.

The FMCBC has responded to this proposal by sending letters to LWBC to express our concerns with this proposal. Evan Loveless has also met with LWBC staff in Kamloops where he discussed the FMCBC concerns. Contact us for more information on this proposal or refer to the Resort Development section of the Land and Water BC website: <http://lwbc.bc.ca/02land/resorts/index.html> and click on Land Tenure Applications. You will find this proposal under the Alpine Skiing section.

### **Mt Robson Forest Health Strategy**

BC Parks is moving ahead with their Mt. Robson Forest Health Strategy set up to address potential pine beetle problems and forest fire fuel loading. This strategy, if followed through, will see considerable logging and several prescribed burns in the

travel corridor of Mt Robson Park. To date, approximately 9 ha. (of the original 39 ha. 'Lucerne Pilot Project') has been logged in and around the Lucerne Campground (adjacent to Yellowhead Pass) under an issued Park Use Permit. The pilot project had been downsized considerably as Parks "missed their window" of appropriate conditions. The remaining area will still be under permit and is planned to be completed next winter. Total volume to be removed from the 36 ha total pilot is estimated (by Parks) from cruise data to be 4,495 cu. m. — about 130 truck loads — roughly half of the pine volume in the pilot area. According to Parks, the pilot area is working out to be 'cost neutral'; the stumpage recovered (and available to Parks) will almost exactly offset the costs.

According to the Mt. Robson Forest Health Strategy, this is just the beginning of a 5-10 year plan by WLAP that proposes to have similar 'tree removal' applied to 1,619 ha., removing (and selling) 242,850 cu. m. of timber from the park. To date there has been little formal public consultation, however the FMCBC has learned that WLAP staff will hold an information session sometime after the election. Fraser Headwaters Alliance (FHA) has contracted forester Herb Hammond to do a report on the ecological considerations of the strategy and that report will be ready soon. FHA is also currently considering legal action against the issuing of the park use permit for the tree removal. The FMCBC is supporting the FHA and has sent a letter to WLAP asking them to re-evaluate their Mt Robson Forest Health Strategy and to include more planning and consultation before any further trees are removed from the park. Michael Feller of the FMCBC has also sent a letter to WLAP outlining the ecological shortcomings of the Mt Robson Forest Health Strategy. Beyond the ecological considerations of this management strategy the FMCBC takes issue on the aspects of selling Park resources and working on a cost recovery basis. For more information please contact either the FMCBC or the FHA [www.fraserheadwaters.org](http://www.fraserheadwaters.org)

### Other Notes

Park Surveys/management plans - BC Parks is conducting a survey with respect to the park management plan for the recently established Spruce Lake/

Big Creek Park. The FMCBC will be participating to ensure the wilderness integrity of the Park is maintained. The FMCBC is also been participating in the development of the Clendenning Park management plan.

Tantalus Gondola proposal - There is a proposal afoot to develop a gondola up to the Tantalus Range. It is unlikely that this proposal will come to fruition, none the less the FMCBC will monitor the proposal and voice member concerns.

Signage for Backcountry motorized/non-motorized zonation in the Sea to Sky corridor has been approved and will be put in before next winter season. FMCBC volunteers will be needed to help with this effort. Contact pat Harrison for more information.

The Sea to Sky LRMP has wrapped up and is now in the Government to Government stage with First Nations. Thanks to Pat Harrison and Michael Feller for there exhaustive participation in this LRMP over the past two years. The Outdoor Recreation sector represented by the FMCBC made significant gains in this planning process.

Thanks also, to all those who've been attending the rec and con meetings in between working, eating and sleeping. We may not be changing the world, but we're making incremental positive impacts on non-mechanized outdoor recreation and the special places we play!

For the strength of the pack is the wolf, and the strength of the wolf is the pack."

- Rudyard Kipling



Paul Chatterton



## Smoke Bluffs Update

Manrico Scremin

In the last *Cloudburst* edition, I mentioned that the District of Squamish has started a process which should result in the creation of a new municipal park encompassing the Smoke Bluffs climbing area. This article includes a very brief history of the area and an update on the park planning process. There has been rock climbing in the Smoke Bluffs since about 1973 and it is now the most popular rock climbing area in Canada. Most of the crags are on municipally-owned land although it is adjacent to what is now housing developments. (The private lands were mostly undeveloped up to the 1990s.)

