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SUMMER & FALL ~ 2008
Volume 18, #2
milehigh.ca

The Marmot



MILE HIGH NEWS ON MOUNT WASHINGTON



A Tasty Destination...



Culinary Tourism gains popularity with travelers

Where traditional tourism offers three-dimensional viewscapes or perhaps adventure experiences, culinary tourism assaults all the senses.

Where traditional tourism offers three-dimensional viewscapes or perhaps adventure experiences, culinary tourism, relatively new to North America, assaults all the senses.

There is a growing demand for travel experiences that include food, says Deirdre Campbell of the BC Culinary

Tourism Society.

"Studies have shown people do travel as much with their stomachs as with their hearts and their heads," Campbell said from Victoria.

"The whole reason there's a Culinary Tourism BC (Society) is we have a great growing season, particularly Vancouver



Guests enjoying the annual WineFest

Island," she said. Culinary tourism isn't all about high-end restaurants either, she said. "It's part of the culture, it's part of the experience. Not only are you seeing a destina-

Mountain Bikers: Mount Washington Wine & Cheese: Susan Quinn

tion, you're tasting it or smelling it. "It's really geared toward the traveler that's experiential in nature – they want to check everything out."

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Cover: A gastronomic delight... Award winning Comox Brie from Natural Pastures, award winning Pinot Gris from Beaufort Winery and world renowned Fanny Bay Oysters. Marmot Image: Oli Gardner

News In Brief

Encompassing people, places and happenings at Mount Washington.

A former Mount Washington ski instructor has turned to saving lives as a profession. **Danielle Robertson**, 30, became a paramedic three years ago. After cutting her professional teeth, so to speak, in places like Sayward, Port McNeill, Port Alberni and Courtenay, she was transferred to Campbell River. That's also where her father, Bob Smith, works as a paramedic. They are reportedly the first father-daughter paramedic team in the province. Robertson has been married for eight years and has two kids aged five and seven years.

The Resort has a new sous chef. **Steven Boudreau** from Montreal will join chef James Loiselle in creating gastronomical delights at Mount Washington. "Between the two of them, we're going to increase the quality of our food as well as the diversity of our food," Food and Beverage Manager Tim Defert said.

Mount Washington's food outlets are taking on a new look for the summer season, both inside and out. In response to customer feedback, more healthy choices will be offered on the menus, Resort Food and Beverage Manager Tim Defert said. That means no trans fats, more items made from scratch and less fried food.

Mount Washington Alpine Resort Marketing Director **Karen Bonell** will go to London, England in October for the London Ski Show. The Resort and Tourism Mount Washington are partnering in the trip to one of the largest ski shows in Europe.

Diane Weir of Mid Island Gifts in the Comox Valley Airport stocks all the 2010 Winter Olympic Games mascots. Are you a MukMuk supporter? Diane also stocks Vancouver Island marmots (the stuffed ones, silly).

The most logical choice for an Olympic mascot for the 2010 Winter Olympic Games in Vancouver has been relegated to the back seat.

Mukmuk the Marmot is a sidekick to Quatchi, Miga and Sumi. There is a movement afoot to unshackle the furry cutie pie and make him an official mascot. The Vancouver Sun newspaper started a campaign in March to "free Mukmuk", in response to comments from their readers. Even Mount Washington Alpine Resort President Peter Gibson took up their cause, asking Vancouver Organizing Committee President John Furlong to consider elevating Mukmuk's status. *If you have a comment on the "free Mukmuk" campaign, the Sun has set up an e-mail at mukmuk-formascot@png.canwest.com.*

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Photo: Susan Quinn

Fat Teddy's Bear? This resident Black Bear is grabbing a quick snack beside the Strathcona Parkway. They can be seen on your drive up to Mount Washington.

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Mount Washington's Renovation Revolution

Mount Washington Alpine Resort's Alpine Lodge is undergoing some changes that patrons will be able to see both inside and out.

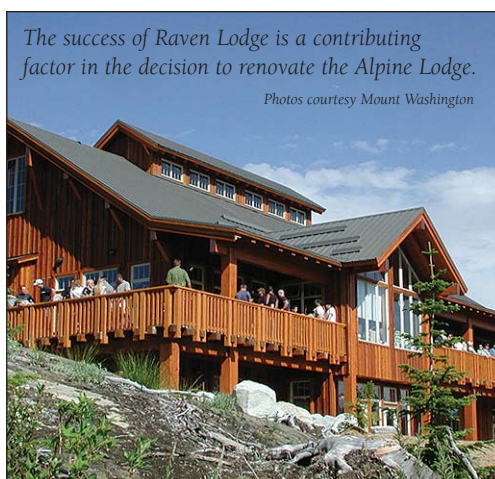
"We're renovating to accommodate wedding and conference business in the off-season, Resort Food and Beverage Manager Tim Defert said.

The number of weddings taking place at Mount Washington has risen exponentially since he took over as Food and Beverage Manager three years ago. That year, the Resort was seeing six to ten weddings per year. Now, they're up to 30. "We have bookings all the way to 2010 already," Defert said. They even have three or four winter weddings booked for 2008-09.

Although Raven Lodge has been the destination of choice for couples wanting to tie the knot in an alpine setting, the Resort renovated the Whiskey Jack Room in Summer 2007 so the wedding business could expand to the Alpine Lodge.

Meanwhile, the Resort is completing renovations to the top floor, Marketing Director Karen Bonell said. "The emphasis is on warmth and woodwork," Defert said. "It will give it a more lodge-like feel, which will complement our focus on healthy choices for the next season."

A new conference area has been created at one end of the Alpine Café; a sliding door can be open during peak times when more table space is needed, or closed for conference or small meeting space as necessary.



The success of Raven Lodge is a contributing factor in the decision to renovate the Alpine Lodge.

Photos courtesy Mount Washington

The new area features a dropped ceiling and better lighting, as well as new banquet chairs purchased last year, Bonell said.

Mount Washington can accommodate conferences of up to 500 people, depending on the type of event.

"We are targeting larger conferences, especially because of all the activities offered – not just on the mountain, but in the surrounding area, with golf, fishing and all the rest of it," Defert said.

The new "lodge-like" atmosphere will continue outside, as the Resort plans to change the look of the Alpine Lodge's exterior.

Staff will work on designs of a wooden façade for the Lodge throughout the spring and summer. The project will cost in the neighbourhood of \$500,000, Bonell said. Construction will start this summer.

Over at Raven Lodge, the Lodge has been recarpeted and painted in anticipation of the wedding season. "The new colour in there has actually made the wood pop out," Bonell said. "It's absolutely fabulous."

Bruce Turner In Profile...

Bruce Turner slowly approaches Mount Washington Alpine Resort, the yellow Bobcat he's driving chugging slowly but steadily through the parking lot. He climbs out, his long hair tucked into a toque, and ambles into the Alpine Lodge.

He orders a coffee at Fat Teddy's Bar and Grill like he's done it hundreds of times before, trading banter with the servers and a table full of groomers.

Turner is at home at Mount Washington. He's been a fixture for 11 years, having arrived more than a decade ago to ski and spend some time in his trailer at the former RV Park. Except he's never left. And now he's virtually indispensable as caretaker at the Resort.

Turner was a marine mechanic living in Campbell River when he first started skiing at Mount Washington. He moved to Campbell River to try and get hired on at

the mill, so he would have a decent retirement package. But that never happened. "Whatever retirement I have is the RRSPs from here," he says. "I hope I can just slow down here and not really retire, just fade."

When the RV Park closed, after Turner had been there for about four years, he offered to do the jobs that other people didn't want to in the hopes they would let him stay. Resort staff found a place for him to put a trailer; they appreciate having someone staying on the hill overnight for security reasons, and Turner likes the mountain culture.

In the winter he works in dry stores, keeping track of food and paper supplies. In the transition season before summer, he gets out in the gardens and puts the playground out.

"I call it putting summer out and putting winter away," he says.

Gardening was something he fell into, and discovered he enjoys it.

"It's all sort of an experiment, gardening at this elevation. I don't get to put many plants out until June."

continued on page 26

Photo: Susan Quinn



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Summer 2008 Preview with a tasty addition to summer events.

Photo: iStock

Summer at Mount Washington Alpine Resort is all about savouring the moment for 2008.

The tour of gastronomy begins July 1 with the annual **Save-On-Foods Family Picnic**, celebrating Canada Day.

The ninth annual **Beer Fest** is scheduled for July 11, featuring samples from many of the Island's microbreweries and more. The **Alpine Wine Festival** celebrates its 10th anniversary on August 8 from 6-9 p.m.

The Beer and Wine Festivals will take place on Friday nights this summer. But it's for a good reason: "They're back at Raven Lodge by popular demand," Resort Director of Marketing Karen Bonell said.

The piece de resistance this summer, though, is the inaugural **Culinary Food Festival** September 5-7 (Friday to Sunday). Co-presented by Mount Washington and Beyond the Kitchen Door in Courtenay, and sponsored by Eat Magazine, the Alpine Food Festival will feature globally inspired local foods. "We want to highlight the diversity of the Comox Valley and the Island," Bonell said.

The culinary talents of two celebrity chefs will be highlights: Karen Barnaby, executive chef of the Fish House Restaurant in Vancouver's Stanley Park and a food columnist with the Vancouver Sun, and Eric Akis, food columnist for the Victoria Times-Colonist and author of

a series of books called *Everyone Can Cook*. Don Genoba of CBC will MC the weekend event.

Friday features the Alpine Cocktail Reception. All the chefs will create hors d'oeuvres for sampling and there will be wine pairings with some of the items. Natural Pastures' award-winning cheeses will be available, too. "It's gourmet grazing," Bonell said. Friday night's event requires a ticket.

Saturday the Resort will host a marketplace in the summer courtyard, which will be open to the public. "We already have about 25 vendors confirmed for it," Bonell said, mostly local to the Comox Valley and surrounding area, including Dark Side Chocolates, Island Bison, Island View Lavender, Bitesize Specialty Foods, The Cookie Crate and The Cheddar Co.

There will be cooking classes going on throughout the day, from sushi making to pastry. Guests may enjoy a five-course gourmet dinner with wine pairings Saturday night. Host Genoba will introduce the chef, producer and dish for each course.

Sunday at noon a blueberry competition will see the celebrity chefs in a cook-off using blueberries collected during Saturday afternoon hikes.

Access to most of the festival is available through two-night packages, which include tickets to the Friday night Reception, the Gala Dinner, Breakfast Buffet on Sunday, two cooking classes, tickets to the marketplace and a Chairlift Ride.

"We want people to experience the entire weekend, not just drive up for a cooking class or the marketplace," Bonell said. "We want people to see this as an entire food festival."

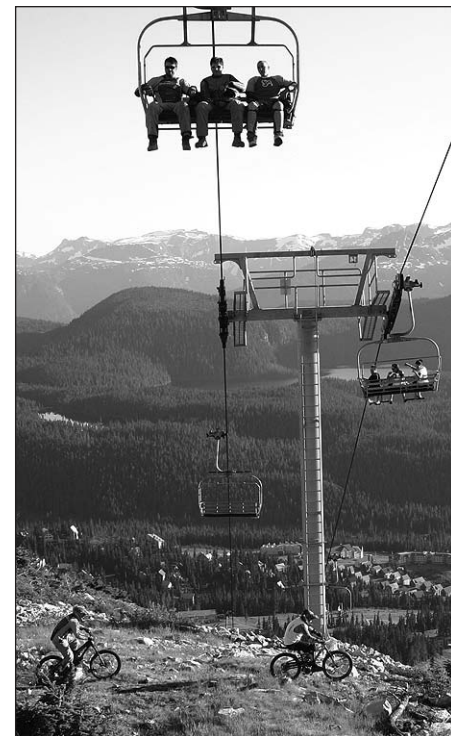


Photo courtesy Mount Washington

Whether riding a chair, a bike, taking a hike or kicking back in the Village you'll find plenty to enjoy on Mount Washington this summer.

Access to separate components of the festival, such as classes, will be available individually only if there are spots available, she added.

For more information or reservations for the food festival packages, please call (250) 338-1386.

