

MARMOT

YOUR GUIDE TO WHAT'S UP ON MOUNT WASHINGTON Volume 15, #1 • Summer/Fall/2005



Photos courtesy Mount Washington Alpine Resort

Proposed Strathcona Park Trail Head to begin at Raven Lodge

Exclusive to The Marmot
Mount Washington
Accommodation Guide

Paradise Meadows and Buttle Lake Trail Maps & Guides

North Island Rotary clubs and BC Parks are teaming up to build a new trail head to Strathcona Park at Raven Lodge. "The trailhead has been 10 years in the decision-making," says Andy Smith of BC Parks.

The Rotary Club of Campbell River has taken on a project to develop our long-awaited and long-needed connector trail and new trail head. Five Rotary clubs in Campbell River and the Comox Valley have been approached to help fund the project.

All five clubs need to agree on the project for it to be successful, says Bayne Mann, president-elect of the Strathcona Sunrise Rotary Club in the Comox Valley. So far, his members are behind the project, he said. "We're going to be voting on it. We're in unless there's something that kicks us out," he said. Mann's club members like to get their hands dirty, so they will

be looking to add manpower to their donation if the vote is successful. "Push dirt around or something," he said.

The Rotary Club of Campbell River has applied to the Coast Sustainability Trust Fund to assist in funding to pay for the trail head project. The plan is to make a wheelchair-accessible trail from the new trail head and meet up with other existing boardwalks all the way out to Lake Helen Mackenzie.

Along with the new trail head, Friends of the Park would like to see a Visitors' Centre built so people could go in and learn about Strathcona Park before they start their hikes. "This is the biggest thing to happen to Strathcona Park, and certainly the Forbidden Plateau area in its history," Smith said.

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Real Estate Development Update See page A3



Web: www.rickgibson.ca
ROYAL LEPAGE
 In the Comox Valley

Emergency Services

The emergency services issue is enjoying a new life with the Mount Washington Community Association.

Fire service was slated to be the main topic on the community association's agenda for its annual general meeting in late June, MWCA president Al Walker said. "In partnership with the Regional District of Comox-Strathcona, the executive of the Mount Washington Community Association has been studying ways and means to provide a fire service on the mountain," Walker said.

"We believe the lack of a fire service puts people and their property at unnecessary risk." A previous emergency services proposal was knocked down during a referendum among Mount Washington Resort residents two years ago. People were critical of the way the referendum was handled, and how information was disseminated.

The MWCA went back to the drawing board; the result was the Roycroft Report,

compiled by Roycroft Consulting Services for the regional district, which examined the steps to establish a fire service program.

The report looked at four possible courses of action: a full-time professional fire dept., a part-time force operated through the regional district, a fully volunteer society or the status quo (to do nothing at all).

A full-time professional fire department was rejected as too costly, according to the report. A volunteer society has its merits, however a secure source of funding is needed. Doing nothing would continue to leave residents, tourists and staff alike exposed to a high risk in case of fire.

"Recognition as a service through the regional district offers the most efficient and cost-effective method available," the report states.

The regional district already sanctions fire departments in six other areas within its boundaries. A fire department at Mount Washington could start up with basic fire services only, such as fire suppression and prevention, first responder training and vehicular extraction methods (Jaws of Life). Walker said the MWCA feels it has come up with a feasible solution for providing fire service at the resort, based on the Roycroft report.

Also at the AGM, the association expected to formally adopt the name "Mount Washington Community Association".

For more information on the MWCA, visit the website at www.mwcommunity.com.



www.rickgibson.ca

The View From Here

Too many times we reflect on the past and what we should have done ten years ago. Perhaps these are your thoughts ten years from now as you reflect back on your new purchase at Mount Washington this year.

June 30, 2015

Dear Rick,

I just wanted to thank you for selling us our property at Mount Washington ten years ago. It only seems like yesterday!!! Memories can not have prices attached to them but the

enjoyment we have had with our Mount Washington home are priceless! Please let us share.

We were nervous about buying back then as it was a lot of money. When we left the lawyer's office signing the papers, we looked at each other after and thought, "what have we done?"

The first winter we spent trying out our mountain home. We changed some of the furniture and added pictures. We opened up that wall that you had suggested and put in a couple of new windows. Our intention that first year was to rent it 3 out of 4 weekends and stay in it the 4th. We spent EVERY WEEKEND, all of Christmas and Spring Break. It was fabulous. Summer we spent a lot more time than we ever imagined that we would. There is just so much to do up there!

The following is some of our highlights over the past ten years.

- The huge snowfall of 2009 where our kids were jumping off the peak of the roof into 9 feet of fresh powder!

- Being around the Resort as the 2010 Olympics drew near and meeting the incredible athletes that stayed at Mount Washington. Our eldest son (now 16) trained with some of the world's best Nordic skiers and now is aspiring to be on the Canada Team, with the incredible support of the Strathcona Nordics he will make it.

- Spectacular sunsets and waking up to blankets of fresh white snow.

- Watching the Mount Washington Village grow and expand. Now ten years later it is not "do we go out for dinner" but "where do we go?" We have come up in the off seasons JUST to go out for dinner!

- Being a part of the mountain bike scene and seeing Mount Washington host several international mountain bike races.

- The fondues... and the fun with our many Mount Washington friends that we now wonder what we would do without.

- Watching the management and staff of Mount Washington continually prove their commitment to customer service and making us always feel like members of their family.

The bottom line is that we are so happy that we made this decision ten years ago. Aside from having ten years of fabulous family memories, our investment has also appreciated way beyond what we thought it would. Thanks for selling us our property!

Sincerely,

Mr. and Mrs. Buyer 2005

THE INSIDE SCOOP

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Real Estate Development Update

Looking for real estate that's a little more upscale at Mount Washington Alpine Resort? Try Wildwood at Strathcona.

"Wildwood is two clusters of four townhomes. The first phase will be built this summer, which will be four units," said Rick Gibson, Realtor with Royal LePage in the Comox Valley. "We're going for a bit of an upper-scale market, offering a little bit more," Gibson said.

Wildwood is located on the lower side of the Nordic Road, just before the intersection with Henry Road offering views directly into Strathcona Park. The townhomes will feature West Coast style design. Each unit is three levels with lofts and will feature separate garages for each unit, decks that are hard-wired and plumbed for hot tubs, laminate flooring and spectacular views into Strathcona Park with skiing access across the street he said.

Price points for Wildwood at Strathcona are expected to be \$440,000 to \$460,000. "We've had a lot of preliminary interest so far. We expect them to sell fairly quickly," Gibson said. "Interest is high for townhomes at Mount Washington, proven by the success of Parkview Place, built a few years ago," he added.

Also coming onto the market is Newton's Wynde, a real estate package planned for Nordic Road just below Paradise Ridge and Ptarmigan Ridge developments.

This development will offer varying densities. "Newton's Wynde is coming on stream to fill a void for people looking for raw land," Gibson said, "for single-family lots and for developers looking to build on duplex through four-plex lots."

The Mount Washington Lodge project is on hold, but not forgotten, says Resort President Peter Gibson.

Mount Washington Lodge is a project of Chris LeFevre, a noted developer from Victoria who is known for Middle Beach Lodge, South Chesterman Beach Homes and Rosie Bay Estates in Tofino and the Railyards in Victoria.

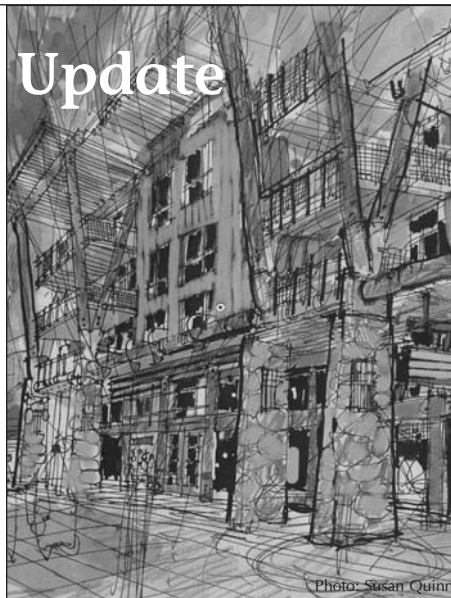
The lodge will feature studios and one and two-bedroom units and, if it goes ahead, will be the cornerstone of a new village at Mount Washington. According to LeFevre's website, the lodge will be built in phases.

The lodge is part of the village core development program, which has been put on hold, Mount Washington Alpine Resort President Peter Gibson said. "Negotiations are continuing. We're still hoping to have a hole in the ground in September," he said. "The winter that we've had has slowed down the project, but hasn't stopped it." Gibson said he hoped more information will be forthcoming in August.

Bear Lodge will soon be open for business, exceeding expectations.

"Owners will gain possession of their suites this summer season and the feedback has been positive," says Rick Gibson, realtor with Royal LePage in the Comox Valley.

Continued on page A11



Artist's conception of Mount Washington Lodge and the surrounding village core.

Photo: Susan Quinn

Mountain Biking and More in store for Summer 2005

The staff at Mount Washington Alpine Resort is looking forward to the opening of the summer season... a gimmee, really, after the strange "non-winter" season.

Look for fun of the two-wheeled variety as the Resort teams up with Norco again for the VPS Fest. Any Norco owners can come up to the Resort and ride the mountain bike trails for free during VPS Fest, as well as try out the

latest in bicycles and other cycling equipment.

Norco provides the Resort's rental bicycles each summer. The VPS Fest will take place Aug. 20-21. "We'll also be bringing back our Wednesday night race series, called "Hump Day", Resort Public Relations Director Dave Hampshire said.

Also for this summer, one of the biggest ATV operators at Whistler is setting up shop on Mount Washington. Visitors will be able to tour the mountain and gain a different perspective... this one on four wheels. Or, take the laid-back route with a flyfishing trip or a horseback ride.

For the second time in two years, Mount Washington will host the B.C. Cup Finals in mountain bike racing, Aug. 27-28. "When it was all over and done with (last year), it was deemed one of the very best finals ever held," Hampshire said.

The news was reassuring to the mountain families who opened their homes to racers for the weekend, he said. "Mountain



Photo courtesy Mount Washington

The increased popularity in mountain biking has helped Mount Washington grow its summer business operations.

biking has evolved from where snowboarding was 15 years ago, where it was a fringe activity," Hampshire noted, "to now being a very much family-oriented sport. It's going to be a much bigger revenue earner for us in the future."

Whistler is already seeing this trend, Hampshire said, the Lower Mainland Resort makes more money in the summer than in the winter, and a big portion is from mountain biking. Mount Washington is also answering that trend.

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Olympic Legacy... A New Mountain Sports Centre?

The Vancouver Island Mountain Sport Society and Spirit of B.C. Communities Committee have submitted a \$3.2 million proposal to Legacies Now to fund a premier Nordic Training Centre at Mount Washington.

"The application went in just before the election and includes amenities to the Park, a Mountain Sports Centre, hostel for accommodations and half a million dollars in trail and electrical upgrades to facilitate high-end competition," said Don Sharpe, Resort Director, Business Services. "We have yet to hear back, but we've been hearing positive overtones," he said.

The V.I. Mountain Sport Society has taken over the Training Centre bid from Mount Washington in order to take advantage of grant opportunities. "The more we got into the project the more we realized this is more of a community issue than a mountain issue. It makes sense," Sharpe said. "We as a company may not be able to access government funding for Olympic initiatives that the society can."

The project, which Mount Washington hopes will draw international-calibre athletes to train in anticipation of the 2010 Olympics, has received community support up and down Vancouver Island.

"We consider the community to be all of Vancouver Island," Sharpe said. A Resort contingent attended the Vancouver Island Association for Coastal Communities in Courtenay last spring, and community-wide support for a Mount Washington Training Centre was unparalleled, he said. "There was a motion put to the floor to endorse the concept and it was passed unanimously."