In the 1980s, the FMCBC secured several grants, totaling about \$100,000, to develop a trail system and build toilets in the area. In 1987, it became clear that one of the private land owners had subdivided their land and was preparing to develop it for housing. This would have cut off access to several important crags. The FMCBC took the initiative to buy that land for about \$70,000: three parcels totaling about 10 acres. The Mountain Equipment Coop lent the FMCBC the funds to buy the land. Over the next few years there were numerous fund raising activities and the loan was paid off. The fund raising activities also raised enough money to pay the property taxes through about 2007.

In 1988, the FMCBC developed a formal proposal to the District of Squamish calling for a municipal park which would include all the relevant municipal lands and the FMCBC land. At that time, Squamish was primarily interested in resource extraction and certainly had no interest in supporting rock climbing or a municipal park in the Smoke Bluffs. This attitude continued right up to late 2003 when a new mayor and council were elected. This mayor and council wholeheartedly support rock climbing and view the Smoke Bluffs park as an important part of a future Squamish.

In mid-2004, the District council created a Smoke Bluffs Planning Team, including two representatives of the FMCBC, to plan for the establishment of a municipal park. The Team has been meeting at

least monthly since then and has made considerable progress in developing a long term vision for the park along with short term strategies for achieving the vision. Visit <http://www.smokebluffspark.ca/> for more information on the park planning process. If the process continues as planned, the FMCBC land will be transferred to the District and incorporated in the park. There will be appropriate covenants on the land title to ensure the FMCBC lands are protected from development. The next *Cloudburst* edition will include a further update on the park planning process.

## Club Profile

### Backroads Outdoor Club, Langley

The Backroads Outdoor Club is a self-propelled activity based club that exists to get like minded individuals together for fun and safety.

We get together to hike, snowshoe, backpack, bike, canoe or kayak, based on whatever is proposed by a member to lead. We also have a monthly social night at local pubs/restaurants to share stories, pictures, and techniques, locations to hike and to have fun.

Meetings are the first Wednesday of each month at the Langley Civic Centre. At the meetings, we discuss any club business then members offer hikes to lead and members can ask questions about a hike and sign-up for it.

Backroads Outdoor Club was started due to a demand for a local hiking club. The nearest clubs are in Surrey, Maple Ridge or Chilliwack so Backroads Outdoor Club was started in October 2000. In the fall of 2003, Bruce Caswell was made President; Dean Pollack, Treasurer/Web Master. For more information visit our web site at [www.backroadsoutdoor.ca](http://www.backroadsoutdoor.ca)

The Backroads Outdoor Club joined the Federation in 2004. We felt it important to have a voice to address concerns and issues relating to self-propelled outdoor activities. The Federation also makes us aware of other clubs' concerns that we would otherwise be unaware of.



Courtesy Tami Knight

## Ramblings

### Arrowsmith, The Un-Judges Route: A Rite of Spring.

Peter Rothermel

The Un-Judges is one of the first trips of the spring season on Mt. Arrowsmith that we can leave the plastic boots, crampons and extra warm layers behind. No rope, harness or climbing gear is needed other than an ice axe for the odd spot. For the first time in what seems like forever winter, you can go LIGHT! Often by May, all the snow is gone from the south facing solid rock and the route truly comes into being, while every other route on the massif is still snowed-up. I think of it as a personal “Rite of Spring.”

This route is much like the Judges Route, yet less often traveled and with a bit of exposed scrambling now and again. Starting from the end of the third spur up Pass Main, off Cameron Main, you hike up into the forest, then bear right and follow down and through an avalanche debris-choked gully. Up again, through first growth forest, it parallels the Judges Route on an adjacent south-facing ridge, but it's not the Judges, hence the name, Un-Judges or Non-Judges. Many people find the name Un-Judges kind of confusing, and some would prefer to rename it something different, such as the “Jury Route.” Well, the jury's still out on that one. I just

wish it had a moniker that made it stand out more as the classic spring/summer route that it is.

I've led trips up this way for many years now and each time I do the route, I like it even more. Above the forest, the original route pretty much goes up in a straight line, up through bluffy, exposed sections. The route we've seen evolving over the years is a little different and is a mixed bag, with a bit of everything — old forest, ledge traverses, snow slopes, rock scrambling and ever-changing views.

My first time up this route was with my pal Dean Williams several years ago. Dean had broken his collar bone some weeks before and was still on the mend. When we came out above the forest and started to scramble on rock and use our hands, Dean's collar bone started to hurt and he said, “Pete, we've got to stop, I should have let it mend longer.” As we rested a bit, I noticed a ledge traversing off to the left and said, “I'm going to go see where that leads, I'll be back in a minute.” The usual route goes pretty much straight up to the right and becomes an exposed scramble, so these ledges piqued my interest.