Summer wouldn't be summer without the **Mile High Chairlift**, which opened June 20 and operates from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. (weather permitting) until September 1. And from noon until 6 p.m. from Labour Day until the the summer operations close in September.

The bungee trampoline, mini-golf and disc golf courses will also be open, so you can burn off all those calories amassed during the culinary festival.

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Mount Washington's Mountain Bike Explosion



If there's one activity that describes Mount Washington Alpine Resort in the summer, it's mountain biking.

The sport has exploded during the Vancouver Island resort's summer season, says Resort Ski School Director Mike Manara, the man in charge of mountain biking in the summer. The number of summer season's pass holders doubled between 2006 and 2007, and they're already on pace to have a good season in 2008, he said.

Mount Washington Alpine Resort starts thinking mountain biking the day the winter season closes. That's when the Cat crew plows maintenance roads and bike trails. The Bike Park is slated to open by the end of June.

Mount Washington's trail crews do a great job of keeping the mountain bike trails updated and in keeping with the latest trends in the sport, Manara said.

The weather creates a unique challenge: even as late as June 9, it was snowing at the Resort. In 2007, the Monster Mile - Mount Washington's premier courses - was carved through snowbanks for the beginning of the season.

The Monster Mile, incidentally, has become known as one of the toughest competition trails in Western Canada, Manara said. "People have been racing on it since the early '90s...we had to get that open for training purposes. Hats off to the trail crews because they were out there shoveling right away."

The Resort is developing more mountain bike trails on the Hawk side of the mountain, because they can get the trails open earlier in the season - and they'll be easier to work with because they are at a lower elevation, Manara explained.

The Tread Shed will be back for Summer 2008, featuring a one-stop mountain bike shop. Cyclists can find guides, lessons, rentals, equipment, accessories and tune-ups at the Shed.

That's the participatory part of mountain biking. There's also a few events planned for the 2008 season that people will want to come out and watch.

Last year the Resort hosted the Tim Hortons National Mountain Bike Championships.

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Winter 2008 In Review

The 2007-08 winter season was a great success at Mount Washington Alpine Resort. And night skiing was a definite hit.

"We had a good, solid winter," Resort Marketing Director Karen Bonell said. "We opened on time, closed on time. We had over 12 metres of snow for the second year in a row," she said. The annual average is 10 metres. "The weather cooperated. We didn't have huge weather events."

While weekends during the winter were agreeable for skiing, temperatures remained cold during the spring, limiting the spring ski season.

Skier visits were up a respectable 10 per cent over the previous year, "predominantly because our weekend weather was so much better," Bonell said.

The Resort expanded its night skiing

this winter, adding the Whiskey Jack Chair, terrain park and Coaster run to its night skiing lineup. "That went very well," Bonell said. "There were a lot more people around and things looked a lot more lively in the evening. It really added a whole new buzz to the nighttime instead of it being quiet."

Later skiing was also offered on the Nordic side, once the time changed back to Standard Time. Bonell said the same night skiing program will stand for next season as well.

The Resort spent a million dollars installing new lighting last summer, and may consider further night skiing expansion a few years into the future.

The Resort capped off its season with the B.C. Freestyle Championships, which they've never hosted before. "It shows we can have the moguls course and aerials here," she said.

Tourism Mount Washington working to expand mid-week visitors.

Tourism Mount Washington has its first season under its belt, and it's been a positive experience, Manager Sarah Nicholson said.

"We've only been operational for four months and we've been busy," she said. Approximately 150 members have signed up and the organization now has several marketing initiatives in place. They are part of the Come Ski Canada Guide, produced by the Canadian Tourism Association and focusing on attracting

Australian tourists to Mount Washington Alpine Resort.

"It's got phenomenal coverage," Nicholson said. "There are 100,000 print copies and a good global distribution (to Australia, Germany, Mexico and South Korea, as well as Web distribution).

"We're really trying to build up our mid-week accommodation" by selling the "alpine destination" as well as the other activities such as golfing or kayaking that one can do after a morning of skiing, she said.

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Susan and Jeff Vandermolen of Beaufort Winery opened on May 30, 2008. They are shown here tasting their silver-medal-winning Pinot Gris.



Taking Inventory of Comox Valley Culinary Tourism

Beaufort Winery, which opened north of Courtenay at the end of May, is the epitome of culinary tourism. And it's just one stop on a gastronomic adventure in the Comox Valley.

The views of the Beaufort Range Mountains are spectacular from the deck, the setting peaceful and the owners Jeff and Susan Vandermolen both knowledgeable about their award-winning wines, and hospitable as the people next door.

The Vandermolens have cleared eight acres of land to plant 7,500 vines of various grapes. For their first year, they have produced half a dozen wines using grapes from the Okanagan and Saanich Peninsula, while their own mature.

Already, Beaufort Winery has produced a trio of winners: their Pinot Gris won a silver medal at the 2008 Northwest Wine Summit, while their Ortega and Beaufort Black port wine both won bronze.

"We're constantly refreshing the marriage of food and wine," says Jeff.

continued on page 27



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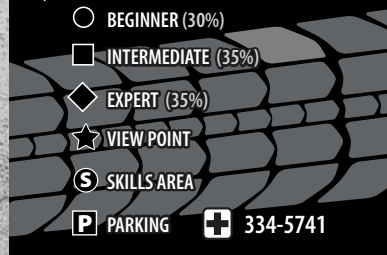
Mountain Bike Responsibility Code

Mountain biking involves the risk of injury. Common sense and caution can reduce the risk. For your safety and the safety of others, please adhere to this code.

- 1 Ride in control and within your ability level. You must be able to avoid other people or objects.
- 2 Stay off the lifts and trails and out of the Bike Park if your ability is impaired by drugs, alcohol or fatigue.
- 3 Wear a helmet. It is mandatory. Other protective equipment is strongly recommended.
- 4 Inspect your bike or have it checked by a qualified bike mechanic before you ride.
- 5 Be sure you have the physical dexterity, ability and knowledge to safely load, ride and unload lifts. Ask the Lift Attendant for assistance if you need it.
- 6 Be aware of changing conditions on trails and features. Inspect features before use and throughout the day.
- 7 Stay on marked trails. Ride only in the direction indicated by trail markers. Obey all signs and warnings. Do not cut switchbacks. Keep off closed areas.
- 8 Avoid riders ahead of you. They have the right of way.
- 9 Look uphill and yield to other riders when entering a trail or starting downhill.
- 10 Do not stop where you obstruct a trail or are not visible from above.
- 11 If you are involved in or witness a collision or accident, you must identify yourself to the Bike Patrol or a staff member.
- 12 Do not feed, provoke or approach wildlife.

Know the Code • Be Safety Conscious • It is Your Responsibility
Park privileges will be removed for breach of the code.

2008 Bike Trails



● Cross Country (XC) Race Course 6.1 km	■ Big Brother 2.3 km	■ Monster Hawk Connector 0.8 km	◆ Blue Vein 0.4 km	◆ Helter Skelter 1.7 km	◆ Monster Mile 2.0 km	◆ 4 Cross ----- 0.5 km
● Discovery Trail 4.4 km	■ Finger Trail 5.8 km	■ Time Warp 2 km	◆ Crusher 1.5 km	◆ Hidden Alley 0.9 km	◆ Scratch & Sniff 1.4 km	◆ Slopestyle Course 0.5 km
● Quick & Dirty 0.4 km	■ MMT 2.0 km		◆ Evil Eye 1.1 km	◆ Hustler 1.6 km	◆ Wizard 1.3 km	

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Single: \$240 ~ Double: \$375 ~ Child (6-12 years with adult): \$90



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2008 Hiking Trails

ALPINE STATS

Summit Elevation: 1588m (5215 feet)

Vertical Rise: 505m (1657 feet)

Summer Lifts:

Eagle Express,
Hawk 6IX Pak (mountain bikers only)

Tread Shed:

Mountain Bikes and Gear Rentals,
Sales, Parts and Bike Service

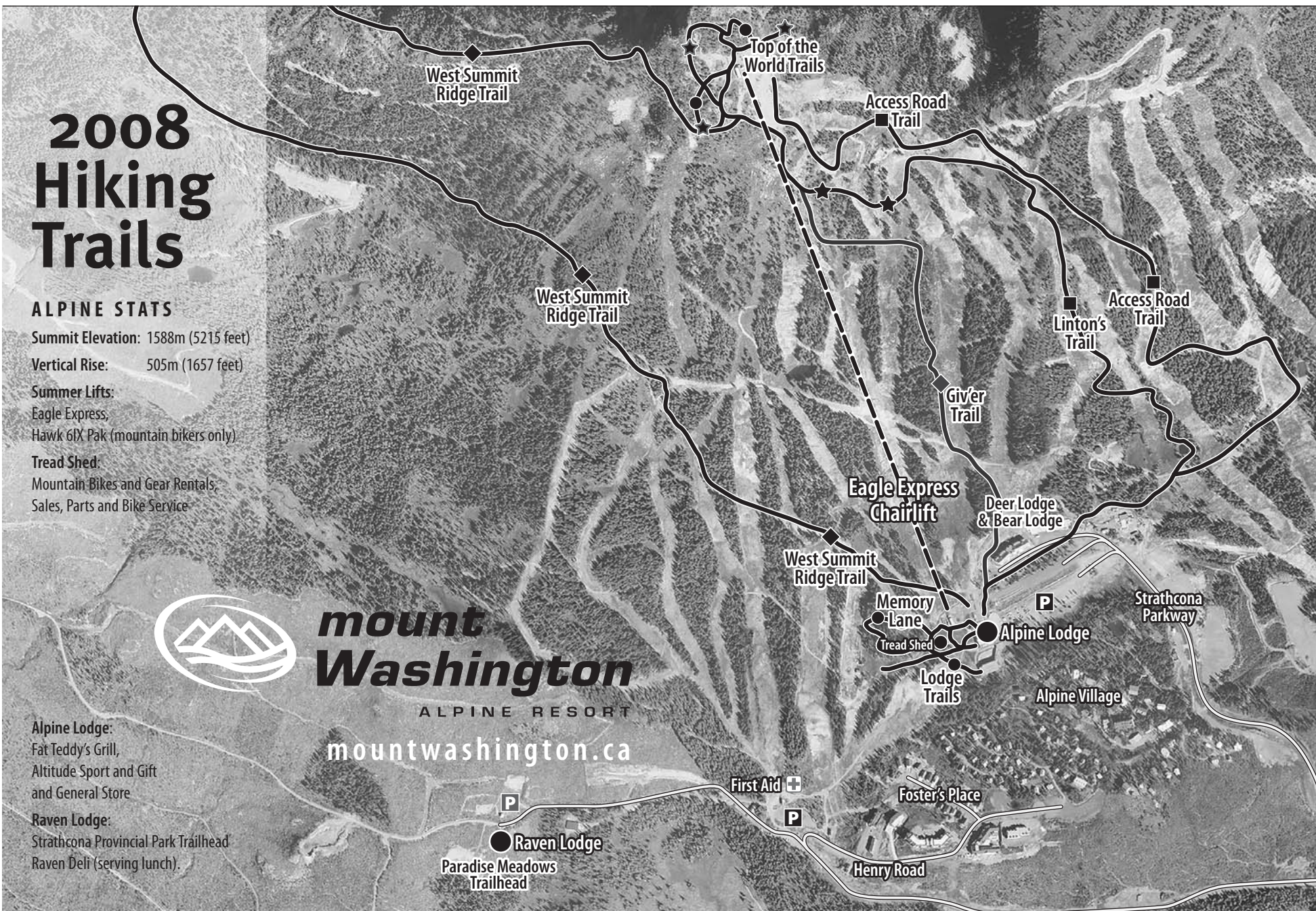


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Raven Lodge:
Strathcona Provincial Park Trailhead
Raven Deli (serving lunch).



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Hiking Trail OVERVIEWS

Top of the World

Access these trails from the Eagle Express Chair. Signs lead you to the very peak of the mountain where you can enjoy a spectacular panoramic view of the Comox Valley, the Coast Mountain Range, Georgia Strait and Strathcona Provincial Park.