From a Comox Valley perspective, the Mountain Sport Society and Spirit of B.C. Communities Committee have made presentations to all municipal councils, Rotary clubs and other service groups, and Sharpe said he is encouraged by the feedback he is hearing. "Everyone thought it was a wonderful idea and 'carry on'," he said. Sharpe said he hopes to hear an answer on the Legacies Now proposal before the end of summer.

If the project is given the go-ahead, they might be able to break ground before the mountain's building envelope closes in September. If not, they will solidify their plans through the winter and break ground in the spring of 2006.

In the meantime, the community committee has started to focus its energy how to lure international teams to the new training centre. The committee met late in June to discuss a cohesive strategy: members want to create a targeted message, and find teams that might have a link to Vancouver Island. The committee is contemplating sending a group to the World Cup event at Silver Star next winter to talk to international athletes.

The committee is also poised to create a website highlighting local Olympic initiatives. "We're in the process right now of deciding who will get the contract and then we'll go and develop the website," Sharpe said.

The community committee was active last winter, organizing a welcome home event for Olympic silver medallist rower Tom Herschmiller, and a countdown event at Simms Millennium Park in Courtenay to mark the halfway point to the 2010 Olympics.



Photo: Susan Quinn

Banding Hummingbirds... No Small Task!

High up on the balcony of a chalet in the Alpine Village at Mount Washington, while dawn breaks colorfully over Strathcona Park, Rufus hummingbirds congregate hungrily at a feeder.

Unbeknownst to the birds, a team of volunteer naturalists watch patiently as the fleeting birds ascend into a special feeder.

The naturalists are the Walker family, and every two weeks during the hummingbird season, mother Sue Walker bands the birds as a research project.

A certain number of hummingbirds are banded every year so naturalists can track their migratory patterns. The birds that Sue Walker bands have been found to migrate to Mexico for the winter.

Walker has two impressive backers who have taught her the art of bird banding.

Cam Finlay is a master bander, and his wife is a naturalist who received the Order of Canada while working in Alberta. "He's (Finlay) a very important person in all our lives," Walker said. "We used to live down the street from them; they became honorary grandparents for the boys."

"Cam decided I should be the one banding birds up here." Walker has a permit, but isn't allowed to band hummingbirds without a master birder present. She and her family have been banding birds for the past three years: in 2004 they banded 134 (only one male) and recorded another 724 "visitors" (birds that aren't captured).

Continued on page A10

Shown above: The tools of the trade in hummingbird banding, a delicate art in itself.

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Geography, History and the Vancouver Island Marmot

ANDREW A. BRYANT
Scientific Advisor,
Marmot Recovery Foundation

I'm often asked how Vancouver Island marmots differ from other marmots, or why they are endangered when other marmots are so commonly found at places as diverse as Whistler, Manning Provincial Park or the south Okanagan. It's a good question.

The basic facts are easily described. As the scientific name suggests, *Marmota Vancouverensis* lives only on Vancouver Island, but it is related to other marmot species just as black bears are related to grizzly bears and polar bears. There are 14 recognizable marmot species in the world,

of which four species live in Canada (Hoary marmots, Yellow-bellied marmots, Woodchucks and Vancouver Island marmots). Just as with bears, Vancouver Island marmots are easily distinguished by their unusual fur; no other marmot has their rich dark chocolate fur colour.

In some ways Vancouver Island marmots are pretty typical. Like all marmots they live in burrows, eat grasses and flowers, hibernate during winter, live a long life (8 years is not uncommon) and reproduce infrequently (females achieve sexual maturity at age 3 or 4, and thereafter produce litters of 3-5 pups every two years). But in some respects Vancouver Island marmots are pretty unusual, and the reasons for this are interesting.

Natural habitat conditions on Vancouver Island are very different from those on the B.C. mainland or elsewhere -- specifically, good patches of habitat tend to be much smaller and more widely scattered. Geography and post-ice-age forest growth are the fundamental reasons why. But natural habitat restriction has done more than make marmots rare. It has shaped their genetics, behaviour and ecology. That's why I like to describe Vancouver Island marmots as "typical marmots...only more so".

Marmots have responded to habitat scarcity by developing strong dispersal behavior -- we've watched some marmots travel over 20-30 km to reach a new habitat patch and find a new mate. Other marmots commonly need to travel only a few kilometres to re-colonize sites where extinction occurred, or "rescue" colonies that aren't doing well.

Vancouver Island marmots also differ in social characteristics. In contrast to other species, Vancouver Island marmots rarely fight, juveniles from different families play together and sometimes they even "camp out overnight" with the neighbours. Researchers have described them as the most social of the world's marmots, making them great fun to study as a result! I think this is the predictable result of an evolutionary history that regularly forced resident marmots to accept strangers into their midst.

Continued on page A10

Onslo: Captive-born male released at Haley Lake Ecological Reserve in July 2004, photo taken on 13 May 2005. In 2005 the captive-breeding program resulted in 13 litters of pups. The plan is to release 10-15 captive-born marmots each year.

All images are copyright Andrew A. Bryant

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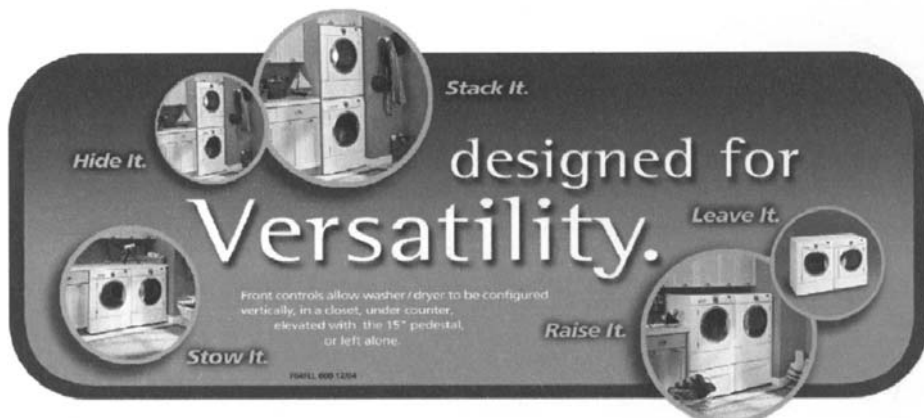
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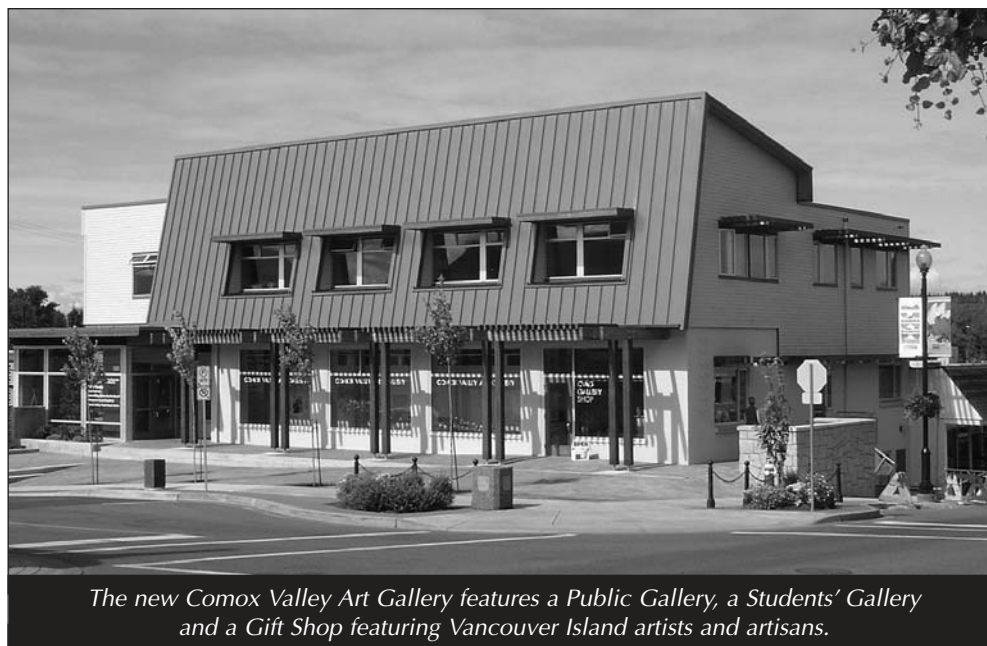
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CIBC WOOD GUNDY is proud to support skiing through sponsorship of the Strathcona Nordics and their Childrens Learn to Ski program. For more information, please call Rick Morson at 703-5383.

The **COMOX VALLEY ART GALLERY** is hardly recognizable in its new home at 580 Duncan Avenue in Downtown Courtenay. Recently relocated from its home of over 20 years on Fourth Street, the Gallery now features four exhibition spaces – the Public Gallery, an Arts and Crafts Gallery, a twenty-four hour Window Gallery and the Students' Gallery - with work for or by students.

Adjacent to the Gallery, the **Gallery Shop** continues to offer a wide selection of high quality hand crafted works ranging from jewellery and glass to wood turning and

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The new Comox Valley Art Gallery, which was formerly the Courtenay Fire Hall, is located just across the street from the Courtenay Library on 6th Street.

Photos: Neil Havers

pottery. The new shop is bright, easy to move around in - and air conditioned! New work arrives on a daily basis - a delightful selection for the discerning buyer.

Over the summer months, the Gallery and Gallery Shop are open Monday to Saturday, 10 am to 5 pm. Admission to the Gallery is by donation.

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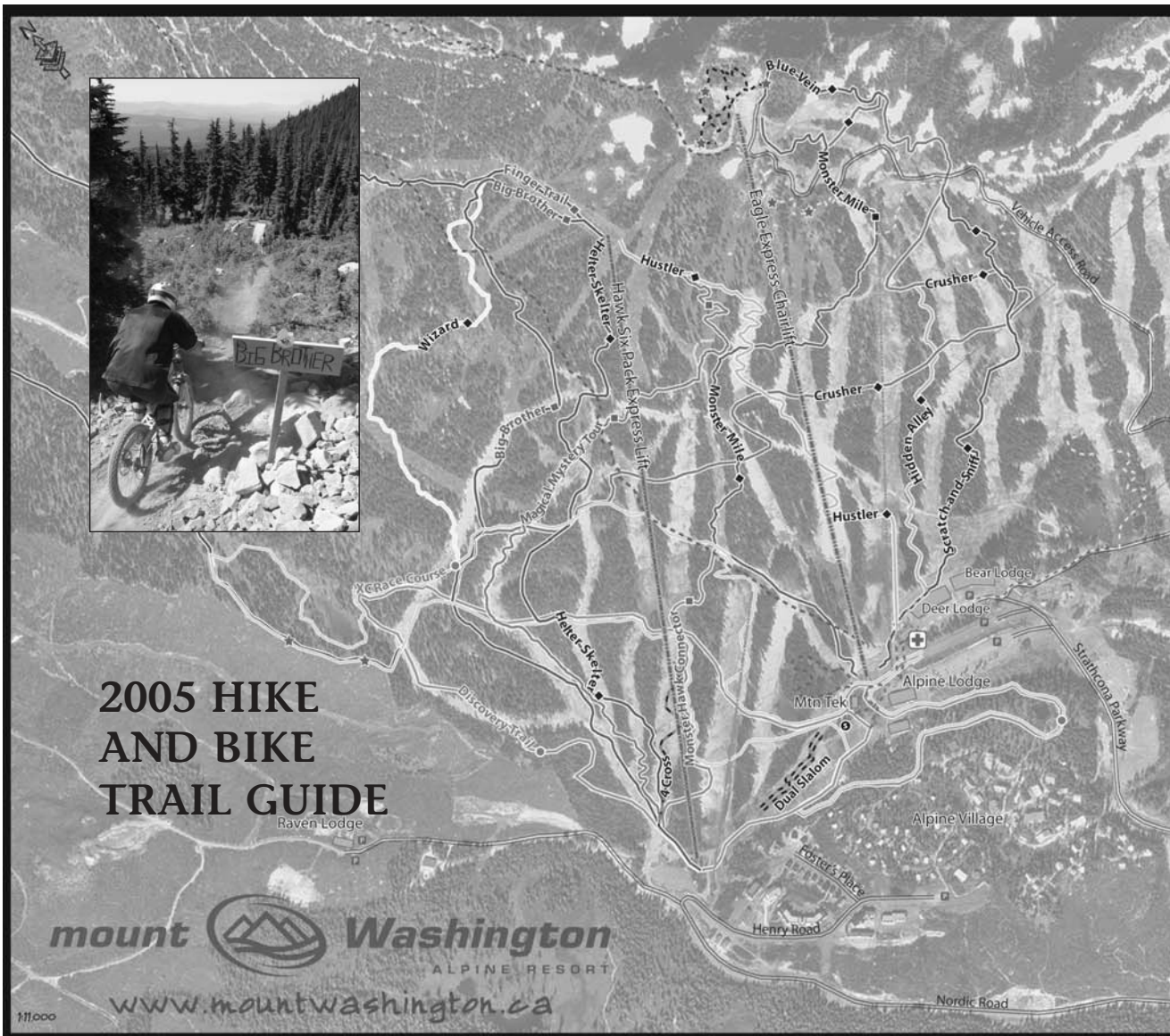
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2005 HIKE AND BIKE TRAIL GUIDE