The ledge continued for quite a way, so I hollered to Dean to come along, as he wouldn't need to use his arms. At the end of this ledge we had to scramble up a couple of steps and Dean's wishbone started to ache again. I continued on saying, “I Just want to see what's around the corner” and there were yet more ledges going for quite a distance and loaded with deer droppings, so I figured this must be the easiest way to somewhere. Deer and elk are smart creatures that always manage to find the path of least resistance in the mountains, unlike us dim-witted humans who most often seem to think straight up is the only way.

I went back for Dean and we eventually followed the deer ledges to a flattish area of hanging forest. Past this we reconnected with the old route which scrambles over easy, but exposed rock, and eventually tops out onto the south summit.

The south summit is my most favorite place on the whole mountain and maybe my most favorite place anywhere. When you reach it, you've just been up

one or another of Arrowsmith's classic routes: Un-Judges, Rudy's or Lost Gully. It is a serene place not marred by the human hand. We often get to laze over lunch, under breathless blue skyies, like a swarm of lizards on the melted out warm rock, surrounded by blankets of snow, while the crows dip and caw above. Heaven!

The traverse from the south summit to the main summit is easy with a few scrambly spots and is a joy in itself. Descending via the familiar Judges Route is the usual non-technical way off the mountain, yet this time of year it is still snowed up and an ice axe should be considered *derigueur*.

Near the bottom of Judges is a traverse that will take you on a well worn deer "highway" through first growth forest and gently deposit you back to your vehicle at the end of Pass Main's third spur. This makes for an all day circuit route that has become one of Arrowsmith's classics and deserves to be protected for future generations.

Most of the lower forested slopes on the flanks of Mount Arrowsmith are private land and are under the threat of the faller's axe. With negotiating and lobbying, maybe the best-known routes will be spared. As it now stands, the Judges Route is guaranteed a buffer of 40 to 80 meters and the lower traverse between it and the Un-Judges Route has areas of retention blocks and single stem harvesting. The lower Un-Judges route has yet to be brought to the table and its fate is still unknown.

So, go out and try out the Un-Judges route and then feel compelled to write some letters to the powers



Scrambling, Mount Arrowsmith

## Requiem for Wilderness: A Rant Designed to Provoke Thought and Discussion

Sandy Briggs

First we need a definition of wilderness, and it turns out that the Vancouver Island's 1993 Strathcona Park Master Plan provides a good one in its description of a Wilderness Conservation Zone: "The objective of this zone is to protect a remote, *undisturbed* natural landscape and to provide *unassisted* recreation opportunities dependent on a *pristine environment* where no motorized vehicles will be allowed. *Development is nonexistent* ... In short, areas designated as Wilderness Conservation are large natural areas *free of any evidence of modern human activity*, with very low use and without facilities." (Emphasis mine.) Approximately 75% of Strathcona Park is zoned as Wilderness Conservation.

I am mourning the death of wilderness. Perhaps this is a little premature, but I think not. As Kojak (Telly Savalas) once said, "Light a candle baby. A get well card won't do."

Wilderness is dead because we are selfish, because we have forgotten the meaning of the word 'wilderness', and because we seem to be incapable of ignoring the specious issue of translating unvisited wilderness into an economic bottom line.

Wilderness has been murdered by selfish convenience in the form of technologies such as cell phones, satellite phones, GPS, and keyhole.com. Or it has been sacrificed to the pernicious allure of helicopters, planes, snowmobiles and ATVs.

Wilderness has been made to appear to be less than it really is, namely a place where one must be strong and alert, where one must take responsibility for one's actions, and where decisions may have consequences.

I am moved to quote H. W. Tilman who, in his book *Two Mountains and a River*, wrote: "I have quoted elsewhere the Bengali proverb that 'the sight of a horse makes the traveller lame,' and I have some fear that the sight of an aeroplane might



make the mountaineer think. To see an aeroplane accomplishing in four hours a journey which will take him nearly three weeks of toil and sweat is bound to give rise to thought some of it subversive ... The farther away from mountains we can keep aeroplanes the better; a sentiment with which even pilots will not quarrel, and which, I hope, even those mountaineers whose pleasure it is to keep abreast or well ahead of the times will echo.”

To be more succinct let me quote the poignantly sarcastic Chinese proverb “He saw the flowers, from a galloping horse.”

Maybe we need to ponder whether we would like our children’s children’s children to be able to experience something of the exhilaration we have felt when we have worked hard to contort our way through dense bush, traverse snowy hills, and climb steep pathless mountainsides to arrive on a clean untouched plane where nature prevails and the signs of man are only subtle: the occasional jet trail, the acidity of the lake, the too-red hazy sunset, the

#### Needs Caption

points of light rushing across the night sky. It is already too late to ask for more.