Linton's Trail Follow the Linton's Loop ski run either up or down the mountain. Expect to encounter mountain vehicles as parts of this trail follow an access road. Great views of Albert Edward and Strathcona Provincial Park.

Giv'er Trail Access this trail from the Eagle Express Chair. It's steep up and down, one of the more fun and challenging ways to get to the top of the hill.

West Summit Ridge Follow the trail through the West basin and up and over little Washington to the top of the

Boomerang. From there the trail winds down the mountain through stunning meadows and valleys -spectacular views of the Comox Valley, the Coast Mountains, and Strathcona Provincial Park.

Access Road Trail Although this is an active road used by mountain vehicles for maintenance, it also provides a great way for hikers to get up and down the mountain. The gentle grade makes it one of the easier hikes to do.

Lodge Trails Use these trails to conveniently walk from Deer or Bear Lodge to the base area.

Watch for Disc Golfers (don't worry, they are more afraid of you than you are of them!)

Memory Lane Access to this trail is just past the loading area of the Eagle Express Chair. This short trail has a series of benches to honour staff, family, and friends who have passed. Enjoy the short hike and be sure to check out some of the trail-side seasonal flowers.

Scenic Chairlift Rides The Eagle Express chairlift is a state of the art chairlift that comfortably carries you up the mountain; dubbed "The Eagle" because it will seem like you're soaring above the mountain for the whole ride! It's a 15 minute ride each way, allowing you time to take in the fantastic view. Getting on and off the chair is made easy as the chair automatically slows down at the loading areas. The view from the top of Mount Washington is an

awe-inspiring 360° panorama of the rugged mountains of Strathcona Park, Comox Glacier, The Comox Valley, Gulf Islands, Desolation Sound, Georgia Strait, and the Coast Mountain Range. Once at the top you can hike on one of the well marked hiking trails and either return to the lodge on foot or ride the Eagle Express back down.

Raven Lodge is the Gateway to Strathcona Provincial Park. The Raven Lodge Trailhead is 1000 meters above sea level. It provides you with immediate access to the lakes, meadows and mountains that make BC's oldest Provincial Park so enchanting. The hiking trails from the Lodge are very well maintained and provide access for the disabled to the Park.

BASE ACCESS

- Lodge Trails (0.4 km)
- Memory Lane (0.4km)

EAGLE EXPRESS CHAIR ACCESS

- Top of the World Trails (.7 km)
- Linton's Trail (2.1 km)
- Access Road Trail (2 km)
- ◆—◆ West Summit Ridge Trail (4.3 km)
- ◆—◆ Giv'er Trail (1.3 km)



Photo: Rick Gibson

A Ranger's Retreat in Paradise

For more than 20 years, an unassuming building nestled in the trees beyond the outer reaches of Paradise Meadows has been a welcome refuge for Rangers performing backcountry patrols or hikers seeking shelter from the rain.

Now, the cabin has become command central for Windy Park Operations' backcountry patrols.

The Ranger Cabin was built in the mid-1980s to provide more Ranger presence in the backcountry during the peak season of June to September. "Up to four Rangers used the seasonal facility at its peak," said Andy Smith, Area Supervisor for BC Parks.

In the winter the two-storey-tall structure is buried in snow, and access for inspection is through digging down to walk directly into the top floor, he said.

In the late 1990s BC Parks moved to maintenance contractors and a Park Facility Operator (PFO) was hired to maintain the plateau trails and campgrounds. That PFO is now Jerry McArthur, owner and operator of the family-run Windy Park Operations.

McArthur is responsible for maintaining all the trails in Strathcona Park near Mount Washington Alpine Resort as well as the back end of Buttle Lake, the Bedwell Trail and Elk River Trail (20 kilometres short of Gold River).

"We use the cabin as a base during the season," says McArthur, who employs his three sons as well as three other people during peak season. "We have one person and sometimes two people staying in the cabin as their base. We equip it in the spring when we activate the Park."

The cabin is about one and a half hours

from the Strathcona Park trailhead beside Raven Lodge at Mount Washington. It features three bedrooms – leaving one available for BC Parks staff – a shower stall, small galley kitchen and a common room with an airtight wood stove.

McArthur flies in wood, propane and other supplies during routine maintenance flights. "It's a great facility for what we need it for. If we're doing work anywhere at that level, we can have up to four or five people staying comfortably in the cabin," he says.

McArthur worked for 10 years with Osprey Silviculture, which previously had the Strathcona backcountry contract. This is his second summer having the contract under his own company.

A moderate hiker before he started working the park contract, McArthur says he "goes everywhere now." He especially likes working with the people he meets in the park – some of them returning year after year.

Jerry and his crew walk every kilometre of the trails they are responsible for at least once during the summer, repairing trails, replacing boardwalk or railings, replacing infrastructure like pit toilets, and answering questions of the public. They even hit the non-core areas, and clear the Della Falls trail once a year.

The busiest place is Forbidden Plateau, which sees thousands of visitors each month during the summer, according to McArthur's traffic counters.

"We try and educate people, especially when the snow is still on the trails, so they have the ability to find the trails. We always caution people to be as prepared as they can...and don't hike beyond their capabilities."

The Robertson/Reitsma Team In Profile



When you say "food" at Mount Washington Alpine Resort, the first thought that might come to mind is "Robb Robertson".

He's the Catering and Entertainment Co-ordinator, and responsible in part for some of the gourmet miracles served at the Resort's two Lodges.

Your second thought might be "Colleen Reitsma". She's the Assistant Food and Beverage Manager and works hand-in-hand with Manager Tim Defert.

Together, Robertson and Reitsma make a formidable team. They have both risen through the ranks at Mount Washington: Robertson started out as a bartender and server in Fat Teddy's Bar and Grill in the summer of 1998, becoming one of the bar's supervisors later that winter.

Reitsma had been working in the food and beverage industry for a company in Victoria for 13 years when she decided to try out Mount Washington.

"I kind of wanted to step back from food and beverage and assess my life," she says. She accepted a job as a server, and agreed to spend a year at the Resort, even living on the mountain. "Once I got here I realized it wasn't food and beverage I was burned out from, it was the company I was working for (in Victoria)," she says. "I loved it."

Reitsma, like Robertson, has worked her way through a variety of jobs at the Resort. Now, she trains the food and beverage crew that works in 13 different outlets at Mount Washington, and keeps her eyes on new trends. She's particularly proud of the fact that the Food and Beverage Department has a 95-per-cent return rate with employees.

Robertson has spent the past two years growing the catering side of the business. "He's done a lot of groundbreaking work by getting some of the Government conferences," Reitsma says of her workmate. "You only have to do one right for the word to spread."

Robertson seeks out and responds to inquiries about private functions like weddings, retreats, conferences and corporate events at Mount Washington. He assists the organizer and catering staff from the planning stages through the

event setup right to execution.

"I think the most challenging part is recognizing the special needs of individual clients, and relaying those needs to all parties involved – with enough detail to ensure a successful event every time," Robertson says.

For all the challenges that are inherent in the food and beverage industry, however, the benefits are many. "There is no single favourite part of my job, but highlights would include the smile on a bride's face following her 'perfect day', and babysitting rock stars can be fun and unique as well," says Robertson.

For Reitsma, the people she meets in the course of her day are the big draw. "It's the people that I work with and people I get to meet client-wise," she says. "Mount Washington really is a family unit. We work hard, we play hard, everybody gets along."

At the end of the day, when the kitchen utensils are cleaned and put away, Robertson and Reitsma carpool home, where they also make a good team – as husband and wife. They've been married for 10 years, but don't make a big deal of the fact when they are at work. "Very little of our day is spent working together," says Reitsma.

The duo makes sure to leave work behind when they leave the Resort, although the topic inevitably finds a way to sneak into their private life, Robertson says. "I think we have a really good balance."

Robertson and Reitsma have different ways of winding down. Reitsma rock climbs, while Robertson is a model railroader. "I play just as hard as I work," says Reitsma. "I'm an avid rock climber."

She likes to play baseball with friends in the summer and snowboard in the winter. She also does a fair amount of hiking. "In my really down, down time I love gardening. I find it soothing," she says.

Robertson in his spare time likes to build communities for his model rail-road. "Much like my job, it encompasses a variety of creative skills and challenges, including but not limited to carpentry, electronics, scenery art, prototype research and the opportunity to wear a funny hat," he says.

"It's a lifelong undertaking for me, providing an opportunity to create 'my own miniature world' where everything is exactly as I want it to be, which isn't always possible in the real world.

"As my miniature world expands, I hone my skills at 'negotiating for' future mini-real estate, much to the chagrin of family members."



BC Parks Strathcona Provincial Park

Forbidden Plateau & Paradise Meadows

Photo: Rick Gibson



The trailhead is located at Raven Lodge and meanders past wetlands and ponds. This new trailhead is wheelchair accessible.

2008 MAP & TRAIL GUIDE

Strathcona Wilderness Institute Continues Offering Weekend Programs and Hikes

The trail access into Paradise Meadows (from Raven Lodge) is completely wheelchair accessible. With gentle grades, this trail is also suitable for seniors and families with strollers. The trail connects into the old trail system leading to Lake Helen MacKenzie, Battleship Lake and beyond. **Please Note:** All visitors are now required to park in the lots adjacent to Raven Lodge.

volunteers there can update you on trail conditions and hiking destinations. The hut is open from 10am-4pm (Friday ~ Sunday and holiday Mondays), June 22 - September 9.

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 (300 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. From June 22 ~ Sept. 9, hours of operation will be: Friday: 3~8pm, Saturday: 10am ~ 6pm, Sunday 10am ~ 5pm and on Holidays weekends, Monday 10am ~ 4pm. Should the weather be inclement and/or there are few visitors, closing times could be earlier. Volunteers are always welcome to help at either of the Info-huts. A good knowledge of Strathcona Park and its trails is essential.

Boardwalk trails make the park accessible to most everyone while protecting the delicate high alpine meadows.



Photo: Neil Havers

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, leave a message at: 250-337-1871 or e-mail: swi@island.net. The Institute's website is: www.strathconapark.org.

The Strathcona Wilderness Institute will again be offering guided walks around Paradise Meadows with Interpretive Guides. A schedule of this year's Walks and Programs are shown on page 22.

KIDS: Every Saturday at 1:00pm (earlier start times on July 19 & Aug. 2) 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 7 -12 (1 1/2 hour duration).

ADULTS: For adults and families a 90 minute to 2 hour walk or lecture presented by a Guest expert on a variety of topics. Sundays at 1:00pm (earlier start times on July 27, Aug. 3 & 31.).

To help the Institute's operational costs, a donation of \$2 per person (\$5 per family) is suggested for these popular programs.