mount Washington
ALPINE RESORT
www.mountwashington.ca

Summer Trail Map

Mountain Bike Trails

● Less Difficult 31%	■ More Difficult 33%	◆ Most Difficult 36%
— Cross Country [XC] Race Course ● 6.1 km	— Crusher ◆ 3.0 km	
— Discovery Trail ● 4.4 km	— Helter Skelter ◆ 1.7 km	
— Finger Trail ■ 5.8 km	— Hidden Alley ◆ 0.9 km	
— Magical Mystery Tour ■ 2.0 km	— Hustler ◆ 1.6 km	
— Monster Hawk Connector ■ 0.8 km	— Monster Mile ◆ 2.0 km	
— Big Brother ■ 2.3 km	— Scratch and Sniff ◆ 1.4 km	
— Blue Vein ◆ 0.4 km	— Wizzard ◆ 1.3 km	
	--- Dual Slalom 0.2 km	
	--- 4 Cross 0.5 km	
		34.4 km

Hiking Trails

● Less Difficult 9%	■ More Difficult 30%	◆ Most Difficult 61%
Eagle Express		Base Access
--- Top of the World Trails ■ 0.7 km	--- Lodge Trails ○ 0.4 km	
--- Linton's Trail ■ 2.1 km	--- Memory Lane ○ 0.4 km	
--- Giv'r Trail ◆ 1.3 km		9.2 km
--- West Summit Ridge Trail ◆ 4.3 km		

--- Summer Chairlift	Ⓢ Skills Area	Ⓟ Parking
== Vehicle Access Road	★ Viewpoint	⊕ First Aid

MOUNTAIN BIKERS RESPONSIBILITY CODE

1. Stay in control at all times. It is your responsibility to avoid other persons and objects around you.
 2. Do not stop where you obstruct a trail or are not visible from above.
 3. When entering a trail or starting downhill, you must look uphill and yield to other riders.
 4. Please assist if you are involved in or witness a collision or accident and identify yourself to the Bike Patrol.
 5. Keep off closed areas and obey all signs and warnings.
 6. Stay on marked trails. Do not cut switchbacks.
 7. Stay off of lifts and trails if your ability is impaired through the use of drugs or alcohol.
 8. You must have sufficient physical dexterity, ability and knowledge to safely ride and unload lifts. If in doubt, ask the attendant.
 9. Hiking is not permitted.
 10. Do not feed, provoke or approach wildlife.
- KNOW THE CODE - BE SAFETY CONSCIOUS**



Sasquatch Update

Sasquatch sighting in northern Manitoba in April has renewed interest in the hairy beast's existence on the West Coast, and specifically, Mount Washington.

While there has never been any hard evidence that Sasquatch is real, there are many believers: including one regular visitor to Mount Washington who declined to be named. Shown is a rare photo of possibly an albino sasquatch or one who possibly has not shed his or her winter coat yet. The jury is still out on this.

The Sasquatch, or Bigfoot, is part of the Coast Salish people's beliefs, according to a 2004 article in The Martlet. The term is derived from the Salish "se'sxac", which means "wild men". To these First Nations people, the Sasquatch was considered an animal, similar to a cougar, bear or wolverine — and not human.

The first sighting of Sasquatch in the Comox Valley area was in April 1905, when the Victoria Colonist newspaper reported that native peoples between Union Bay and Comox shot at what they thought was a bear digging on the beach. *Continued on page A10*

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The Wild Side of Mount Washington



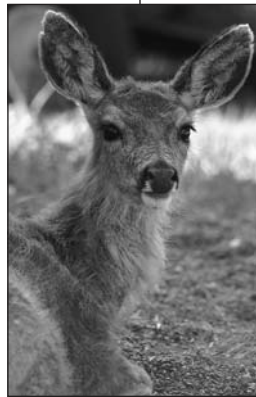
Who has't been amazed at the sight of someone standing patiently on the outdoor patio at Fat Teddy's while a Whiskey Jack saucily perches on an outstretched hand, accepting a snack. Or stopping for a picnic only to have one of these 'camp robbers' snatch a delicacy from your picnic basket?

The Whiskey Jack (or Gray Jay, as it is also known) isn't the only wildlife to be found at Mount Washington Alpine Resort. One day Resort President Peter Gibson put a crock pot out on the second-storey deck at what was then his home in the Alpine Village. "There was a roast in the pot," he said. Suddenly, he spotted three small, dog-like creatures that at first he thought were wolverines, chomping on the roast. "I thought I'd found wolverines; I was excit-

ed, because they're supposed to be extinct." However, they weren't wolverines, although Gibson can't recall what they were. "I haven't seen them since I lived on the hill, but they're still around," he said. "There are pine martens, too," he added.

Here are some other birds and wildlife one can expect to see at Mount Washington: **Marmots** Staff at the Marmot Recovery Centre at Mount Washington are excited with the news that a new litter, possibly two, has been born in the wild. This is positive news for a species facing extinction **Black Bears** Bears are a common sight on the roadside of Strathcona Parkway during the spring and early summer. Many local tourists make the drive up to the main lodge just to see if they can spot a bear. **Cougars** "You won't see a cougar, you won't see a wolf, but they are there," Gibson said. **Bald Eagles and Golden Eagles** Majestic when they are soaring high above the trees, the eagles are also a threat to baby marmots and other small creatures. **Ravens** "The raven is very

much a part of the mountain," Gibson said. "You get that sound at night that's like a cluck-cluck-cluck." Raven Lodge was also named for the mystical creature. **Hummingbirds** Rufus Hummingbirds are prevalent in the meadows during late June and July, helping to pollinate wildflowers. **Squirrels** Squirrels are sometimes spotted among the trees around the Mount Washington buildings. **Woodpeckers** Often heard before they are seen, woodpeckers tap into dead trees for their supper. **White-tailed Ptarmigan** Strathcona Park is home to a small number of Vancouver Island white-tailed ptarmigan. A mottled lichen color in the summer and white in the winter, the ptarmigan nests in the alpine under shrubs and have been spotted near the peaks of Mount Washington and Mount Albert Edward.



Deer White-tailed deer can often be seen munching on the vegetation on the side of the road in the lower elevations, and may surprise a hiker or two in the alpine meadows. **Sasquatch** Well, the jury's still out on this cryptozoological creature, but rumor has it he's been prowling around Paradise Meadows!

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Onslo and Haida



Marmots

continued from page A5

It is therefore only half-jokingly that I describe Canada's most endangered mammal as a truly "Canadian" kind of species.

From a low population ebb of 70 individuals in 1998, I am pleased to report that the world now has at least 130 individuals, and populations are growing. Due to the efforts of the government, the Marmot Recovery Foundation, companies such as Mount Washington Alpine Resort, and individuals from around the world, I believe the prognosis for saving this unique species is very good indeed. So, if you're out and about on the mountain this summer and happen to encounter a marmot, consider this: you have not only seen something that few people have seen. You have encountered a fascinating example of how animals respond to history and geography.

For more information, please visit our website at www.marmots.org

NEWS IN BRIEF Who says the rental market was soft this past winter? A certain Sue is driving a posh two seater Mercedes Sports Car.

Onslo and Haida: Mmale and female released at Haley Lake Ecological Reserve in July 2004, photo taken on 13 May 2005. These are the first marmots to inhabit this natural habitat since the colony became extinct in 1999.



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Sasquatch

continued from page A8

The "bear" straightened up, yelled and ran into the woods — on two feet. The article noted that the "bear" was digging for clams.

According to the Martlet article, many Sasquatch sightings are in and around Strathcona Park, which is densely forested and largely uninhabited. Reports of unexplained nocturnal screams abound, and 15-inch-long tracks were discovered in 1988 that Sasquatch experts say could only be made by Bigfoot.

The latest sighting, in northern Manitoba, comes from a man living in remote Norway House. The man claims a fuzzy video he took earlier in the spring is Bigfoot. The video is just under three minutes long, according to a report by Canadian Press, and people who have watched the video say it shows a large, hairy creature walking upright in the Nelson River.

The Mount Washington visitor, a self-proclaimed Sasquatch groupie, claims Battleship Lake would be ideal habitat for the Bigfoot. And despite the numbers of people who hike into the area in Paradise Meadows every summer, Sasquatches are so adept at camouflage this human presence wouldn't matter, the visitor said.

And who knows what the migration patterns are with Sasquatch? If his stride is as long as experts claim, it is not inconceivable that he winters over in Manitoba and wanders back to Strathcona Park in the summer.

NEWS IN BRIEF Mount Washington Public Relations Director **Dave Hampshire** certainly had a busy snow season, if not too many others did. Not only was Hampshire the Resort's face in the news, he also became a father! **Joseph Hampshire** arrived just as the resort enjoyed the most snow it had all year, after it was "officially" closed. Mom, Dad and baby are all doing well.

Hampshire is spending his off-season touring with the band Trooper, doing lighting for their road shows.

Hummingbird Banding

continued from page A4

Also in 2004, she recaptured a bird that had been banded in 2001 and 2003. "I thought that was really exciting," she said.

Banding takes place at 5:30 a.m. The Walkers have a feeder with a trap that allows the birds to feed before a net is dropped. "We very quickly and carefully work with the bird. We wrap a little blanket around it," Walker explains. "I try and take their measurements in less than a minute."

They use handmade banding pliers that are made so they can't accidentally clip the birds' legs. The miniscule leg bands are aluminum and their codes are recorded along with the sex and age of the bird.

"This is very good information for people all up and down the western coast," she said. The oldest known hummingbird is eight years 11 months (recorded in the United States).

While Sue Walker holds the banding permit, the process is very much a family affair: sons Andy and Darien feed and release the birds from the trap feeder. Other son Stewart looks after the traps. Neighbor Kindle Parsons acts as a recorder.

"Our scientific station downstairs is very quiet and very respectful of the birds. It's an unbelievably excellent opportunity for the boys," Walker said.

"It's quite an art form. Sometimes it's so busy we end up having four, five, six birds lined up at once."