I suppose there may be those of you who will accuse me of pointing a finger, but I want to assure you that I have ski-planned to Mt Vancouver and Mt Logan and Devon Island. I have helicoptered myself and food caches into the mountains. I carry a satellite phone in the arctic and I even own a gps unit. But somebody has to start casting some metaphorical stones, for if we wait for him who is without sin to begin the process then we may wait quite a while. I am a participant in the murder of wilderness.

But I am hoping, and wrestling almost daily with the issue, that as I am overtaken by the natural course of time’s passing which is to say, by *deliquium* of the spirit and/or physical decline I will have the dignity to recognize that I have had my turn, and that the wilderness (if there is any left alive) will do just fine without my technologically assisted visits.

I have mentioned some of the ways by which we are killing wilderness, but there are many more. Every piece of flagging tape I put up and do not later remove is another stab in the death of a thousand cuts. So also is, in some sense, every new summit or route cairn I build, every new summit register I place. These latter intrusions have a long and somewhat useful and engaging tradition in the human context, and so far only the very unacquisitive and strong-willed have been able to abstain.

But now when we go to summits we are increasingly likely to find not only that someone has left a note, but also that someone has decided, generally unilaterally, to make that summit a memorial for a deceased friend or relative, even if the deceased didn't die on that mountain ? even if the deceased had nothing in particular to do with that mountain.

A memorial plaque has recently appeared on the summit of the Golden Hinde. Like the wooden cross that appeared there about 1985, it is unauthorized, and moreover it contravenes the BC Parks Policy on Memorial Markers. This policy states, among other things, that anyone wishing to place a plaque must apply in writing to BC Parks and that "free standing memorial plaques or markers will not be permitted unless by previous agreement." Almost certainly, permission to place such a plaque on the summit of the Golden Hinde would be denied because it contravenes the Wilderness Conservation zoning that was defined at the beginning of this article. There is an unauthorized memorial plaque on the summit of Elkhorn, and there is a more modest memorial installation outside Strathcona Park on the summit of Conuma Peak.

Such memorials are certainly not restricted to summits. Memorial cairns and/or plaques not authorized by BC Parks have appeared in recent years at Schjelderup Lake outlet, at Owens Lake (?) (west of the Golden Hinde) , and at the recently named MacIntyre Lake Southeast of Mt DeVoe (?). All of these contravene the Wilderness Conservation zoning for those parts of Strathcona Park.

Other Island locations where there are, or are reputed to be, memorial plaques and/or cairns, some of which may have been officially authorized, in

the wilderness are: Douglas Lake\*, Century Sam Lake\*, Capes Lake, Idiens Lake, Gem Lake\*, Mt Argus\*, Mt Clifton, Mt Chief Frank, Greig Ridge\*, and Wheaton Memorial Hut\*. There may be more of which that I have not heard.

Let me be clear. This particular rant is not about the naming of geographical features, though one does wonder what our successors will do in three hundred years to honour their heroes, after all the geographical features have been named. This rant is about sullyng the wilderness so that it isn't wilderness any more. It is about rendering the wilderness no longer "free of any evidence of modern human activity."

An even more modern technology-supported threat to the integrity of wilderness is the sport of geocaching. One can go to [geocaching.com](http://geocaching.com) and zoom in on geocaches already appearing in Strathcona Park and many other places on Vancouver Island ? heck, even on Baffin Island. While such caches themselves, placed and sought by hikers, represent a contravention of the definition of wilderness accepted for the purpose of this article, it is the idea that such caches in this worldwide game might be placed and sought by those using helicopters or snowmobiles that disturbs me most.

Well okay, maybe not the most. After all, I haven't even mentioned mining, logging, roads, radio towers, micro-hydro dams, pipelines, or Survivor wannabes.

So Wilderness is dead ? on Earth. But the cosmos is full of wilderness where there are, so far, few signs of man. I think it's chimerical to think of getting to those new worlds any time soon, so we'd better think a little more about this one and how it's going to look in 50, 100, 500 years. Will there be any wilderness? I doubt it. Sorry kids, we blew the family fortune.

(All that and I didn't say a thing about bolts. Hmmm.)

\* in Strathcona Park

**FMCBC 2005 AGM Program  
June 10-12, Victoria, BC  
Dunsmuir Lodge Executive Training and Conference Centre  
Hosted by the Alpine Club of Canada, Victoria Section**

**Friday, June 10**

- 7:00 – 8:00      Opening Session: meet and greet reception. No host bar.  
8:00 – 10:00    Presentation: "Mt Arrowsmith – a park for all" by Peter Rothermel. Public event.