INFO HUT: An Interpreter will manage the Info Hut at the Raven Lodge parking area. The Info Hut is full of fascinating natural history objects that the kids will love and the

BC Parks Map & Trail Guide courtesy of Rick Gibson



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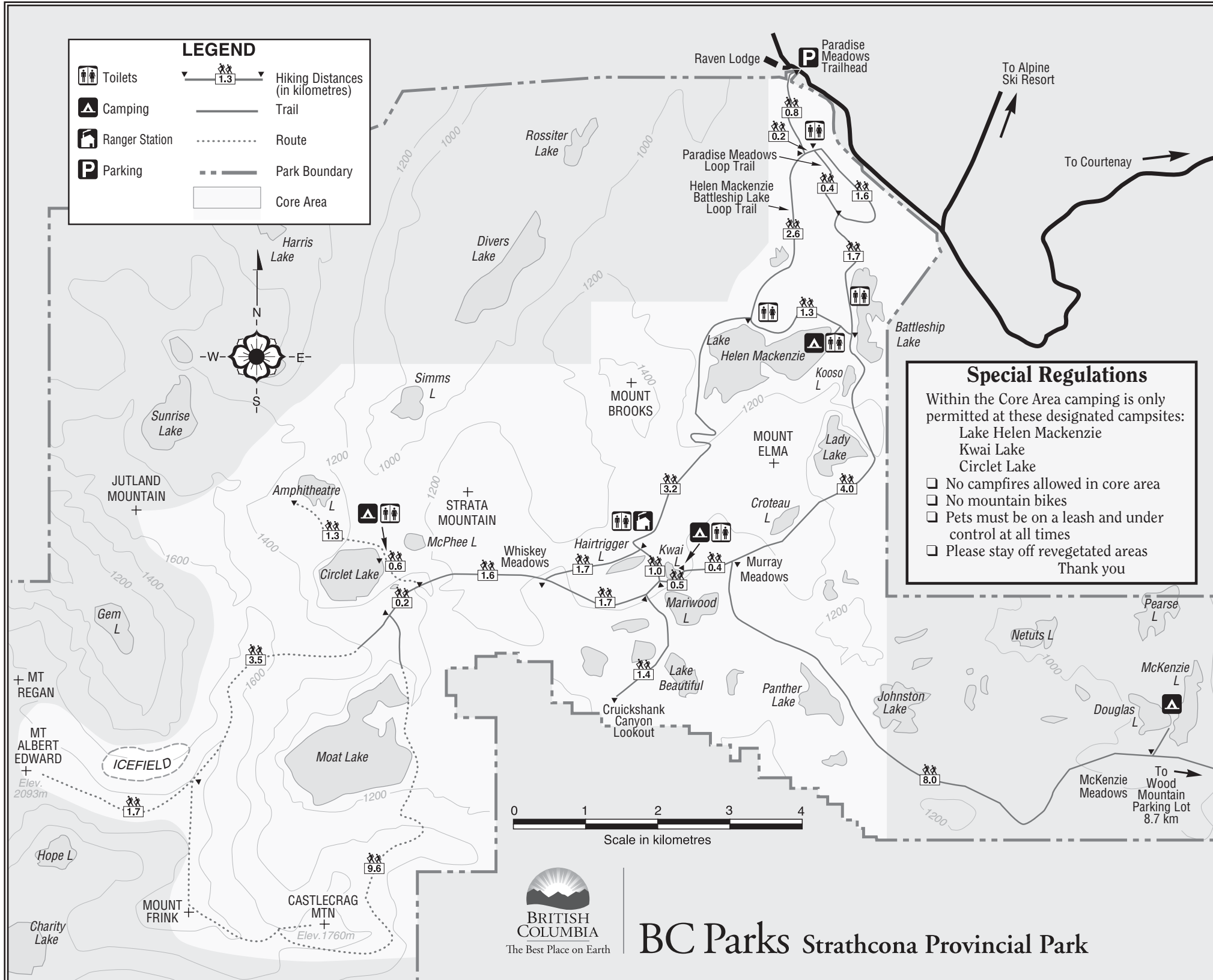
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In Case of Emergency...

- Contact Park Rangers in the area.
- Location of Park Rangers will be posted on the notice board at the ranger cabin.
- Phones are located at Mount Washington.
- In case of emergency, Phone 911
- To report a forest fire, dial 0 and ask for 1-800-663-5555

Maps and Guidebook

Scale 1:50,000 Nat. Topographic Series
 -92 F/11 Forbidden Plateau
 -92 F/12 Buttle Lake
 Hiking Trails III Central and Northern Vancouver Island.

For Further Info

- See local Park Rangers & Operators
- Web: wlapwww.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/

Routes

These routes are suitable for experienced hikers. People using these routes should have map and compass skills and be prepared for inclement weather.

From Circler Lake

Mt. Albert Edward 2093m
 Elevation gain: 935m • Distance: 6.5 km
 Suggested time to summit: 5 hours
 Follow signs towards Albert Edward from Circler Lake intersection. Trail climbs steeply for first 3 km. Once the first ridge has been reached look for route leading South and follow for 2 km. It's another 1.5 km to the summit.

Castle Crag 1760m
 Elevation gain: 620m • Distance: 6.3 km
 Suggested time: 5 hours
 Route begins at the southeast end of Moat Lake. Follow route to the small col west of the summit. It's a steep scramble over loose rock to the top. Caution: This route crosses boulder fields and slopes with loose rocks.

From Albert Edward

Augerpoint route (not shown on map)
 Distance: 25 km (one way)
 Suggested time: 3 days
 An extended route through to Buttle Lake. From the summit of Albert Edward descend it's southwest ridge to the drainage divide above Norm Creek and Ralph Lake. Continue up to Ruth Masters Lake (local name) and above to the saddle southwest of Augerpoint Mountain. Continue southwest along the ridge to a high point of 1760 m before descending a long ridge above Shark Lake. Continue northwest along route to reach the beginning of the Auger-point Trail. This trail descends steeply for 1400 m before arriving on the 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, Circler 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.

Cache your food! BC Parks has installed new metal food caches at Lake Helen Mackenzie, Kwai Lake and Circler Lake campsites.



Hike along boardwalk along side high alpine wetlands and lakes with Mount Washington ever present in the background. Be sure to wear suitable footwear and bring your own water along.

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 camp-

grounds. 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.

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Photo: Steve Smith

Resting and enjoying the view at the summit of the Crest Mountain Trail.

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, visitor service details and other useful information will be available every weekend starting June 20. Stop in 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 20 to September 6, 2008

Friday: 3 pm ~ 8 pm
Saturday: 10 am ~ 6 pm
Sunday: 10 am ~ 5 pm
Monday: 10 am ~ 4 pm (holidays only)

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

2008 MAP & TRAIL GUIDE

Buttle Lake is easily accessible in forty five minutes from Campbell River on Hwy. 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 wilderness 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.

Please Note: All tributaries to Buttle Lake are closed to angling.

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. 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 the web-site at www.discovercamping.ca.

To book Driftwood Bay Group Campground call 250-474-1336 or fax 250-478-0376.

BC Parks Map & Trail Guide courtesy of Rick Gibson



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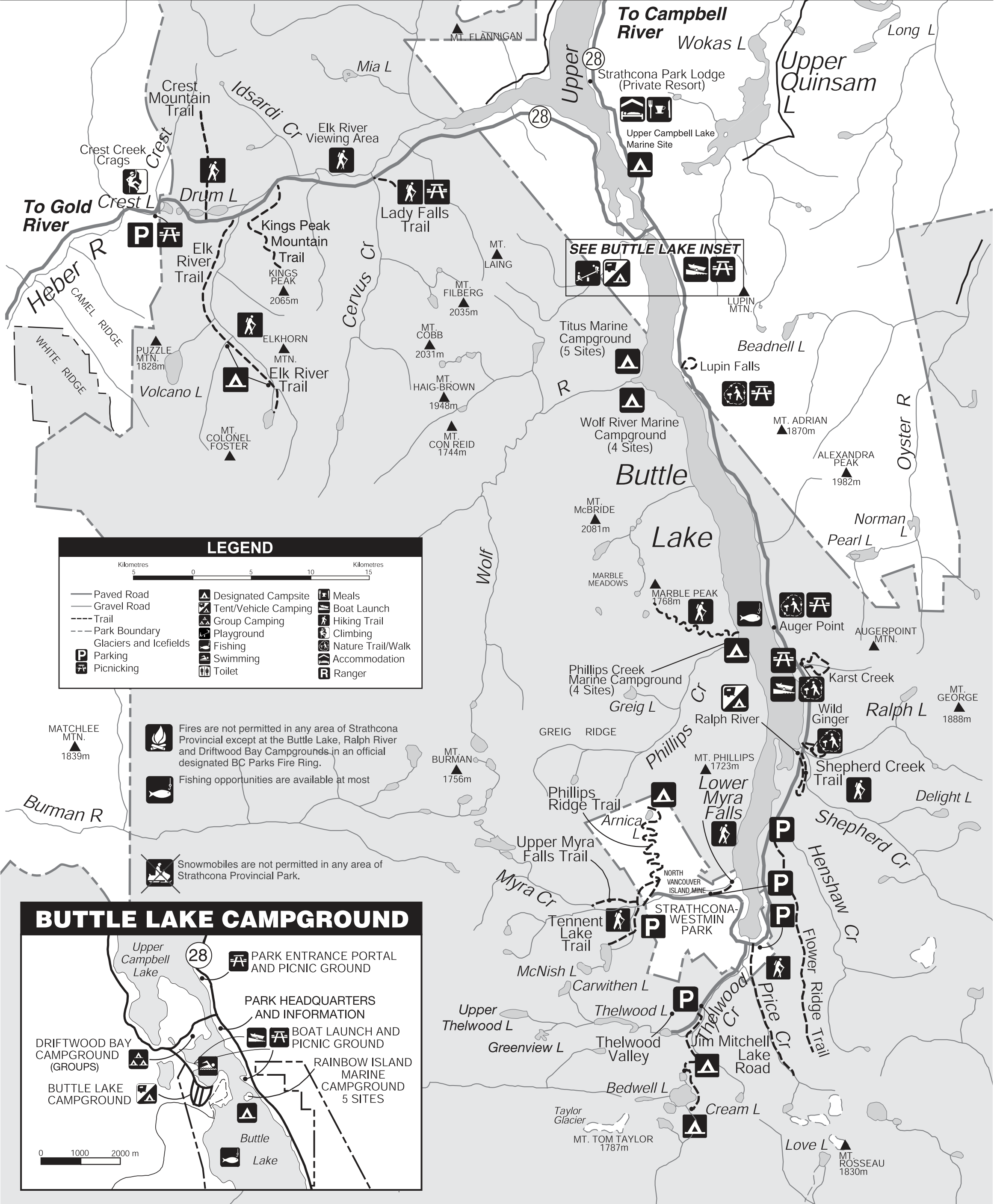
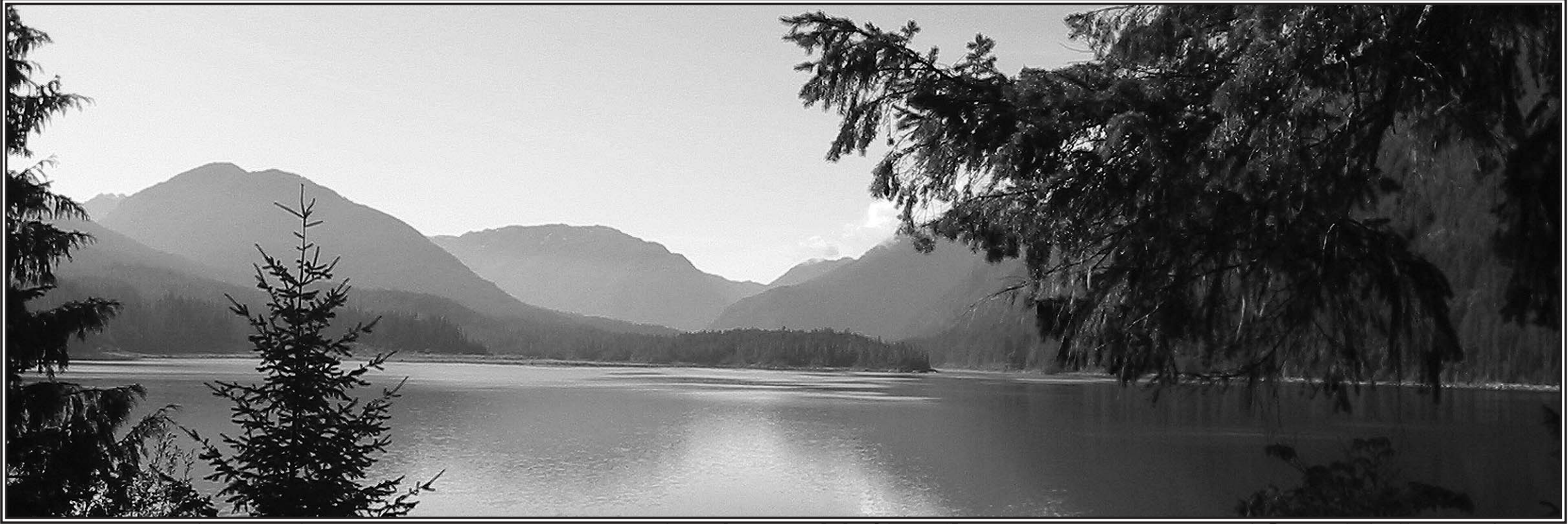


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BUTTLE LAKE CORRIDOR

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.