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New Trail Head

continued from page A1

However, he cautioned that the project might have to happen in phases. The Coast Sustainability Fund has a maximum of \$100,000 for grants; The trail work and trail head will cost an estimated \$200,000, and a Visitors' Centre would be another \$200,000. "Regardless of whether we get the sustainability grant or not, we still need donations," he said.

The need for a new trail head was underscored last year after the road was paved to Raven Lodge. Hikers used to park their cars on the side of the gravel road in order to use the old trail head, which was located near the old Nordic Lodge. When Raven Lodge was built, an 800-metre bark mulch trail was created by the Resort to give the public access to the old trail head, but everyone agreed that trail head was inconvenient, Smith said.

Mount Washington Alpine Resort donated land worth \$156,000 for the trail head. Smith said he hoped the project would receive funding approval by the end of June, so construction of the trail head could be completed by the fall of 2005.

For more information on the trail head project or to donate to the effort, contact Smith at (250) 337-2405 or e-mail him at andy.smith@gov.bc.ca. Tax receipts will be written for donations over \$100.



Photo: Susan Quinn

Real Estate Developments

continued from page A3

"Bear Lodge is half sold out of the 59 units," he said. "It's finished and the comments from buyers is that the finishing has exceeded their expectations. "The colors and furniture packages and finishing details are more than buyers expected." he said.

The units are in one, two and three-bedroom configurations and have a rustic lodge look and feel. "Phase 2 (Bear Lodge) looks like night and day," says designer Sharon Thielmann of Objects of Desire Designs in Vancouver. Thielmann designed the interiors of both Deer and Bear lodges. "It's a much better building in my estimation, and the furnishing package looks really, really good."

Bear Lodge is the twin to Deer Lodge, which was completed in 1996. The main difference between Bear and Deer lodges is that Bear has been built with cutting-edge rain screen technology, which protects against possible envelope issues. "There's a few features Appia is talking about patenting," Gibson said.

Mountain Biking & More

continued from page A3

Last year the Resort expanded its mountain bike terrain to include that for beginners and intermediate riders; in the past the steep terrain that came off the Eagle Express was only accessible to expert riders.

In the summer of 2004 Mount Washington was the only resort in North America to run a six-seat lift just for mountain bikes (The Hawk), with a special carrier on each chair. The Hawk will be open to bikers again this summer.

While mountain biking continues to grow, so do the festivals that Mount Washington presents in the summer.

The popular fests are back: sixth annual **Beer Fest** July 16, seventh annual **Alpine Wine Fest** August 6 and the **High on Chocolate** "tasteful" event August 13. "We've sold out (for High on Chocolate) two years in a row," Hampshire said.

Families will no doubt flock to the hill for annual **Canada Day celebrations** July 1 and the **Save-On-Foods family picnic**, July 23, too.

The Eagle chairlift will be open for tourists wanting a mile-high experience and unprecedented views of Georgia Strait, and this summer the resort is offering **Sunday brunch at the idyllic Raven Lodge** as well as **Musical Sundays**: live music in front of the courtyard from 2-4 p.m. every Sunday from July 3 to Sept. 4.

The summer season wraps up October 10 with the Resort's popular food bank fundraiser, where people can take free rides on the scenic chairlift with any non-perishable food donation.

Major Summer Grooming

Mount Washington Alpine Resort will spend upwards of \$200,000 on summer grooming this year. "We're proposing giving the mountain a haircut," Resort President Peter Gibson explained.

In the past couple of years the resort has concentrated on cutting lift lines and bike trails with minimal grooming. Meanwhile, the vegetation on some of the trails has grown. The Resort will spend \$125,000 recontouring some of the terrain, with possibly another \$65,000 in cleaning up trails.

The Resort was already committed to a \$200,000 upgrade to its sewage treatment plant under its regular maintenance program. "We'll make sure our treatment system is working and meeting regulations," Gibson said. "We respect the people who are downstream and we want to make sure our standards are maintained."

Photo: Susan Quinn



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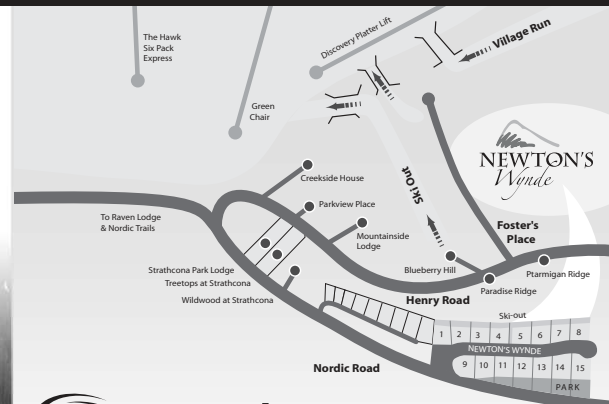
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The mountain home was custom built by the present owners with insulated concrete walls with R50 insulation. Inside, are two propane fireplaces, HRV system, Low E windows throughout, 4 bathrooms, central vacuum, 2 hot water tanks, and private concrete patios (both wired for hot tubs).

The home has been split into two areas, the main living area with 4 bedrooms and the spacious owners suite below. Plus, the overheight basement (11 foot ceilings) is ideal for getting out of the winter weather or workshop or ??? In the main area, take advantage of the spectacular views of the Beaufort Mountain Range and the vistas of Strathcona Park from the expansive outdoor patio, or put a hot tub on the upstairs deck located privately off the master bedroom. Downstairs, check out the patio as well!

The owner's suite gives the occupier the feeling that they are in their own chalet with an open plan and great views. The home has huge storage areas and has been set up to look after all the needs of renters and owners alike. Easy access to all winter activities and close to the Strathcona Park trailhead for summer time. Loads of parking available. In a nut shell, if you are looking for the finest accommodation on Mount Washington, come and check out Blue Haven!! **\$849,900**





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Lovingly maintained chalet on Fosters Place with 3 bedrooms in the main area with a separate 2 bedroom suite down below. ALSO there is an unfinished basement for further investigation. Each suite offers a rock faced fireplace and is totally furnished. As it sits the upper suite handles 12 people and the lower handles 7. Many other features like two decks and sauna and ample storage. Price includes web site (www.chalet19.com)

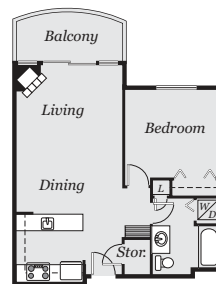
\$639,900

BEAR LODGE

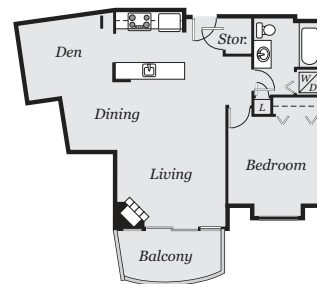
Floor Plans

Ease of Access

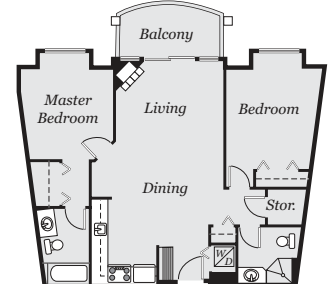
With its close proximity to the resort's amenities and lifts Bear Lodge is ideally situated to make ownership at Mount Washington a rewarding experience.



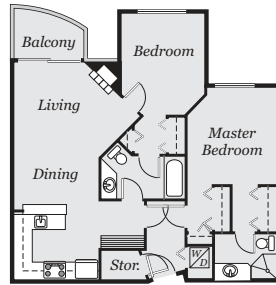
1 Bedroom



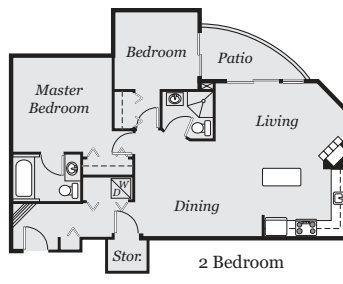
1 Bedroom & Den



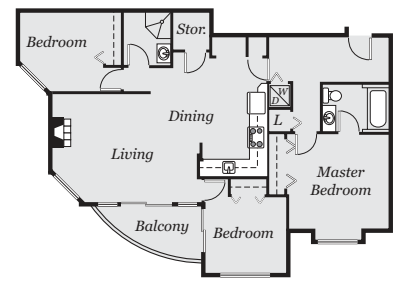
2 Bedroom



2 Bedroom Lockoff



2 Bedroom



3 Bedroom lockoff

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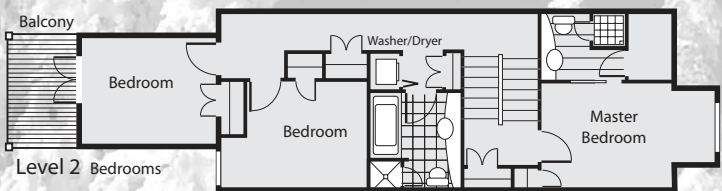
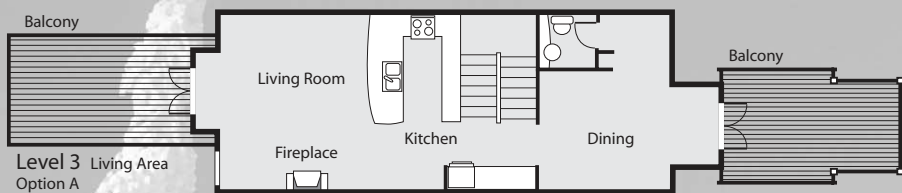
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Artist's rendering, not exactly as shown.

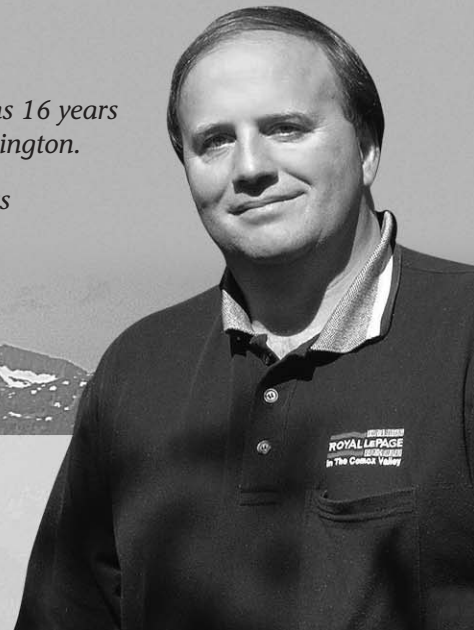
This is not an offering for sale.



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- ▶ The Royal LePage website receives over 800,000 visits per month.
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- ▶ Photo displays in the Alpine Lodge showcase properties for sale.
- ▶ The Mount Washington Real Estate Channel shows your property 24/7.
- ▶ Royal LePage has four office locations in the Comox Valley including the Comox Valley Airport.
- ▶ Rick Gibson resides on Mount Washington and has 16 years experience promoting and selling on Mount Washington.
- ▶ The Mount Washington Marmot newspaper boasts an annual circulation of 80,000 copies.



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**Accommodation & Events Guide
Summer 2005**

RIDE THE CHAIRLIFT • TAKE IN THE VIEW • MTN BIKE THE TRAILS • HIKE THE MEADOWS • INDULGE IN AN EVENT

Here is a list of this summer's main events.

June 25-26 • 2 for 1 Adventure Rides

Bring a friend and enjoy the 2 for 1 Adventure Rides this Opening Weekend!

July 1 • Canada Day Celebration

Celebrate Canada Day on Mount Washington with free Canadian flags, temporary Canadian flag tattoos and cake!

Music Sundays

Every Sunday this summer (starting July 3) enjoy live music in the courtyard.

July 16 • 6th Annual Beer Festival

Tickets include unlimited samples, souvenir sampling glass and live entertainment.