**Saturday, June 11**

- 9:00 – 10:00    Registration. Coffee and Muffins available.  
10:00 – 12:00   Annual General Meeting (Business Meeting, Board Elections).  
12:00 – 1:00    Lunch (included in registration fee).  
1:00 – 1:30     Break Out Session – Membership/Club Issues. This is a chance for club delegates and or members to voice concerns and share ideas, e.g. club promotion and membership retention, club representation by the FMCBC, etc.  
1:30 – 3:30     Concurrent Workshops:  
                    1:30 – 2:30   Vancouver Island Section of the National Hiking Trail. This workshop will look at possible route options for the Vancouver Island section of the National Hiking Trail, in particular the section from Port Alberni South to Victoria.  
                    1:30 – 2:30   Roofed Accommodation in BC Parks – FMCBC strategy and policy. This workshop will evaluate the provincial legislation and policy for Roofed Accommodation in BC Parks and recommend/update the FMCBC policy on this issue.  
                    2:30 – 3:30   Trails, Trail Building and the FMCBC. Trails have been a mainstay of the FMCBC since inception. This workshop will look at a future FMCBC strategy for trails and access, trail building projects, and trail building tools and concepts.  
                    2:30 – 3:30   Access Issues. Access will most likely become the dominant issue for the FMCBC. This workshop will deal with the myriad of access issues including private land access, LWBC tenures and the state of FS roads. Perhaps a new committee might emerge.  
3:30 – 5:00     Panel Session - FMCBC Strategy for 2005/2006 and beyond. This will be your chance to set the direction and priorities for the FMCBC in 2005/2006. It is hoped that the outcomes of the workshops will help set the tone for this strategy.

~~5:00 – 6:00     Annual General Meeting (Special Resolutions from workshops and panel session)~~

6:00 – 10:00    Evening Banquet and Awards Ceremony. Keynote presentation by Lindsay Elms "Mountaineering on Vancouver Island". FMCBC Awards.

Local hikes, sponsored by the Outdoor Club of Victoria and the ACC – VI, will be offered Saturday for those not participating in Saturday sessions.

**Sunday, June 12**

Mt Arrowsmith - Peter Rothermel will be leading the Main Gully (4<sup>th</sup> class) or Judges Route (3<sup>rd</sup> Class) on Mt Arrowsmith. Depart Victoria 6:00am – finish by 4:00pm.  
Others hikes will be offered by the Outdoor Club of Victoria and the ACC - VI

**FMCBC 2005 AGM Registration**  
**June 10-12, Victoria, BC**  
**Dunsmuir Lodge Executive Training and Conference Centre**  
**Hosted by the Alpine Club of Canada, Victoria Section**

**Please print**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_  
 Affiliation (Club): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>AGM Registration Options</b> (check all that apply)	<b>Qty</b>	<b>Each</b>	<b>Total</b>
? Saturday AGM (includes, all sessions, workshops, and lunch)	_____	\$10	_____
? Friday reception and presentation (cash bar, donations received for Mt Arrowsmith project)	_____	\$0	_____
? Banquet Saturday evening, registrants	_____	\$40	_____
? Banquet Saturday evening, non - registrants	_____	\$40	_____

Vegetarian / special diet? Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate which workshops you are interested in (this is just for planning and to get an idea of interest)

- ? Vancouver Island Section of the National Hiking Trail
- ? Roofed Accommodation in BC Parks – FMCBC strategy and policy
- ? Trails, Trail Building and the FMCBC
- ? Land and Access Issues and Strategies

Do you require a billet?      Yes ?    No ?

Do you intend to hike on Saturday (including partners/spouses)?      Yes ?      No ?  
    Easy ?      Moderate ?

Do you intend to hike on Sunday?    Yes ?    No ?      Easy ?      Moderate ?    Mt Arrowsmith ?

Accommodations are available at Dunsmuir Lodge for \$150/night (incl. breakfast). Please contact the lodge for reservations and tell them you are attending the FMCBC AGM.

Please e-mail or fax completed form and payment by May 30 to FMCBC office Box 19673, Vancouver, BC, V5T 4E7.  
 Fax 604-873-6086. Cheques Payable to: FMCBC.



Paul Chatterton/Meg Stanley

## 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
- Backroads Outdoor Club
- 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 information available at  
[:www.mountainclubs.bc.ca](http://www.mountainclubs.bc.ca)