BC Parks Strathcona Provincial Park



LEGEND

Paved Road	Designated Campsite	Meals
Gravel Road	Group/Vehicle Camping	Boat Launch
Trail	Tent Camping	Hiking Trail
Park Boundary	Playground	Climbing
Glaciers and Icefields	Fishing	Nature Trail/Walk
Parking	Swimming	Accommodation
Picnicking	Toilet	Ranger

- Fires are not permitted in any area of Strathcona Provincial except at the Buttle Lake, Ralph River and Driftwood Bay Campgrounds in an official designated BC Parks Fire Ring.
- Fishing opportunities are available at most
- Snowmobiles are not permitted in any area of Strathcona Provincial Park.

BUTTLE LAKE CAMPGROUND

- PARK ENTRANCE PORTAL AND PICNIC GROUND
- PARK HEADQUARTERS AND INFORMATION
- BOAT LAUNCH AND PICNIC GROUND
- DRIFTWOOD BAY CAMPGROUND (GROUPS)
- BUTTLE LAKE CAMPGROUND
- RAINBOW ISLAND MARINE CAMPGROUND 5 SITES

Scale: 0 1000 2000 m

Accommodations & Events



Photo: Mount Washington Alpine Resort



2008 Events

June 20 • Mile High Chairlift Rides Begin

The summer season begins today at Mount Washington. Summer Scenic Chairlift Ride operations continue to September 21.

June 30 • Mountain Bike Season begins (Weather permitting)

July 1 • Save On Foods Canada Day Celebrations Celebrate Canada Day with your family with bouncey castles and playing fun picnic games with prizes sponsored by Save-on-Foods.

July 1 • Beavertails Tail Eating Contest

This popular FREE event from the winter happens to ring in Canada's birthday!

Join us at the Beavertails hut to test your gut and your mettle. He or she who eats the most tails wins!

July 7-11 • Norco Learn To Ride Week

Lift, lesson and special rental package for beginner riders, just \$49! Pre-booking required, space is limited!

July 11 • 9th Annual Beer Festival

This is the event that all you beer lovers have been waiting for! Unlimited samplings, souvenir glass and awesome live music.

July 19 • Old Dutch Open Disc Golf Tournament

18 hole tourney, long drive competition, putting competition, closest to

pin comp. Great times!

Aug 7, 14, 21 & 28 • Lucky Thursday

DH Race Series Get lucky for \$5 at this fun DH race series sponsored by the Island favourites Lucky Lager and Dodge City Cycles!

Aug 8 • 10th Annual Alpine Wine Festival

A wide selection of wines to taste plus local foods and great music. This is a mile-high-class event, so gather some friends and make a weekend out of it!

Aug 23 • Bearclaw Invitational Slopestyle III

One of the world's premier slopestyle mountainbike events.

Sept 5-7 • Beyond The Kitchen Door presents the 1st Annual Culinary Festival

Where the food is the attraction! Cooking classes, Marketplace and gala dinner.

Sept 7 • 2nd Annual Jump Camp

This grass roots Jump Jam welcomes all riders (male and female) from all parts of the Island and beyond! Come for the dirt, the DJ, and the good times!

Sept 8-12 • Back to Bike School

Special package at the Tread Shed all week.

Sept 13 • CIBC Wood Gundy 3rd Annual Sprint to the Summit

A fun, grueling race to the peak of Mount Washington.

Sept 20 • Sleemans DH Race

End of the season fun race.

Sept 21 • Final day of operations for Summer 2008

Entertainment, food and beverage specials and the Thanksgiving "Turkey" Sale at Mtn Tek and Altitude Sport & Gift.



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



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Private Rental Accommodations



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

Table with columns for property name, various pricing (Weekday, Weekend, Holiday, Summer, Max people), amenities (FIREPLACES, CLEANING, etc.), and contact information. Rows include ALPINE VILLAGE, FOSTERS PLACE, HENRY ROAD, BEAR LODGE, BLUEBERRY HILL, CREEKSIDE HOUSE, MOUNTAINSIDE LODGE, PARADISE RIDGE, PARKVIEW PLACE, PTARMIGAN RIDGE, COMOX VALLEY, and STAY IN THE COMOX VALLEY.

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Mount Washington Phone Directory (Area Code 250)

Altitude Sport & Gift 334-5721	Fire - to report a fire 911	Raven Lodge 334-5764
Ambulance 911	Fireweed's Restaurant 334-5706	Real Estate (Rick Gibson) 338-1723
Catering 334-5757	General Store 334-5745	Resort Info 338-1386
Central Res. 1-888-231-1499	Police EMERGENCY 911	Security 792-1204
Fat Teddy's Grill 334-5716	Police NON-EMERGENCY 338-1321	Utility EMERGENCY 792-1209

PLEASE NOTE:

- The above information is current as of June 10, 2008
- All properties are non-smoking 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.
- Royal LePage in the Comox Valley and The Marmot have no interest, financial or otherwise in these accommodations and assume no responsibility for them in any way.
- Parking at Mount Washington can be a challenge in snowy conditions.
- PLEASE follow the rules of the property you are staying at in regards to parking.
- If you are parking in an other property's parking space or on the road, you will be towed without notice.

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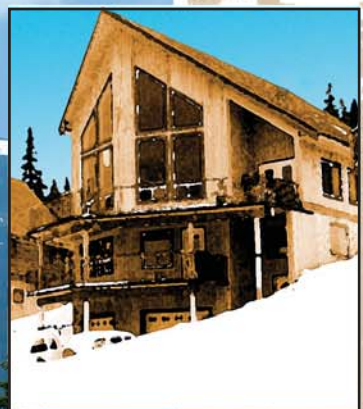
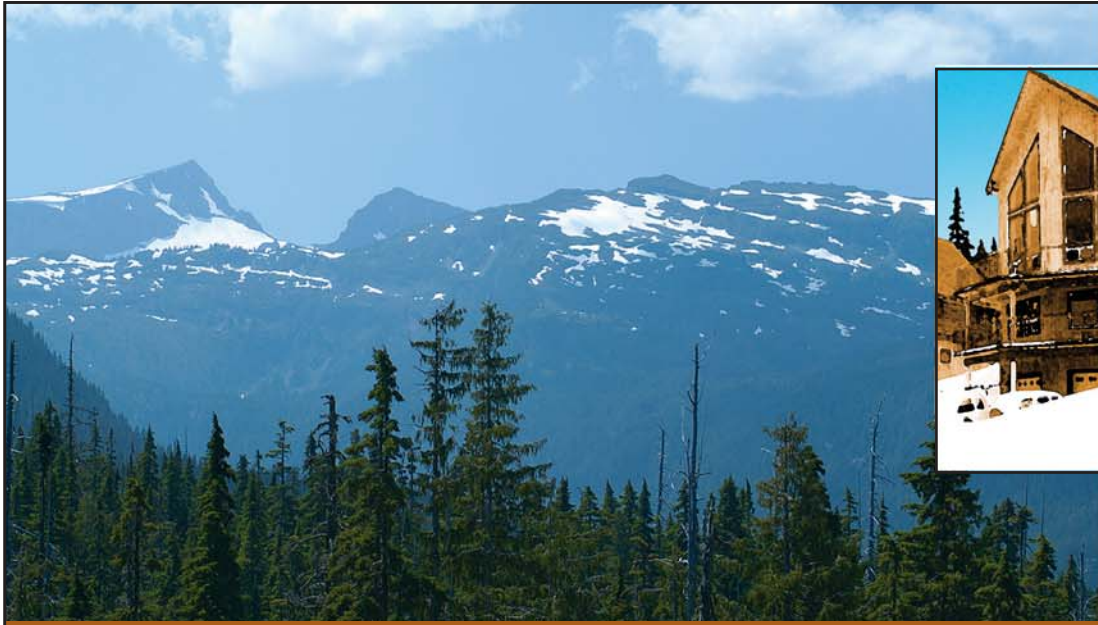
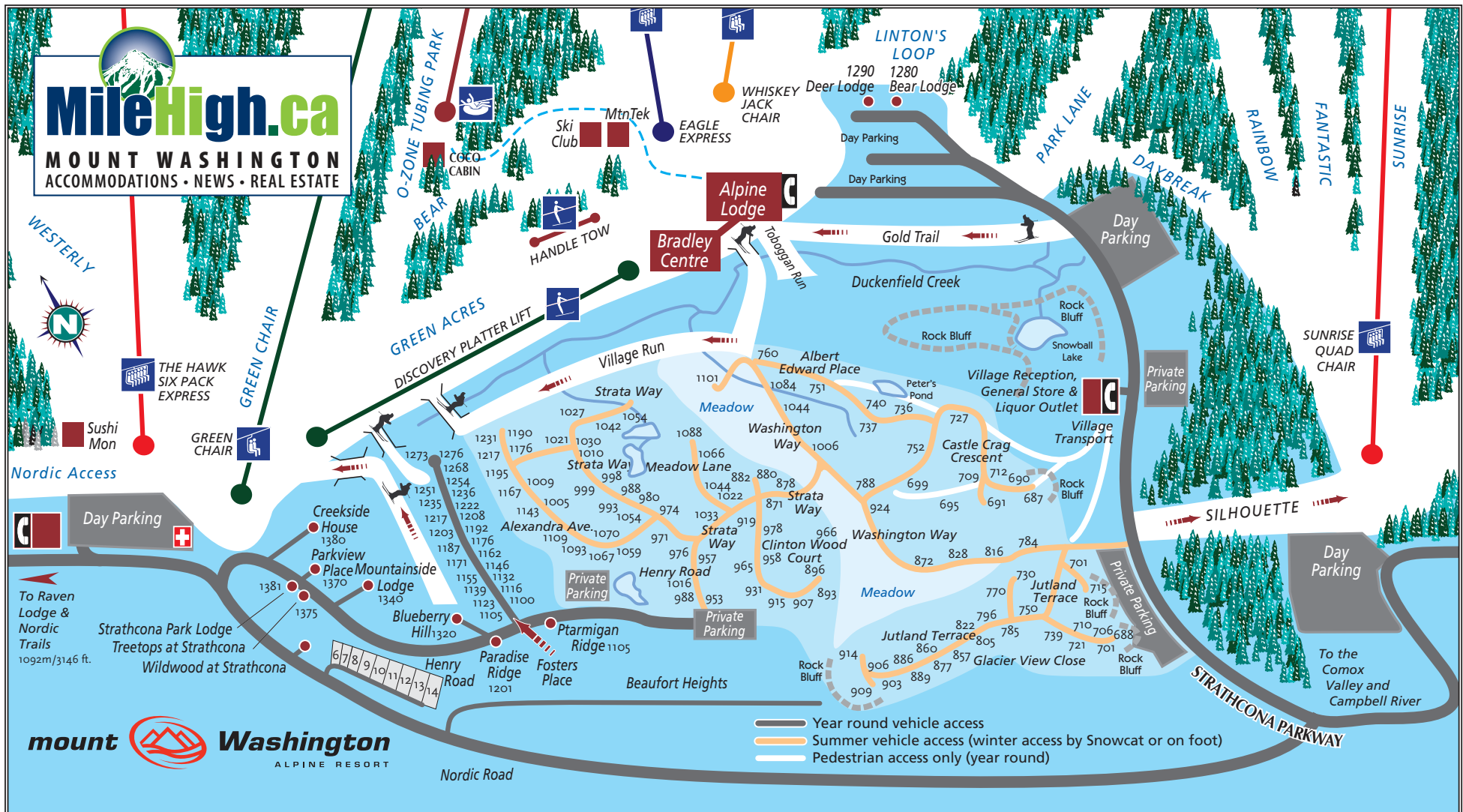
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- ▶ Rick Gibson resides on Mount Washington and has over 20 years experience promoting and selling on Mount Washington.
- ▶ The Mount Washington Marmot newspaper boasts an annual circulation of 80,000 copies.

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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. Fires are not permitted in Strathcona Park except in an authorized BC Parks steel fire ring. 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. Use caution on trails and be aware of snow, fallen trees and other natural hazards.