July 23 • Save-On-Foods Family Picnic & Games

Fun and games for the family with mini golf, backyard bouncers, face painting, country games and more. Then fill your picnic basket a la carte.

August 6 • 7th Annual Wine Festival

Enjoy a wide selection of wine tasting, food samples and live entertainment at the Raven Lodge.

August 13-14 • Island Cup Vancouver Island Bike Race Series

The finals in this race series will take place at Mount Washington with the XC Finals on Sat. and the DH Finals on Sun.

August 13 • High On Chocolate - A Tasteful Event

A chocoholic's delight! Indulge with chocolate samples, demonstrations and a kid's chocolate play area.

Aug 20-21 • Norco VPS Fest

The Norco team comes to Mount Washington bringing demos and free tech support to all Norco bike riders for the weekend - Norco riders receive a FREE Bike & Rider lift ticket on Saturday.

Aug 27-28 • BC Cup Finals XC & DH Mountain Bike Race

The final race in this 6 race province-wide series - Cross Country Finals on Saturday and Downhill Finals on Sunday.

September 3 • Native Salmon BBQ

Local wild salmon prepared traditionally and served with all the fixings.

October 1-9 • Alpine Oktoberfest

Half-price Scenic Chairlift Rides beginning October 1.

For up-to-date Mount Washington event information go to www.themarmot.ca



Disc Golf, Minigolf, Bungee Trampoline, Horseback Riding and many special events make Mount Washington a special place to bring your kids to in the summer.

Mount Washington Phone Directory (Area Code 250)

- Altitude Sport & Gift . . . 334-5721
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- Catering 334-5757
- Central Res. 1-888-231-1499
- Fat Teddy's Grill 334-5716
- Fire (To report a fire) . . .792-1209
- First Aid 334-5741
- General Store 334-5745
- Police (EMERGENCY ONLY) 911
- Police (NON EMERGENCY) . 338-1321
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- Resort Info 338-1386
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CHALETs, DUPLEXES & SUITES

Table listing chalets, duplexes, and suites with columns for unit address, pricing (weekly, weekend, holiday, summer), and amenities (fireplaces, cleaning, linen, pets, etc.).

Blue Haven advertisement featuring a chalet image and contact information for Foster's Place, including phone numbers and website.

Wintergreen Lodge on Foster's Place advertisement, highlighting amenities like hot tubs and ski-in/out access.

Mountainside Lodge ski-in/out advertisement with an interior photo and contact details.

CONDOMINIUMS & TOWNHOUSES

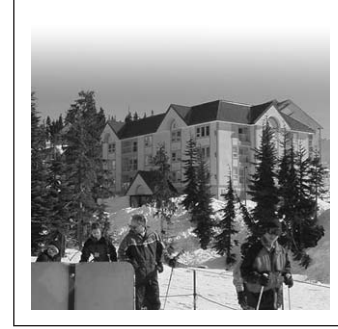
Table listing condominiums and townhouses with columns for unit address, pricing, and amenities.

Advertisement for a unit with 8-10 bedrooms, sunny exposure, and \$150/weekday pricing.

Castle Crag Chateau advertisement, mentioning its location on Castle Crag Crescent and amenities.

Advertisement for a laptop computer, likely a promotional offer or related service.

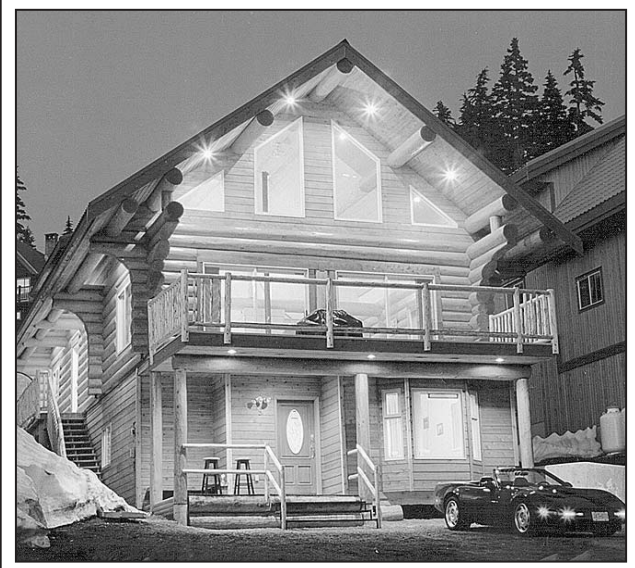
The Marmot On-line advertisement, promoting their website for resort information.



For Up-To-Date Rental Accommodations: www.mtwashingtonaccommodation.com

The above information is current as of June 20, 2005

PLEASE NOTE: All properties are non-smoking and no pets except for Condominium 788-102 Washington Way. These privately owned chalets and condominiums are rented out by their owners and have their own features and contacts as listed above.



9 & 21 FOSTERS PLACE

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\$100 OFF COUPON advertisement with a circular logo showing two people skiing and a discount of \$100 off regular rates.



BUTTLE LAKE

Strathcona Provincial Park

2005 MAP & TRAIL GUIDE

Strathcona Park's Buttle Lake is easily accessible in forty five minutes from Campbell River on highway 28. The drive takes you alongside the Campbell and Upper Campbell Lakes ending with views of the expansive waters and dramatic mountains of the Buttle Lake corridor.

The beauty of this peaceful place will take your breath away, and you will find great opportunities for camping and recreational pursuits.

People come to fish for trout, and to swim, canoe, kayak, board sail, picnic, sunbathe and waterski on the 25 km of lake, while others enjoy the easy and interesting nature walks, or more challenging back country hikes. Local guides and club members rock climb at Crest Creek Crags. Some visitors just sit quietly in the shade of ancient trees and enjoy the fresh air.

Camping facilities include 85 sites at **Buttle Lake Campground** on the lake at the North end, and 75 sites at **Ralph River Campground** with both lake and river access at the south end of the lake. **Driftwood Bay Campground**, an excellent facility for groups, is located separately on the northern end of the lake. You will also find simple wilder-

ness camping opportunities for boaters on the western shoreline.

A pleasant white sand beach and a playground for children are available at Buttle Lake Campground. There is a concrete boat-launch ramp within two kilometres, and also an undeveloped gravel launch nearby. The lake levels are controlled by hydro electric dams and tend to be low during the winter but normally rise for the summer months.

Ralph River Campground is shaded by the graceful beauty of an ancient forest of cedar, hemlock and fir trees underneath which you will likely see the resident blacktail buck grazing. This peaceful campground borders both the lake and a lovely clear river, which is at times alive with spawning trout. It's a popular spot for both fishermen and hikers of all levels. Many of the trails are easily accessible from Ralph River Campground.

There are interesting trails to explore, some less strenuous and others more challenging, and each with unique features to enjoy. Opportunities abound for everyone throughout the Buttle Lake corridor. For further information refer to the map on the next page. If you are at Buttle Lake go to park headquarters, where volunteers from the Strathcona Wilderness Institute will assist you Friday, Saturday and Sunday.



Photo: Neil Havers

Check out the Parks web site at www.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/. Come to the campgrounds at anytime as there are almost always sites available on a first come-first serve basis at both major campgrounds. If you would like to make a reservation at Buttle Lake Campground call Discover Camping at 1-800-689-9025, or link up to website at www.discovercamping.ca.

To book Driftwood Bay Group Campground call 250-337-8550.

BC Parks 2005 Map & Trail Guide courtesy of Rick Gibson



Web: www.rickgibson.ca
ROYAL LEPAGE
In the Comox Valley



Strathcona Provincial Park INFORMATION HUT

Run voluntarily by The Strathcona Wilderness Institute

Do you have questions about Strathcona Park and its fascinating plants, wildlife or history? Are you interested in taking an easy day hike or exploring some of the challenging back country?

Strathcona Wilderness Institute is pleased to provide all visitors with a wide range of information about BC's oldest, and one of our largest provincial parks. Maps, trail up-dates, details about visitor services and other useful information will be available every weekend starting June 25th. To find out more about Strathcona, stop at the Park Information Hut and pay us a visit. We are located 300 metres south of highway 28 at Buttle Lake bridge turn-off to Gold River, at the Park Headquarters just watch for the signs!

HOURS OF OPERATION

June 24 to September 11, 2005

- Friday: 3 pm ~ 8 pm
- Saturday: 10 am ~ 6 pm
- Sunday: 10 am ~ 5 pm
- Monday: 10 am ~ 3 pm (holidays only)

If the weather is inclement and/or there are few visitors, closing times could be earlier.

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BUTTLE LAKE CORRIDOR

Strathcona Provincial Park

HIKING TRAILS, BOAT LAUNCH RAMPS, AND CAMPGROUNDS
The trails are graded as follows: (1) Easiest (2) Moderate (3) Difficult

NOTE: Cell phones don't work in the Buttle Lake area and the nearest public phone is in Gold River, 40 km west on Highway 28.

ELK RIVER TRAIL (2-3)

Length: 11 km. Suggested time: 4-5 hours Elevation change 600 metres. Trail starts at Hwy. 28 and follows the Elk River Valley for 10 km before climbing up to Landslide Lake. Bare rock sections. Camp in designated camping areas only.

CREST MOUNTAIN TRAIL (3)

Length: 5 km. Time: 3-4 hours to the tarn. Steep with an elevation change of 1,250 metres. Use care on single log creek crossing with handrail (the last good water). The snow stays late into the year on top. Random camping allowed. Spectacular views in all directions.

FLOWER RIDGE TRAIL (3)

Length: 6 km. Time to the subalpine ridge: 3-5 hours. Steep with an elevation change of 1,040 metres. The start of the trail is 3km south of Ralph River campsite (signposted), climb an additional 200 metres from the top of trail to flat ground for tents. Carry water, supply limited and difficult to find. Panoramic views. Camping possible at halfway point.

PHILLIPS RIDGE TRAIL TO ARNICA LAKE (2-3)

Length: 6.5 km. Time: 2-5 hours with an elevation change of 800 metres. This is a well graded trail beginning at Westmin mine. Observe old growth forest, a waterfall, and alpine meadows. Designated camping area. Bear cache.

UPPER MYRA FALLS (2)

Length: 3.3 km from the parking lot past the yellow gate. Drive through the mine area to find the parking lot. Time 2 hours. Elevation change: 100 metres. Trail follows gravel road for approx. 800 metres to the sign. Large trees. Views of Mt. Myra and a waterfall. No camping.

TENNENT LAKE (3)

Length: 4 km. Estimated time 2-4 hours with an elevation change of 840 metres. Trail access is from the parking lot at the mine. Walk past the yellow gate on the gravel road for 1 km and across a bridge to the start of the trail which is a rough, rocky, steep old roadbed. Old-growth forest to sub-alpine. There is an undefined route to access Mt. Myra from here. Tennent Lake is dammed. Random camping is permitted.

BEDWELL LAKE (3)

Length: 6 km. Drive over the Thelwood River bridge at the south end of Buttle Lake, and turn left immediately onto the Jim Mitchell Road for 6.8 km. This is a rough gravel road not suitable for small vehicles. Trail elevation change: 600 metres. Time 3-4 hours. Features river valley and old growth forest then rocky out cropping and a sub-alpine environment with excellent hiking and views. Camp in designated areas at Baby Bedwell and Bedwell Lakes. Fires are not permitted. Be aware of bears.

CREST CREEK CRAGS

Technical climbing only. Picnic facilities. Climbers can explore a number of rocky bluffs in this area which is easily accessible from alongside Highway 28. Climbers using the area do so at their own risk. It is each climber's responsibility to climb safely and ensure that they have the necessary skills to do so. Camping and fires are not permitted.

LADY FALLS (1)

Length: 900 metres. Time: 20 minutes. The trail starts at Hwy. 28. Enjoy the cool spray from the falls. Picnic facilities at trail-head. No camping.

ELK VIEWPOINT (1)

Length: 400 metres. Time: 15 minutes. The trail starts at Hwy. 28 and accesses a viewing platform where you may be able to see Vancouver Island's unique Roosevelt elk. No camping.

LUPIN FALLS (1) Loop Trail

Length: 800 metres. Time: 15 minutes. Access from Westmin Road. Walk a circular trail through a cool forest to the waterfalls. No camping. Picnic facilities at the trail-head and a canoe and kayak launch access for Wolf River and Titus Mt. marine campsites.

AUGER POINT (1) Loop Trail

Length: 400 metres. Time: 15 minutes. This forest is recovering from the fire of 1982. No camping. Picnicking facilities at trail-head and a canoe and kayak launch access for Marble Meadows trailhead.

MARBLE MEADOWS (3)

Length: 6.6 km. Time: 4-5 hours to the Alpine meadows. Elevation change: 1,250 metres. Steep, some bluffs. Trail starts at Phillips Creek marine campsite on Buttle Lake. Access by boat from Auger Pt. or Karst Creek day use areas. Be aware of submerged stumps in the lake. Random camping is allowed in the meadows. Marble Meadows features wonderful viewpoints, alpine meadows and limestone formations.

KARST CREEK BOAT LAUNCH RAMP, TRAIL AND PICNIC AREA (1)

A good concrete ramp located 4 km from Ralph River Campground, and accessible from the Westmin Road. There is a large open grassy area plus several picnic tables and fire pits, and lots of room for parking. Karst Creek trail is a 1.3 km loop. Time: 45 minutes. Observe Karst geological formations such as sink-holes with disappearing and reappearing streams. No camping. A good spot for swimming.

WILD GINGER (1) Loop Trail

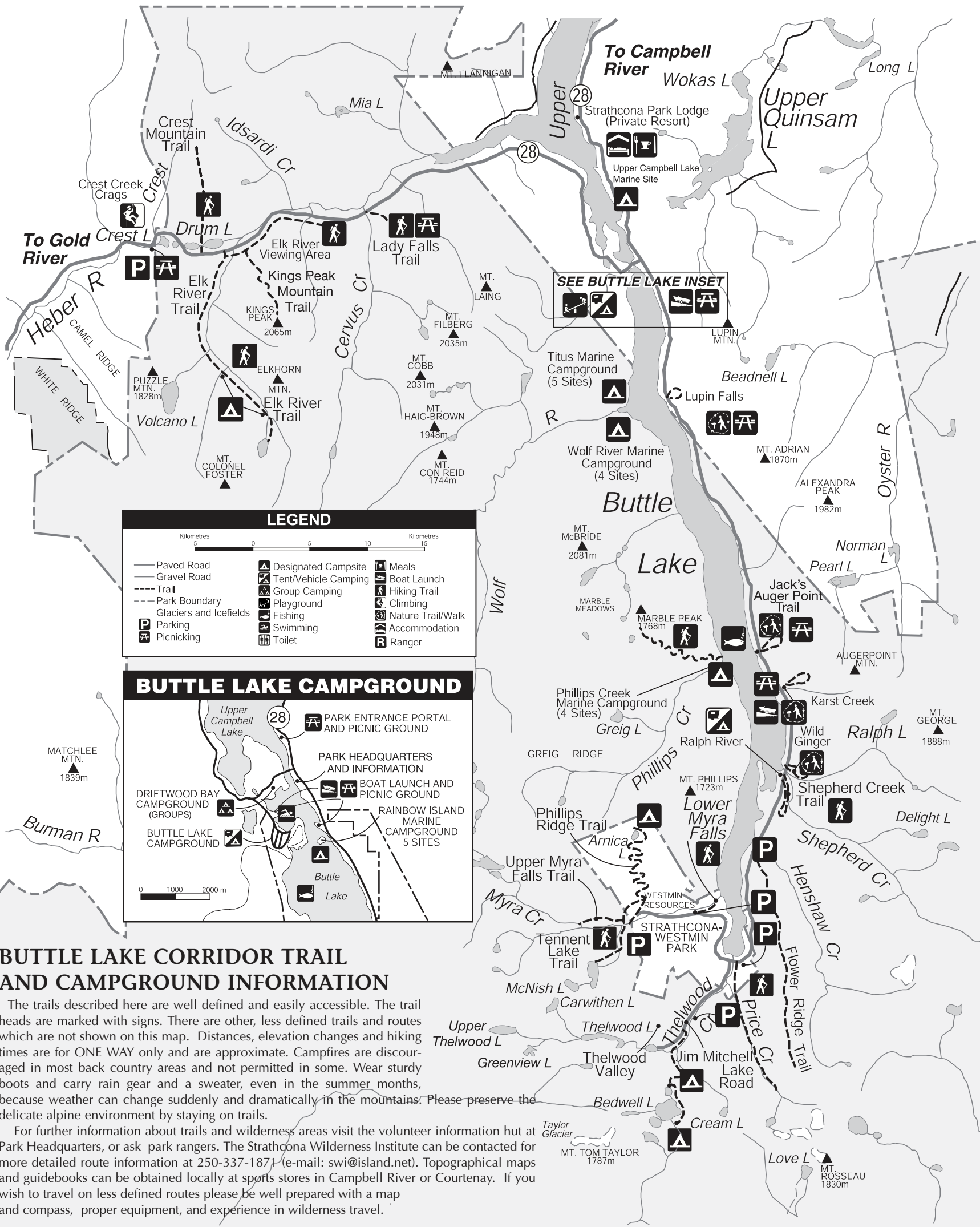
Length: 800 metres. Time: 20 minutes. Access is across the road from Ralph River Campground. The trail follows the Ralph River. No camping.

SHEPHERD CREEK (1) Loop Trail

Length: 1.5 km. Suggested time: 1 hour and 15 minutes. Access is across the road from Ralph River Campground. A shady walk along the Ralph River then ascending to pass a lively marsh. See dogwood trees in the spring. No camping.

PRICE CREEK TRAIL (2-3)

Suggested time: 3-4 hours. Trailhead can be accessed near the Thelwood Creek Bridge. Originally the only access route to Cream Lake and still only suitable for Advanced Hikers, this trail can make a pleasant day hike through varying timbered areas if you turn around at or before the log crossing. The route beyond this log crossing is extremely rough and steep and snow lingers late into the summer.



BUTTLE LAKE CORRIDOR TRAIL AND CAMPGROUND INFORMATION

The trails described here are well defined and easily accessible. The trail heads are marked with signs. There are other, less defined trails and routes which are not shown on this map. Distances, elevation changes and hiking times are for ONE WAY only and are approximate. Campfires are discouraged in most back country areas and not permitted in some. Wear sturdy boots and carry rain gear and a sweater, even in the summer months, because weather can change suddenly and dramatically in the mountains. Please preserve the delicate alpine environment by staying on trails.

For further information about trails and wilderness areas visit the volunteer information hut at Park Headquarters, or ask park rangers. The Strathcona Wilderness Institute can be contacted for more detailed route information at 250-337-1871 (e-mail: swi@island.net). Topographical maps and guidebooks can be obtained locally at sports stores in Campbell River or Courtenay. If you wish to travel on less defined routes please be well prepared with a map and compass, proper equipment, and experience in wilderness travel.

Please let a friend know where you plan to go and when you plan to return.

The MARINE CAMPSITES are accessible by boat only. There is a \$5.00 per adult per night fee. The money can be deposited into a vault at the boat launch access points. B.C. Parks also charges \$5.00 per adult per night for back-country camping in some areas and fee vaults are located at the applicable trail-heads.

LOWER MYRA FALLS (1)

Length: 800 metres. Time: 30 minutes. Steep descent. Enjoy several beautiful water cascades. Use caution when approaching the creek, and supervise small children. No camping. No swimming.

BUTTLE LAKE BOAT LAUNCH

A good, recently lengthened concrete launch. Located 1 km south of the bridge at the junction and only 1.5 km from Buttle Lake Campground. No camping. The launch provides immediate access to the Rainbow Island marine campsites.

FORBIDDEN PLATEAU AND PARADISE MEADOWS

Refer to a separate flyer in "The Marmot" publication for information about this area which is accessible from Mount Washington.

RALPH RIVER CAMPGROUND

- Ancient forest, lake and river.
- Gates are open all summer until Sept. 30th.
- Picnic tables, fire rings, water pumps and pit toilets.
- Fee: \$12.00 per party per night, \$6.00 for extra vehicles.
- B.C. Senior Citizens \$7.50 during the spring and autumn.
- Firewood: \$5.00 per bundle.
- Reservations are NOT taken, however the campground is rarely full.

BUTTLE LAKE CAMPGROUND

- Sand beach and playground.
- Three easy nature trails begin here. Fish in Darkis Lake.
- Gates open all summer until September 30th.
- Picnic tables, fire rings, water pumps and pit toilets.
- Fee: \$15.00 per party per night. \$7.50 for extra vehicles.

- B.C. Senior Citizens \$7.50 during the spring and autumn.
- Firewood: \$5.00 per bundle.
- Some campsites can be reserved ahead of time by contacting Discover Camping at 1-800-689-9025 or by going online at www.discovercamping.ca
- DRIFTWOOD BAY GROUP CAMPGROUND
- Private, covered shelter with woodstove and tables, large grass field, fire pit, pit toilets, wheel chair access pit toilet, water pump, swimming area.
- Fee: \$15.00 per party per night. \$7.50 for extra vehicles.
- Firewood \$10.00 per night
- The minimum number of parties allowed is 5 and the maximum is 25.
- Fee for non profit youth and school groups \$50.00 per night.
- Tel. 250-287-2942 to book the campground.

The STRATHCONA WILDERNESS INSTITUTE is a non-profit organization whose mission is to inspire awareness, appreciation and stewardship of the natural world through education and participation.

The institute will provide a volunteer information service on weekends at park headquarters at Buttle Lake from July 1 through to the September Long Weekend.

The FRIENDS OF STRATHCONA is a non-profit organization whose mission is to protect, preserve and promote Strathcona Park. Box 3404, Courtenay, B.C. V9N 5N5 Tel: 250-337-1871

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FORBIDDEN PLATEAU PARADISE MEADOWS

Strathcona Provincial Park

2005 MAP & TRAIL GUIDE

Strathcona Park Institute Offering Weekend Programs

Weekend visitors to Strathcona will again have the option of taking a guided walk around Paradise Meadows with a Strathcona Park Institute interpretive guide, or let their children take part in some of the new activities planned for the summer.

INFO HUT: An Interpreter will manage the Info Hut at the new visitors parking area. The Info Hut is full of fascinating natural history objects that the kids will love and the volunteers there can update you on trail conditions and hiking destinations. The hut is open from 10-5pm Friday, Sat, Sunday and holiday Mondays, July 1st - September 6th. Kids: Every Saturday at 10:00am throughout the summer kids can enjoy Paradise Meadows through a children's nature program. The program encourages children to learn about the natural world, helping them discover the plants and animals around them and developing their naturalist skills. Suitable for children ages 5 -12, 2 hour duration.

GUIDED WALK: For adults and families, a 90 minute walk of Paradise Meadows trail led by Interpreter and local expert volunteers. Saturdays: 1:00 pm

Guest Walk: For adults and families a 90 min to 2 hour walk or lecture presented by a Guest expert on a variety of topics (TBA). Sundays at 1:00pm.

All walks and programs are to be conducted in Paradise Meadows and will begin at the Information Hut. Look for the event schedules at the Visitors Info-hut, the Raven Lodge or the local newspapers. Anyone interested in learning more about the natural world and Strathcona Park is welcome. To help the Institute's operational costs, a donation of \$2.00 per person (\$5.00 per family) is suggested for these popular programs.