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 **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 June 20 through to September 6, 2008.

The **FRIENDS OF STRATHCONA** is a non-profit organization whose mission is to protect, preserve and promote Strathcona Provincial Park. Tel: 250-337-1871

Box 3404, Courtenay, B.C. V9N 5N5

BUTTLE LAKE CORRIDOR

HIKING TRAILS, BOAT LAUNCH RAMPS, AND CAMPGROUNDS

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

Trail conditions: www.env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks



Buttle Lake

Photo: Neil Hovens

ELK RIVER TRAIL (2-3)

Length: 11 km. Suggested time: 10 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 North Vancouver Island mine. Observe old growth forest, a waterfall, and alpine meadows. Designated camping area.

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 1 ~ 1 1/2 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. Use caution due to winter storm damage.

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. Be aware of bears. Due to storm damage two wheel drive access is difficult and motor homes are not recommended.

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)

Length: 800 metres. Loop Trail. 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 1.3 km. It is no longer a loop walk due to the bridge being out. 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. Trail not maintained and may prove difficult for inexperienced hikers. 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.

CAMPGROUNDS

RALPH RIVER CAMPGROUND

- Ancient forest, lake and river.
- Gates are open May 1 to September 30th.
- Picnic tables, fire rings, water pumps and pit toilets.
- Fee: \$14.00 per party per night, \$7.00 for extra vehicles.
- B.C Senior Citizens \$7.00 per couple per night (shoulder season only).
- Firewood for sale by the PFO.
- 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.



Photo: Marlene Smith

View along the Bedwell Lake Trail

- Gates open all summer until September 30th.
- Picnic tables, fire rings, water pumps and pit toilets.
- Fee: \$14.00 per party/night. \$7.00 for extra vehicles.
- B.C Senior Citizens \$7.00 per couple per night (shoulder season only).
- Firewood for sale by the PFO.
- 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

CREST LAKE PICNIC AREA

- Shaded picnic area, day use only.
- Picnic tables and pit toilet, close to the lake.
- Access left off Highway 28 heading West.
- Short distance from Crest Mountain Trailhead.

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: \$14.00 per party per night. \$7.00 for extra vehicles.
- Firewood for sale by the PFO.
- Fee for non profit youth and school groups \$50.00 per night.
- Tel. 250-474-1336 to book the campground.

BACKCOUNTRY & MARINE CAMPING FEE

- \$5.00 per night per person 13 years or older.

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Strathcona Wilderness Institute

Family Programs ~ Saturdays (1:00pm)

Guest Expert Walks ~ Sundays (1:00pm)

Discover the many natural features of Strathcona Park by participating in a series of family oriented programs on Saturdays and Sundays throughout the summer put on by the Strathcona Wilderness Institute, a non-profit society.

Share your favourite aspects of nature in Strathcona Park this summer with Strathcona Wilderness Institute's "Lights, Sounds and Action in a Paradise Meadows", a series of family-oriented nature programs designed to get you moving and exploring. There is no cost to attend, but donations are greatly appreciated. The Strathcona Wilderness Institute is a non-profit society.

Youths aged 7 ~ 12 are welcome for Saturday programs (a hike, special topic and a creative wrap-up activity) from 1:00 to 3:00 pm. **Adults** can attend guided walks on Sunday afternoons, 1 ~3pm. See the schedule for specifics or earlier times for longer hikes.

All programs start at the Paradise Meadows trailhead Info Hut located in the Parking Lot by the Raven Lodge. To get there, follow the inland island highway heading north from Courtenay or south from Campbell River and take Exit 130, Strathcona Parkway. Follow the paved road and signs to the Raven Lodge, where you'll find ample parking. Remember to dress for the weather and bring water, sunscreen and bug spray.

If you are setting out on your own expedition, visit the Paradise Meadows Info Hut to exchange trail information, obtain maps, books or contribute your ideas at the shadow clock and sundial building activities.

Sat, July 5 • Dial a Rainbow Explore the role of sunlight and colour. Make a spectrum or a sundial. Bring a flashlight.

Sun, July 6 • Tree challenges in the Sub-Alpine Join forester Margaret Symon for an insider's look at how trees adapt to this area.

Sat, July 12 • Good Vibrations Hike through the park and collect as many types of sounds as you can. What might be present that we do not hear? Make a sound trap or a create a story with sound effects. Bring a flashlight.

Sun, July • Sub-Alpine Wildflowers Explore the beauty of Paradise Meadows with Comox Valley Naturalist Fred Constable.

Sat, July 19 • Celebrate Parks Day with a 3 hour hike to Battleship Lake and a nature Scavenger Hunt. Meet at the Hut by 11:00 am. Bring lunch and water.

Sun, July 20 • Ethnobotany, The Healing Power of Plants Join ethnobotanist Gwyn Sproule for information on this fascinating topic.

Sat, July 26th • The Gift of Leaves How many kinds of leaves are there? Why are they different? Make a gift of leaves.

Sun, July 27 • Hike to Divers Lake Join mountaineers Steve and Marlene Smith for this easy 4 hour hike. Meet at the Hut by 10: am, bring a lunch and water.

Sat, Aug 2 • Hike and Picnic at Helen Mackenzie Lake 3 hours. Meet at the hut by 11:00 am. Bring lunch and water.

Sun, Aug 3 • Hike to Kwai Lake Meet at the info hut at 10:00 am. Hike destination with the most votes (within reason) wins.

Sat, Aug 9 • Knock, knock - Who's There? Who lives up here? Who's just passing through? How can we tell? Make a food chain mobile.

Sun, Aug 10 • I the Tree, We the Forest Join agroforester Harold Macy for a different perspective on forests.

Sat, Aug 16 • Lights, Sounds, Actions in the Park Test your senses and powers of observation. Create a play or art involving natural features of the park.

Sun, Aug 17 • Botany and Mushrooms Adolf and Oluna Ceska will delight you with their knowledge and insights on botany and mushrooms.

Sat, Aug 23 • Still life – Is it Really Still? Look carefully – things are not what they seem. Arrange art in a jar using natural materials Bring your own jar.

Sun, Aug 24 • Down to Earth - The Earth/Sky Connection Join astronomer/streamkeeper Roy Myers for an unusual look at the connection between sunlight and plants, as well as other cosmic interactions between the sun, earth, atmosphere and the moon.

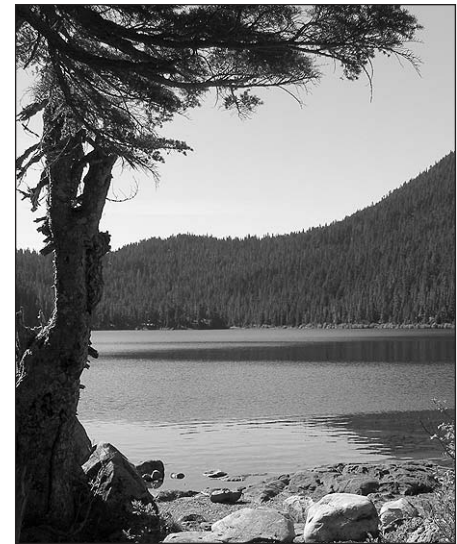
Sat, Aug 30 • Which Way? North, south, east, west. Discover the many ways to find your way in a park. Bring a compass if you have one.

Sun, Aug 31 • Cruickshank Canyon Lookout Hike Join Andrea Blaseckie for this spectacular hike thru beautiful meadows to an amazing viewpoint. This moderate, but long hike, will take 8 - 9 hours return. Bring lots of water and food. Meet at trailhead info-hut by 8 am.

To find out more about the Strathcona Wilderness Institute and programs visit our website: www.strathconapark.org or call 250-337-1871.

For more program details contact the SWI at 250-285-3181

The volunteers there can update you on trail conditions and hiking destinations. For all programs please remember to be prepared for all weather conditions and to tread lightly through the park.



View of Lake Helen Mackenzie.

The Marmot
MILE HIGH NEWS ON MOUNT WASHINGTON

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

If you are looking for more information, wish to advertise, or want to submit information in future issues contact us at (250) 334-3124 or by e-mail: rick@themarmot.ca

Editorial: Susan Quinn

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Ph. 250-897-3678

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Photo: Oli Gardner



'Reintroduced' Marmots help save the wild Vancouver Island Marmots

High in the sub-alpine bowls of Strathcona Park, reside some of Canada's most precious inhabitants, a small group of incredibly rare Vancouver Island marmots.

How they got there is a story of rescue, recovery and release. Don Doyle let out an audible sigh of relief as he flew over Greig's Ridge in Strathcona Park, Vancouver Island. He'd spotted the muddy stains on the snow that are sure signs of unplugged marmot burrows, along with multiple marmot tracks within the meadow.

"The marmots are up and all over the place" he reported happily, "there's lots of open habitat and the ridge looks great. Better than last year."

Don Doyle is the Chair of the Vancouver Island Marmot Recovery Team and he had just made the first fly over to check on the reintroduced marmots since they went into hibernation last winter. They had awoken safely and were doing what marmots do, exploring their terrain and rekindling their relationships.

The volume of late season snowfall had Don worried the marmots might wake up before the bowl had warmed enough to slough off the snow and begin to green up, leaving them without food and warm rocks to sun on, but everything looked fine.

Last summer nine Vancouver Island marmots born in a zoo based captive breeding program run by the Marmot Recovery Foundation were released to this site in Strathcona Park. Two more groups will be added this summer with third group going to a historically occu-

ried site on the other side of Buttle Lake, on Mt Adrian.

All are part of a larger recovery strategy that will see up to 60 animals reintroduced to different parts of Vancouver Island this summer with a final goal of establishing 400-600 animals in 3 sustainable population groups on the island.

"Currently, there are approximately 84-94 Vancouver Island marmots in the wild. That may not sound like many but it's a big improvement over the less than 30 animals that remained in the wild in 2003" said Don.

The turn around is the result of a captive breeding program begun in 1997 as an emergency measure to protect and maintain the species. Because of the lack of breeding aged animals, it was slow to start, with the first 4 pups born in 2002, but it is now expected to produce an incredible 50-60 pups a year to augment the wild population and re-colonize other historical marmot sites. All very good news for Canada's most endangered mammal.

"We're facing a critical time in the recovery process," said Don. "The wild population is in crisis with only 3 litters of pups born in the wild last year. We know that reintroduced animals are reproducing and surviving in the wild almost as well as wild born animals and we can now release up to 60 animals a year. It only makes sense that this will improve the odds of litters being born in the wild and improve the long-term chances of Vancouver Island marmot survival, providing we have the resources to get them out there".

Adopt a Marmot

This is a great way to help this endangered species as well as an opportunity for you to learn more about these interesting creatures

When you join the **Adopt-a-Marmot Club**, you help protect the endangered Vancouver Island marmot every day of the year. Pre-arranged monthly gifts are a convenient way to help save this beautiful and special creature from extinction. Your gift supports the field research and captive-breeding that's so critical to marmot survival. For instance, your contribution will help fund ear-tagging of wild marmots, which is the only way in which we can identify and track individual marmots and the success of recovery efforts in future years.

When you adopt-a-marmot you'll receive:

- Your personalized marmot adoption certificate
- Your full-color poster of a Vancouver Island Marmot
- Your official recovery project newsletter (The Marmoteer)
- Your special year-end report about individual marmots

For more info go to www.marmots.org/adopt.htm

Vancouver Island marmot terrain is remote and difficult to access. Helicopters must be used to fly the marmots into their new homes and researchers must closely monitor the marmots to determine the causes of mortality, survival rates, reproduction, dispersal and ultimately the success or failure of the program.

For more information or if you would like to assist with the recovery of Canada's most endangered mammal, please visit www.marmots.org

Thanks to these Visitor InfoCentres for distributing The Marmot

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Photo: Brent Reid



Olympic Spirit Committee in Action

Mount Washington Alpine Resort continues to be on the Olympic radar for teams needing a place to practice for the 2010 Vancouver Winter Games.

And they can thank the Comox Valley Spirit of B.C. Community Committee. **The Swedish Team will be coming to the Resort in 2009 and 2010**, Spirit Committee Chairperson Susan Kelsey said. "They've already booked their accommodation."