For visitors wishing to enjoy the local flowers and shrubs in the meadows at their own leisure, the Institute volunteers will have plant markers in place at various locations on the small loop walkway. The Institute has produced a small brochure that will also be available at the Info-hut to help those wishing to take a self-guided plant identification walk.

The Institute is again continuing the **weekend information service at Buttle Lake** (200 yards past the Gold River turn-off). Look for the sign before crossing the Buttle Lake bridge. This is a voluntary service, thanks again to Gerry Roberts. Beginning June 25th, hours of operation will be: Fridays: 3-9 pm (or dusk), Saturdays: 10-6 pm, Sundays: 10-4 pm. This service ends



Photo courtesy Mount Washington Resort

September 6th. Volunteers are always welcome to help at either of the Info-huts. Obviously a good knowledge of Strathcona Park and its trails is essential.

As a non-profit society, the Institute's mandate is to continue to facilitate a co-operative effort to assure support for continuing education, information and park stewardship. In order to keep the organization running, they are always in need of directors and supporters. Their vision and present goal is to eventually create, with community partners, a Visitors Information and Park Interpretive Centre.

If you are interested in supporting the goals of the SWI, in any way, phone and leave a message at: 250-337-1871

or e-mail: swi@island.net. The Institute website is: www.strathconapark.org.

(Above) The raised trail system in Paradise Meadows allows visitors easy access to many areas of the park.

BC Parks 2005 Map & Trail Guide courtesy of Rick Gibson



Rick Gibson Ph: 250-334-3124 (24 hrs) Direct: 250-338-1723

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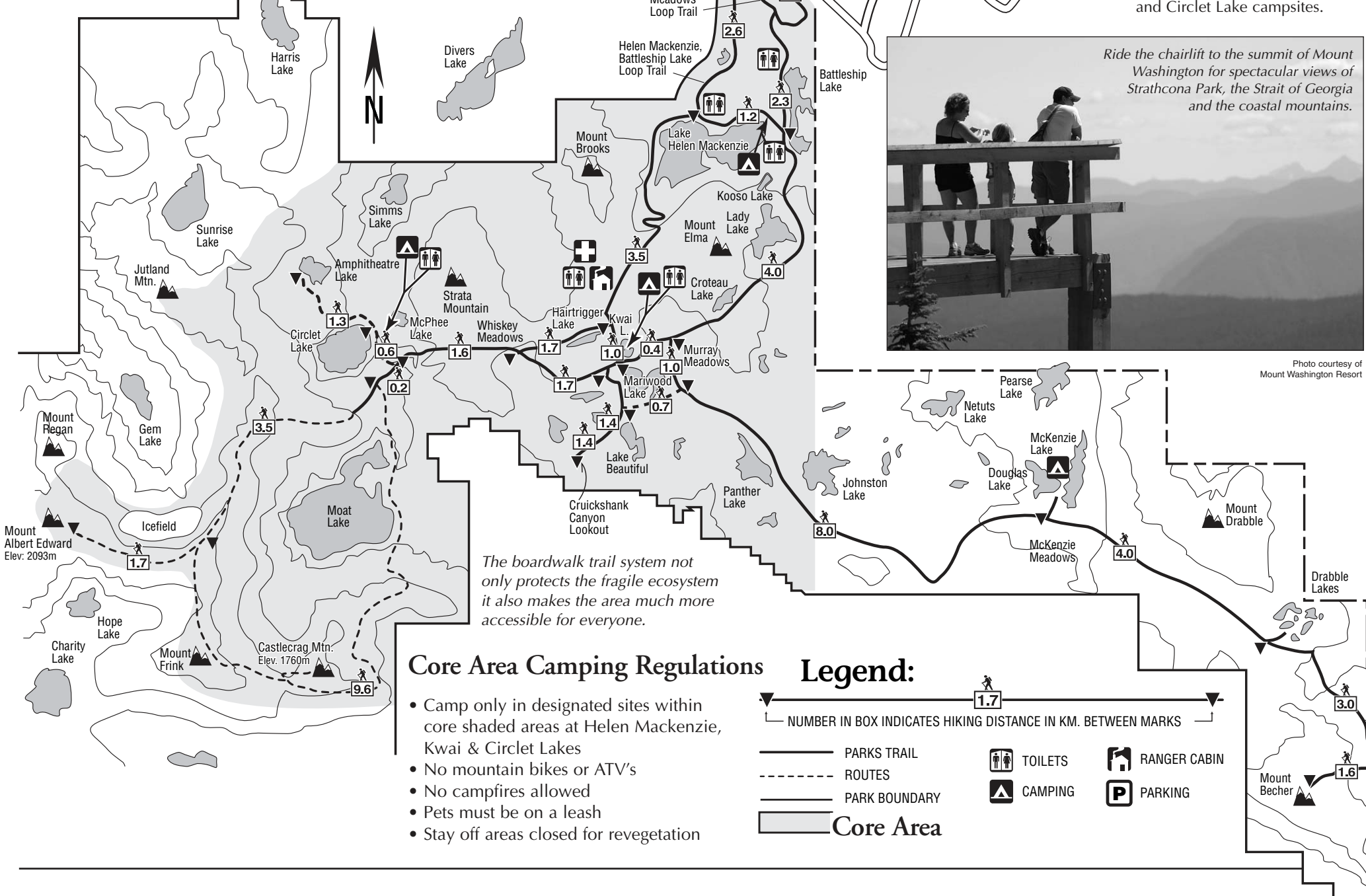
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FORBIDDEN PLATEAU PARADISE MEADOWS

Strathcona Provincial Park



of the Augerpoint Trail. This trail descends steeply for 1400 m before arriving on the Buttle Lake Parkway at Buttle Lake.

The following guidelines will help to ensure that the Forbidden Plateau area remains pristine for all who venture there.

Hiking Trails - Please stay on designated trails, stay off revegetated areas and avoid taking short cuts.

Camping - Designated camping sites are located at **Lake Helen, Mackenzie, Kwai, Circllet and McKenzie-Douglas lakes.** Please use the tent pads and toilets where provided. If a tent pad is unavailable choose a site that has exposed soil or will not easily be impacted.

Fires - Campfires are prohibited. Please pack a campstove for cooking.

Garbage - Help keep the back country clean. Pack out all garbage and please pick up any litter you see. Please do not use outhouses for trash receptacles.

Pets - Please keep your pet on a leash at all times. Free running pets can harm other animals, irritate other visitors and can be harmed by wild animals. Do not allow your pet to swim in the lakes as this could contaminate drinking water sources.

Groups - Larger groups of people tend to concentrate use in an area and cause extensive damage to the fragile vegetation. To reduce these impacts, we recommend that group size be restricted to ten or less people. Where this is not possible, the

larger group should be split into smaller groups which should travel and if possible camp in different locations.

Water - Drinking water is available from the lakes at all designated campgrounds. All drinking water should be boiled or purified prior to consumption. Please avoid swimming in these areas as it may contaminate the water supply. It is also important to use the toilets and grey water pits provided to keep these pollutants from entering the lake.

Safety - To avoid bear conflicts while camping, never leave food, garbage or toilet articles in your tent. Please use pack sack hangers provided at designated campgrounds. Hikers should make noise when approaching blind corners to warn off bears and other animals.

Mountain weather can change without warning, be prepared. Take spare, warm clothing and rain gear. It is advisable to leave an itinerary of your trip with a friend or relative.



Photo courtesy of Mount Washington Resort

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Explore the Buttle Lake area, the "Other End" of Strathcona Park

With 70,000 local and international visitors each year, the Forbidden Plateau area of Strathcona Provincial Park is undoubtedly the most popular. But the "other" end of Strathcona offers a wealth of gems for hikers and walkers of all abilities.

Strathcona is 250,000 hectares of diverse, yet rugged wilderness slashing through the centre of Vancouver Island. Dominated by mountain peaks, the park also offers visitors alpine meadows laced with rivers, creeks, streams and lakes. The forests in the valleys and lower regions pre-date the discovery of Vancouver Island by Captain James Cook.

Buttle Lake is the dominant body of water in the park; it is also the site of one of the park's more popular campsites (the other is at Ralph River). Besides Forbidden Plateau, Buttle Lake is the only other place in the park with visitor-oriented developments – the rest of the park is a back-country enthusiast's paradise.

GETTING THERE

To get to the north end of Strathcona Park, follow Highway 28 through Campbell River to Buttle Lake, right on the highway. Trail Maps are available.

STRATHCONA HIKES

One of the more popular trails to walk in the Buttle Lake area is Elk River – an 11 kilometre trail that begins right off Hwy. 28 and follows the Elk River for 10 kms before turning up to Landslide Lake (a five-hour hike).

Marble Meadows, a 6.6-km trail, offers viewpoints, alpine meadows and limestone formations. Start at the Phillips Creek Marine Campsite on Buttle Lake (six-hour hike).

Upper Myra Falls is a 3-km trail that starts just past the Westmin mine operation and follows a gravel road for 700 m before turning into a forested trail (two-hour round-trip hike). To access Myra Falls, start near the south end of Buttle Lake and take the 1 km trail down to the falls. Although this is a short, 25 minute hike, use caution while at the falls.



The Buttle Lake Campground features a safe, shallow sandy beach.

A weekend information service is operated by Strathcona Wilderness Institute at Buttle Lake Narrows.

CAMPING

Buttle Lake Campground features lake side and forested camp sites. There is a selection of trails to explore accessed from the campground. A boat ramp is available for those who want to go fishing or explore this beautiful waterway.

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The Mt. Washington Marmot

Published for your convenience by Rick Gibson of Royal LePage in the Comox Valley.

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BUTTLE LAKE CORRIDOR

HIKING TRAILS, BOAT LAUNCH RAMPS, AND CAMPGROUNDS

The trails are graded as follows: (1) Easiest (2) Moderate (3) Difficult

ELK RIVER TRAIL (2-3)

Length: 11 km. Suggested time: 4-5 hours
Elevation change 600 metres. Trail starts at Hwy. 28 and follows the Elk River Valley for 10 km before climbing up to Landslide Lake. Bare rock sections. Camp in designated camping areas only.

CREST MOUNTAIN TRAIL (3)

Length: 5 km. Time: 3-4 hours to the tarn. Steep with an elevation change of 1,250 metres. Caution required on single log creek crossing (the last good water). The snow stays late into the year on top. Random camping allowed.

FLOWER RIDGE TRAIL (3)

Length: 6 km. Time to the subalpine ridge: 3-5 hours. Steep with an elevation change of 1,040 metres. The trail begins at Westmin Road, climb an additional 200 metres from the top of trail to flat ground for tents. Poor water. Panoramic views. Camping possible at halfway point.

PHILLIPS RIDGE TRAIL TO ARNICA LAKE (2-3)

Length: 6.5 km. Time: 2-5 hours with an elevation change of 800 metres. This is a well graded trail beginning at Westmin mine. Observe old growth forest, a waterfall, and alpine meadows. Designated camping area. Bear cache.

UPPER MYRA FALLS (2)

Length: 3.3 km from the parking lot past the yellow gate. Drive through the mine area to find the parking lot. Time 2 hours. Elevation change: 100 metres. Trail follows gravel road for approx. 800 metres to the sign. Large trees. Views of Mt. Myra and a waterfall. No camping.

TENNENT LAKE (3)

Length: 4 km. Estimated time 2-4 hours with an elevation change of 840 metres. Trail access is from the parking lot at the mine. Walk past the yellow gate on the gravel road for 1 km and across a bridge to the start of the trail which is a rough, rocky, steep old roadbed. Old-growth forest to sub-alpine. There is an undefined route to access Mt. Myra from here. Tennant Lake is dammed. Random camping is permitted.

BEDWELL LAKE (3)

Length: 6 km. Drive over the Thelwood River bridge at the south end of Buttle Lake, and turn

left immediately onto the Jim Mitchell Road for 6.8 km. This is a rough gravel road not suitable for small vehicles. Trail elevation change: 600 metres. Time 3-4 hours. Features river valley and old growth forest then rocky out cropping and a sub-alpine environment with excellent hiking and views. Camp in designated areas at Baby Bedwell and Bedwell Lakes. Fires are not permitted. Be aware of bears.

CREST CREEK CRAGS

Technical climbing only. Picnic facilities. Climbers can explore a number of rocky bluffs in this area which is easily accessible from alongside Highway 28. Climbers using the area do so at their own risk. It is each climber's responsibility to climb safely and ensure that they have the necessary skills to do so. Camping and fires are not permitted.

LADY FALLS (1)

Length: 900 metres. Time: 20 minutes. The trail starts at Hwy. 28. Enjoy the cool spray from the falls. Picnic facilities at trailhead. No camping.

ELK VIEWPOINT (1)

Length: 400 metres. Time: 15 minutes. The trail starts at Hwy. 28 and accesses a viewing platform where you may be able to see Vancouver Island's unique Roosevelt elk. No camping.

LUPIN FALLS (1) Loop Trail

Length: 800 metres. Time: 15 minutes. Access from Westmin Road. Walk a circular trail through a cool forest to the waterfalls. No camping. Picnic facilities at the trail-head and a canoe and kayak launch access for Wolf River and Titus Mt. marine campsites.

AUGER POINT (1) Loop Trail

Length: 400 metres. Time: 15 minutes. This forest is recovering from the fire of 1982. No camping. Picnicking facilities at trail-head and a canoe and kayak launch access for Marble Meadows trailhead.

MARBLE MEADOWS (3)

Length: 6.6 km. Time: 4-5 hours to the Alpine meadows. Elevation change: 1,250 metres. Steep, some bluffs. Trail starts at Phillips Creek marine campsite on Buttle Lake. Access by boat from Auger Pt. or Karst Creek day use areas. Be aware of submerged stumps in the lake. Random

camping is allowed in the meadows. Marble Meadows features wonderful viewpoints, alpine meadows and limestone formations.

KARST CREEK BOAT LAUNCH RAMP, TRAIL AND PICNIC AREA (1)

A good concrete ramp located 4 km from Ralph River Campground, and accessible from the Westmin Rd. There is a large open grassy area plus several picnic tables and fire pits, and lots of room for parking. Karst Creek trail is a 1.3 km loop. Time: 45 minutes. Observe Karst geological formations such as sink-holes with disappearing and reappearing streams. No camping.

WILD GINGER (1) Loop Trail

Length: 800 metres. Time: 20 minutes. Access is across the road from Ralph River Campground. The trail follows the Ralph River. No camping.

SHEPHERD CREEK (1) Loop Trail

Length: 1.5 km. Suggested time: 1 hour and 15 minutes. Access is across the road from Ralph River Campground. A shady walk along the Ralph River then ascending to pass a lively marsh. See dogwood trees in the spring. No camping.

PRICE CREEK TRAIL (2-3)

Suggested time: 3-4 hours. Trailhead can be accessed near the Thelwood Creek Bridge. Originally the only access route to Cream Lake and still only suitable for Advanced Hikers, this trail can make a pleasant day hike through varying timbered areas if you turn around at or before the log crossing. The route beyond this log crossing is extremely rough and steep and snow lingers late into the summer.

LOWER MYRA FALLS (1)

Length: 800 metres. Time: 30 minutes. Steep descent. Enjoy several beautiful water cascades. Use caution when approaching the creek, and supervise small children. No camping.

BUTTLE LAKE BOAT LAUNCH

A good, recently lengthened concrete launch. Located 1 km south of the bridge at the junction and only 1.5 km from Buttle Lake Campground. No camping. The launch provides immediate access to the Rainbow Island marine campsites.

FORBIDDEN PLATEAU AND PARADISE MEADOWS

Refer to a separate flyer in "The Marmot" publication for information about this area which is accessible from Mount Washington.



Cream Lake and Nine Peaks

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- Gates are open all summer until Sept. 30th.
- Picnic tables, fire rings, water pumps and pit toilets.
- Fee: \$12.00 per party per night, \$6.00 for extra vehicles.
- B.C Senior Citizens \$7.50 during the spring and autumn.
- Firewood: \$5.00 per bundle.
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DRIFTWOOD BAY GROUP CAMPGROUND

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- Fee for non profit youth and school groups \$50.00 per night.
- Tel. 250-287-2942 to book the campground.



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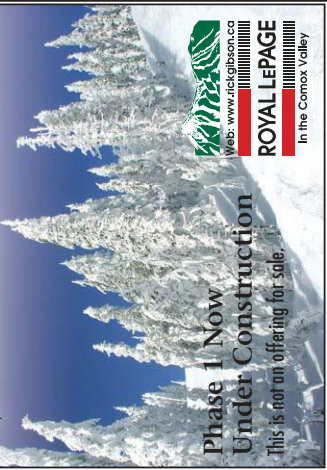


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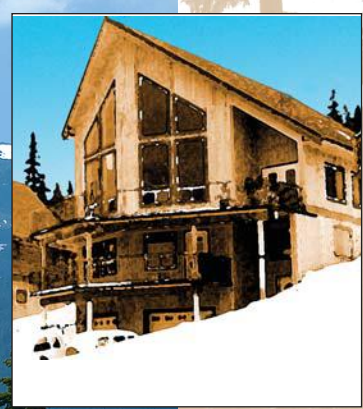
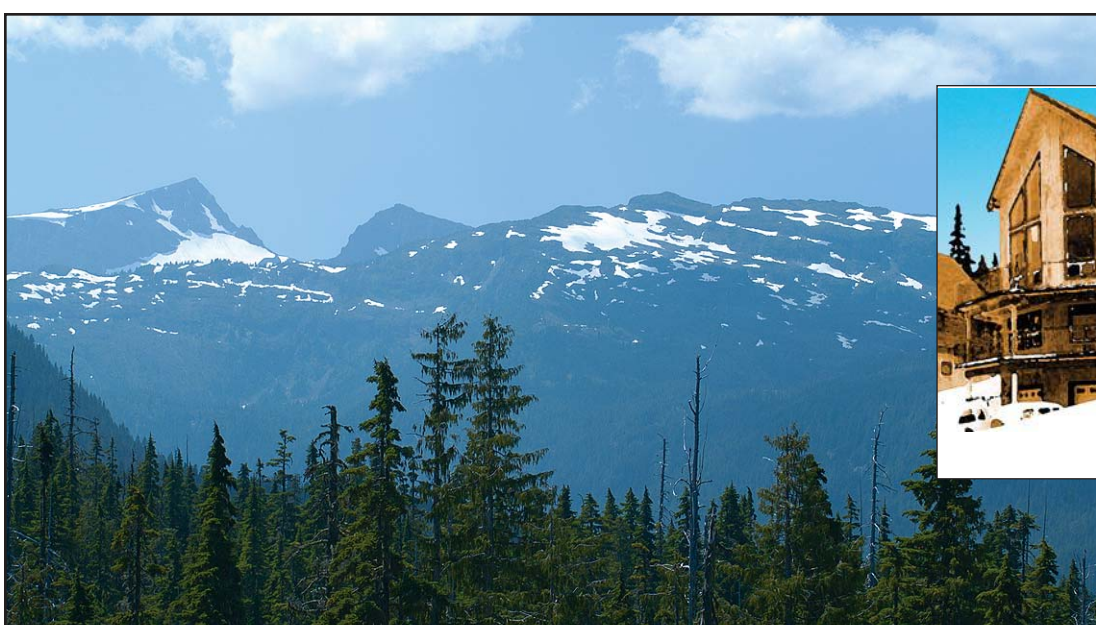
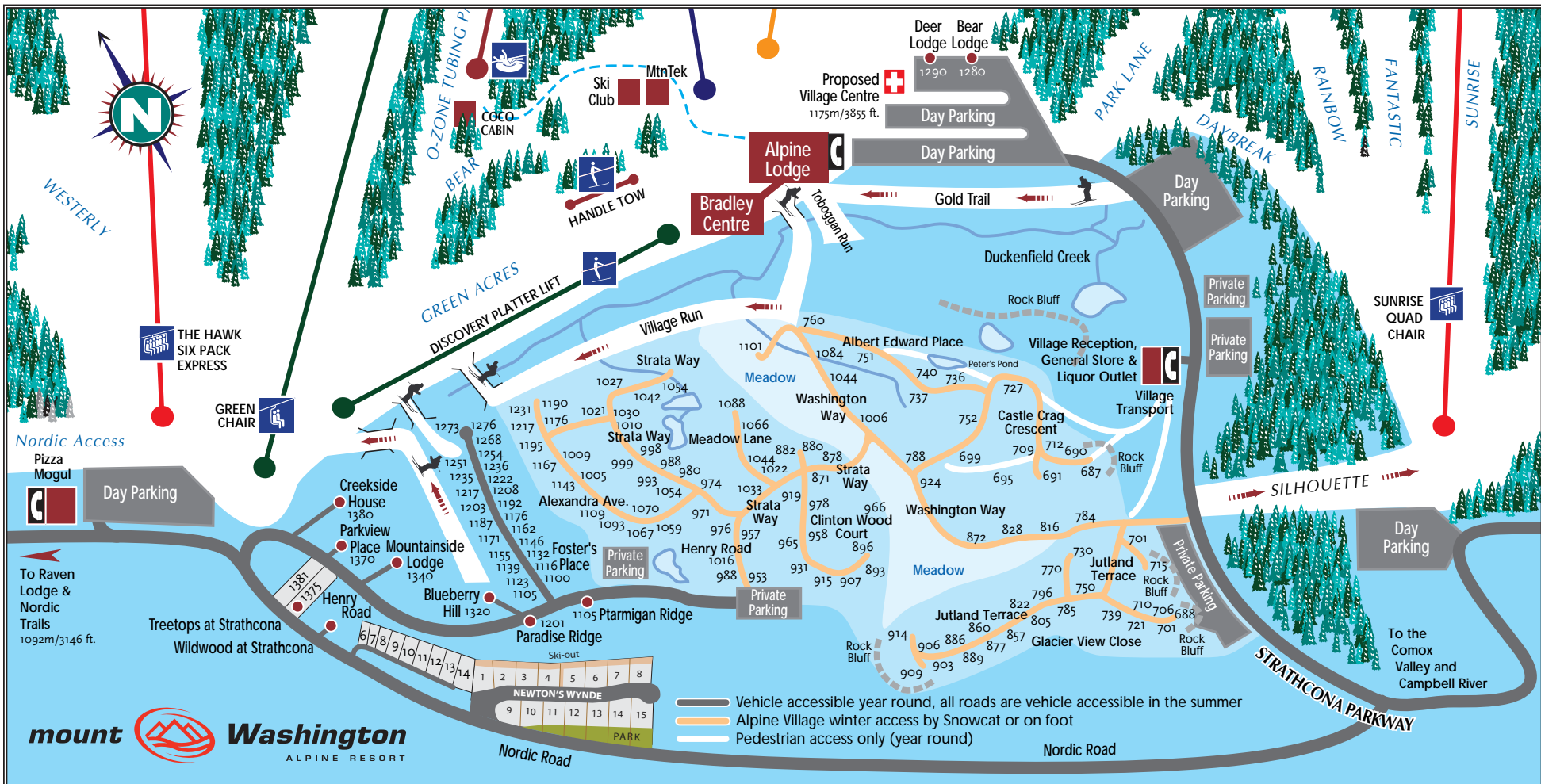
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