Other teams have also expressed interest in using Mount Washington Alpine Resort as a training facility prior to the 2010 Olympics, and some representatives have even toured the Resort and surrounding area. "We're continuing with our work on team attractions for training on Mount Washington," Kelsey said. "We've had lots of interest from lots of different teams."

Even though the Olympics are two years away, the Spirit Committee has been busy. "The work we do touches lots of different areas," Kelsey said. "It's non-stop. The main thing is raising spirits about the Olympics and getting people excited."

In February, the committee celebrated Spirit of B.C. Week, and there are plans

to hold celebrations for British Columbia's 15th anniversary.

In March, John Furlong, CEO of the Vancouver Olympic Committee, visited the Comox Valley along with Olympic mascots Quatchi, Sumi and Miga. "It was very exciting," Kelsey said. "John Furlong is an excellent speaker."

In May, the Cowichan Spirit Pole stopped in the Comox Valley. The pole is on a tour around the Province and will be part of the Opening Ceremonies to the Aboriginal Games in the Cowichan Valley later this year.

Kelsey and other committee members will go to Beijing for the 2008 Summer Olympic Games, singing the praises of both Mount Washington and the Comox Valley. "All the name players in the Olympic movement will be there," she said.

The committee will lobby some of these people to bring the 2010 Olympic Torch Relay through the Comox Valley on its way across Canada. And in March 2009, Mount Washington will host another International Paralympic Committee World Cup Event.

"We're going to work hard between now and then to get more community involvement in that," Kelsey said.

VIMSS continues to help our future Olympians

Photo: Susan Quinn

The Vancouver Island Mountain Sports Society works to put Vancouver Island athletes on the podium in both winter and summer alpine events.

While there are programs that help athletes when they reach the amateur level - and are aiming for the Olympics - VIMSS has a more grassroots focus: the athletes who are just starting out.

The sports society was originally formed to help athletes with travel expenses in getting off Vancouver Island for competition, VIMSS director Joanna Fox said. Many events occur within a few hours of the Lower Mainland, which is convenient for mainland-based athletes, but more expensive for those on Vancouver Island who must take the ferry and stay in hotels and often pay their own expenses.

"It's important to help these athletes because they are the future. Some of them will be future Paralympic and Olympic athletes that will represent Canada," Fox said.

"They train really hard and put a lot of determination and dedication into getting better. Because they're emerging athletes, they're not at a level where they are eligible for carding from Sport Canada, so they're always looking for help with their training and competing costs."

While Canadian National Alpine Ski Team member Allison Forsyth might spend \$140,000 in just one year on the competitive circuit, which takes into consideration equipment, travel and even wax technicians, she has a lot of help from national sporting organizations and sponsors.

Emerging athletes, on the other hand, rely on their parents to foot the bill. The Mountain Sports Society is making a difference in their level of opportunity, Fox said. Grants are awarded twice a year, in the spring and fall. In the fall of 2007, grants totaling \$7,000 were distributed to 14 athletes, Fox said. "They're essentially travel grants. If they are an emerging mountain sport athlete on Vancouver



Alison Forsyth shared her personal and touching story with guests at the annual Black & White Gala in Raven Lodge in support of VIMSS.

Island, they can apply."

The Society has yet to award a grant for a mountain bike athlete because none have applied, but Fox is hoping that will change this year. Cutoff for spring grants was May 26.

Rick Gibson has been a sponsor of the Society for the past two years and says, "I support VIMSS because it provides a guarantee that the youth of Vancouver Island has every opportunity to enjoy and excel at sports to whatever level they wish to achieve."

Every year the Society holds a black tie event at Mount Washington Alpine Resort's Raven Lodge. Each year the event raises thousands of dollars to put towards athletes' travel costs. This past April, the society raised \$12,000 from the annual event, now coined the Black and Blue Gala.

"The fundraising went very, very well," said Fox. "I think it's a record for us. It brings our total raised to \$47,000 from the four galas and other small fundraising initiatives. Our fundraising success is thanks to a truly supportive community that believes in what we are doing."

Major Grant Announced for Vancouver Island Mountain Sport Society

The Vancouver Island Mountain Sport Society has received a grant from the North Island Economic Trust that will allow them to move forward with their Mountain Sports Centre. "The North Island Economic Trust has approved our application," VIMSS chair Rick Morson said. "They will give us a matching grant in the amount of \$555,000." The project is expected to cost \$2.1 million.

The balance of the funding for the Mountain Sports Centre will have to be raised by VIMSS itself, Morson said. The Society has already received a land grant from Mount Washington Alpine Resort worth \$250,000 as well as a donation of \$15,000 from Rick Gibson of Royal LePage. "This means it's going to go forward," Morson said.

"There's some things we still have to do, but this is a significant amount of funding for it." The Mountain Sports Centre is the second phase of VIMSS's infrastructure projects. The first phase saw some of the Nordic trails at Mount Washington upgraded, some lighting installed at the stadium area for biathlon and Nordic events, and a new trailhead created for Strathcona Provincial Park.

The first phase was completed in 2007 with grant money from the Olympic/Paralympic Live Sites Program, and allowed VIMSS and Mount Washington to host an IPC World Cup event. The Resort and VIMSS will host a second event in March 2009.

Photo: Boomer Jerritt



Increased Media Attention Stymies Sasquatch Sightings

Photo: Robb Burgess-Webb

There were several sightings of the hirsute creature during the Kokanee Snowboarding Festival at Mount Washington Alpine Resort last winter, including one brazen encounter near the front entrance, witnessed by only a few people - none who wanted to go on record with their observations.

Sasquatch investigator Horace Minid says it is unusual to see the bipedal creature so blatantly out in public, especially at Mount Washington. "Sasquatch are basically shy creatures that prefer avoiding human contact," Minid said.

Sightings at Mount Washington have been few and far between until last spring, he said. Perhaps it's because the creature's likeness has been used for Quatchi, one of the 2010 Winter Olympic Games mascots.

One observer surmised that it's because Sasquatch is getting more exposure in outside markets due to the Kokanee beer "Ranger Live or Die" campaign.

Minid, however, has a more mundane theory. Like deer that wander through downtown streets in Island communities like Comox, the sasquatch that roam the Vancouver Island Mountain Range and Mount Washington are becoming habituated to humans.

There have been more than 200 sightings of sasquatch in B.C. in the past few years. Canadian folklorist Carole Carpenter once said part of B.C.'s cultural identity included sasquatch.

The Vancouver Olympic Committee's enthusiastic embrace of the elusive creature is only proof of that, says Minid. He predicts that more sightings will be reported as sasquatch becomes more readily accepted by the general public.

"There has never yet been a family of sasquatches spotted on Mount Washington. Wouldn't it be ironic for such a family to be living near a Resort that emphasizes family vacations?"

Getting to the Comox Valley by air is becoming even easier.

A new airline offering floatplane service from downtown Comox to downtown Vancouver saw its inaugural flight touch

Flying here continues to get easier, according to 1 million passengers.

down in Comox Harbour on April 1.

West Coast Air offers six scheduled flights from Monday to Friday and two on Saturday and Sunday, providing convenient access to and from the Lower Mainland.

"The Town of Comox and the region have been developing the infrastructure and support for this type of service over the last 10 years. West Coast Air has a tremendous reputation and will add a vital and convenient transportation link for the entire North Central Island region," said John Watson, Executive Director, Comox Valley Economic Development.



"The Comox Valley has been an area we've had our eye on for some time," said Rick Baxter, President and CEO of West Coast Air.

"It's a thriving business community with diverse industry and significant development opportunities. It's clear that travel time needs to be minimized."

Cutting down that travel time will provide an opportunity for increased visitors to the Valley and its many attractions, including Mount Washington Alpine Resort.

While floatplane service is new in Comox, land-based air travel is not. **The Comox Valley Airport celebrated its one millionth passenger in May.** The new terminal on Knight Road only opened in 2004, Comox Valley Airport Commission CEO Chuck Fast said.

The airport saw a 30 per cent increase in business last year, and this spring was already seeing 15 per cent more business. "The market awareness is increasing," Fast said.

An increase in air travel has its own set of challenges, like crowded passenger seating areas. The airport commission is

already looking at expanding the terminal.

"What we failed to dream was the economic development that would come because of the airport access," Fast said. "That's not a normal community stimulus. It's because of the transportation link."

The airport is often the first stop for prospective ski teams looking to use Mount Washington as a training facility leading up to the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver and Whistler.

The winning contract for design development of the airport international service expansion went to Stantech. One of the partners is Thomas Moore Architects,



which designed the new Victoria Airport terminal. Fast estimates the expansion will cost \$30 million before it is complete.

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Tourism Mount Washington

continued from page 6

In other words, enhancing the overall experience for visitors and maximizing benefits for members.

Tourism Mount Washington is also part of a move to take the Resort to London in the fall – attending the Metro Ski and Snowboard Show. “It’s going to open up a market for us,” she said.

Next season the Tourism Mount Washington board will concentrate on building its membership – which means building trust and a following from the resort community.

The biggest challenge facing the organization, said Nicholson, is that the concept is new, and owners in the resort community want to see how things develop before they will commit to it.

The organization has been put in place for the benefit and common interest of the accommodation and business owners and providers, she added. “The model that we’re using is a tried and tested model which mixes the benefits and collected wisdom of a group of stakeholders,” she said.

Getting that message across to individual owners has been difficult, however. Because of privacy issues, the strata councils cannot provide Nicholson with phone lists of their members. The group will hold its first annual general meeting on Thanksgiving weekend.

News In Brief

continued from page 2

Earlier this spring, provincial ministry of environment officials noted there were at least **160 marmots in captivity and go in the wild**, with more pups supposedly on the way. The Marmot Foundation would like to see 400-600 marmots thriving before they will consider the species to be recovered. Several of those in captivity are lodged at the Tony Barrett Marmot Recovery Centre at Mount Washington.

Mount Washington Alpine Resort lost a great friend on April 15. **Glenn Willis Jordan** died after an illness. Jordan was quite involved with disabled skiing at the Resort. “He was so completely dedicated to skiing,” Resort Marketing Director Karen Bonell said. Jordan is survived by his wife of 58 years, Anne; daughters Sandie, Lorraine and Sharel (Andrew) and son Dale (Eleanor); 10 grandchildren, six great-grandchildren and his brother, Sid.



Mountain Bike Explosion

continued from page 5

This year they cap it with the **B.C. Cup Provincial Finals** August 30-31. “For us to be able to hold a provincial title is a big honour,” Manara said.

The **Bearclaw Invitational Slopestyle**, which drew 5,000 spectators last year, is back August 23. The **Norco Learn to Ride week** is July 7-11. The Resort holds a **Jump Jam** September 7, and **Back to Bike School** September 8-12.

The mountain bike season ends September 20 with the **Sleemans Downhill Race**.

Although the sport is still quite young, it’s growing at Mount Washington. One of the things the Resort has done to manage growth, says Manara, is join the organization Bike Parks of B.C. It’s a partnership program with Tourism BC and comprises a collective of western Canadian resorts wanting to promote their bike parks and other amenities. “Because it’s still such a young sport, it’s neat to see it in terms of growing,” he says.

“They help us as a group to bring the best of the province together and showcase what B.C. has to offer.”

Bruce Turner

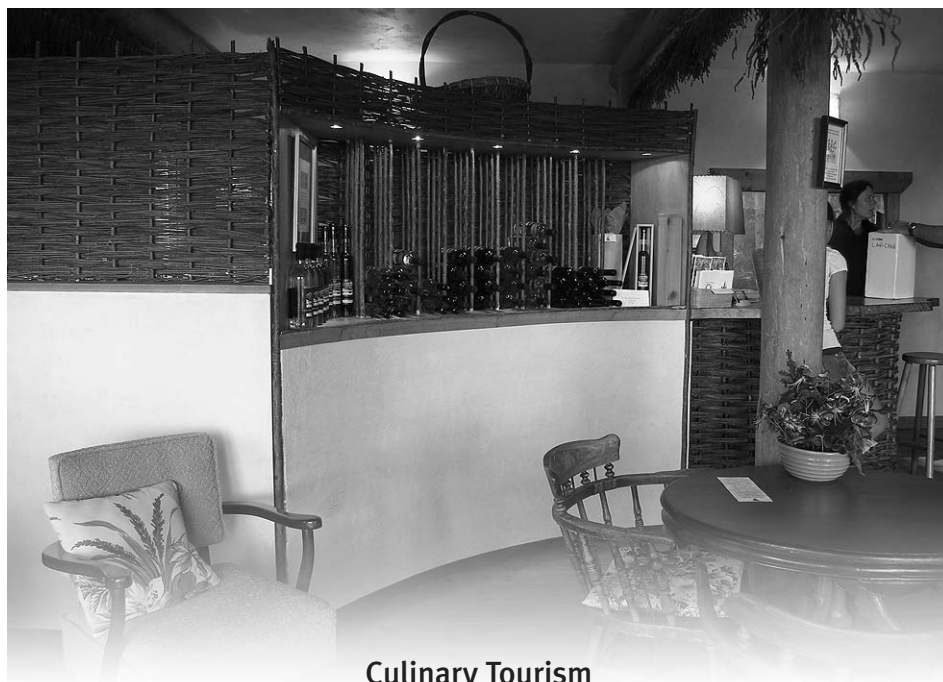
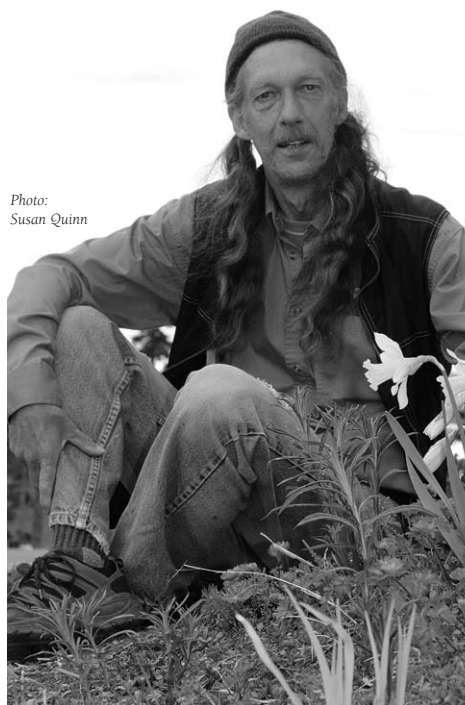
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Turner sets his own timetable, working when he wants to, and taking time off to get out in the outdoors mountain biking or fishing when he doesn’t. He averages 40 hours a week and is never far from his cellphone – he’s even taken calls from staff while fishing in the middle of Dragon Lake near Quesnel.

He still manages to ski 30-40 days every winter. He considers himself semi-retired. “I’m a recluse,” he admits. “I live alone up here with my cat, Smokey and I’m happy like that.”

As Turner walks back to the Bobcat to continue cleaning up the courtyard, he is asked if he could live anywhere else in the world, where would it be? He answered readily. “I haven’t found any place better than this.”

Photo:
Susan Quinn



Culinary Tourism

continued from page 1

Campbell said the whole idea of the “slow food” trend is to focus on single ingredients, like going somewhere just to taste the cheese, learning who the best garlic growers is, or finding rare breed local and regional farmers.

Culinary tourism is an economic driver that helps sell B.C. as an attractive tourist destination, Culinary Tourism BC asserts.

Gary Hynes, editor of Eat magazine, is inclined to agree with that point. “I believe a case can be made in 2008 that British Columbia is now the capital of food in our country,” Hynes writes in a note from the editor in Eat’s May-June 2008 issue.

“We have the chefs, restaurateurs, farmers, vintners and food producers in

this province to thank for helping British Columbia be the best place on Earth to eat,” Hynes wrote.

Mount Washington Alpine Resort recognizes the importance of supporting local growers, which is one reason they have planned the first annual Alpine Food Festival, September 5-7.

“Culinary tourism has definitely been a trend, and we think we’re perfectly poised to promote this trend,” Mount Washington Alpine Resort Director of Marketing, Karen Bonell said.

The Resort is located in the Comox Valley, which itself is rich in culinary delights. Promoting eating that which is grown close to home, and supporting local growers and artisans in the area is the goal behind the inaugural Alpine Food Festival, she added.

Above: Tasting Room and retail area at Middle Mountain Mead on Hornby Island, BC’s newest wine growing region.

Photo: Neil Havers

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Photo: Rick Gibson

Phase 1 Sold Out

Last summer, work crews moved around tonnes of rock along Nordic Road to clear and service Beaufort Heights, a project by Victoria developer Chris Le Fevre.



This summer, people driving along that road can expect to see building activity of a different sort. Half a dozen homes are planned for some of the **Beaufort Heights lots**, Le Fevre said. Phase I has sold out and there are some resales available already.

While lot owners turn their focus on their individual homes, Le Fevre will concentrate on Phase II for the summer of 2008. "The 2008 summer has an extensive servicing program to see Beaufort Phase II fully completed," Le Fevre said.

Also last summer, land was cleared off the main parking lot at Mount Washington Alpine Resort for **Pacific Ridge**, 12 ski-in, ski out townhouses. LeFevre says finishing these lots is a project for 2009. The development is still under consideration by the Comox Valley Regional District.

Le Fevre's development concept includes mountain estates, townhomes and mixed-use lots in a village setting above the Alpine Lodge. He would also like to see a freestanding food and beverage establishment built at the summit of Mount Washington, but says that is a project for the future.

"This is a project that is currently in the concept stage, but deemed a high priority amenity on the mountain," he said.

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International Award Winning Natural Pastures cheese ready for market.

Photo: Neil Havers

Comox Valley Culinary Tourism

continued from page 7

When they do a tasting of the seven different wines Beaufort offers, they first focus on the wine itself. Then they start thinking about what it's good to eat with, he adds.

Before they opened the winery, the Vandermolens invited representatives from Natural Pastures Cheese Company to come out and do a wine pairing with some of their award-winning cheeses, which they will sell in their shop.

Natural Pastures in April won a Best of Class award for its Comox brie at the 27th Biennial World Championship Cheese Contest in Wisconsin.

The company's Garlic and Chives Verdelait also won a silver medal in the flavoured semi-soft cheeses category.

Paul Sutter, a master cheesemaker from Switzerland, joined Natural Pastures in 2002. His creations have garnered the artisan cheese company many national and international awards since then - close to 40 of them.

Sutter uses locally produced milk for his cheeses, and creates most of his cheese by hand.

Food is abundant in the Comox Valley, both on land and in the sea. Fanny Bay Oysters is synonymous with shellfish, and has been since Glen and Sharon Hadden first opened the processing plant 23 years ago.

The plant is now owned by Taylor Shellfish Farms, a Shelton, Wash.-based company.

Fanny Bay Oysters has a seafood shop at the Buckley Bay Petro-Canada station, adjacent to the ferry terminal to Denman Island. Their product, which ranges from raw to smoked oysters, salmon candy to pates and spreads, is collected, processed and packaged locally.

Beaufort Winery will also carry Fanny Bay Oysters for picnickers wanting a tasty snack.

In Comox, two of the best places to go for fresh seafood are the Comox dock

and Aquatec Seafood Ltd., on Guthrie Road.

Aquatec has been providing finfish, shellfish and smoked seafood in Comox for nearly 30 years. The company began offering value-added salmon processing in the mid-1980s and still employ 50 people in their processing plant, which has since branched out.

Aquatec also has a retail store, Hooked on Seafood, where they specialize in smoked salmon and other seafood treats that are ideal for entertaining. They are renowned for the salmon candy and award-winning salmon pepperoni.

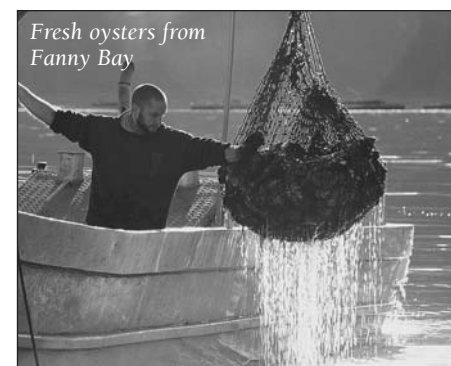
Aquatec will also custom process and smoke customers' fish, and ship the finished product to them if they are from out of town.

Take a stroll down to the Comox dock and you can be rewarded with fresh halibut, tuna, prawns and more available for purchase from local fishers. Variety varies with the season. And by the way, the view isn't so bad either.

There are many more examples of producers in the Comox Valley and Campbell River region, growing every type of vegetable and fruit imaginable, and some specialty items such as emu and bison.

"We've been doing so much work here trying to attract investment in the culinary food and agri-tourism sector," said Lara Greasley, Manager, Market for Invest Comox Valley.

Last year Invest Comox Valley focused on the Farmer's Market, which began as a Saturday morning event during the spring, summer and fall growing seasons and has now expanded to Wednesdays at Simms Millennium Park and indoors at the Native Sons Hall in the fall as well.



Fresh oysters from Fanny Bay

Photo: Boomer Jerritt



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Third floor one bedroom sunny suite in Bear Lodge. Watch the sun set over the Beaufort Mountains in Strathcona Park. Spacious plan with open living area and entertainment style kitchen. Bear Lodge offers rain screen technology and a slopeside location that is hard to beat. **\$252,900**

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In the Comox Valley

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Ptarmigan Ridge

Features Include:

- One Bedroom Apartments located on Henry Road
- Apartments are Furnished
- Drive To Access
- Propane Fireplaces
- Self-contained Kitchens
- Ski Storage Lockers off Lobby
- Breathtaking Mountain Views
- Convenient Location to Ski Lifts and Strathcona Provincial Park.

- 204** Facing strathcona Park **\$169,900**
- 303** Top floor, facing the slopes **\$164,900**
- 304** Top floor, facing Strath. Park **\$177,500**
- 307** Top floor, facing the slopes **\$177,500**



Lots for Resale!

Building sites available at Beaufort Heights. You will find these lots in the Phase 1 development. ACT FAST on these!

- Lot #3** (No GST) **\$129,900**
- Lot #7** **SOLD!** (No GST) **\$114,900**
- Lot #22** **\$115,000**
- Lot #30** **\$114,900**



A Bright Buy!

Very unique and bright corner suite in Snowbird. 3 bedroom townhome with loads of natural light and extra windows. Very quiet location in the building and easy access to parking and skiing. 2 bathrooms, sauna, electric fireplace, open living area.

MAKE AN OFFER! **\$267,500**



Features Include:

- Elevator Access
- Spectacular Views of Strathcona Park and the Ski Runs
- Above & Underground Parking
- Propane Fireplaces
- Convenient Location to all amenities
- Furnished units ready to go
- Ski Storage Room off the Lobby with separate lockers for renters

- 108** 3 bedroom, views of ski runs **\$269,900**
- 118** 2 bedroom and spa room, view of ski runs and Strathcona Park **\$299,900**
- 208** 3 bedroom **SOLD!** ski runs **\$274,900**
- 302** Penthouse (1600 sq. ft.) **\$425,900**



Many Upgrades!

3 bedroom townhome location in the Alpine Village of Mt Washington. Many upgrades have been done and the suite is in immaculate condition. Lower deck has hot tub. Building is very well maintained and easy access to parking and skiing. **\$274,900**



Close to Alpine Lodge!

Spacious, well-kept townhome within a few minutes stroll of the Alpine Lodge. 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms and sauna. The inside is well cared for with a huge space in the lower floor for sleeping or recreating. Enjoy the outside patio, taking in the sunsets and mountain views. Ski-in and out access to the slopes. Fantastic location and great value. **\$275,000**



Creekside House

Rarely do suites in Creekside House hit the open market. One owner, immaculately maintained 3 bedroom suite available. Quality plus building built by the same builder of Raven Lodge. Creekside is located immediately adjacent to the loading area of the Green Chair so is about as ski in and out friendly as you can get. Easy access to Nordic and Strathcona Park.

- 102** Ground Floor, 3 bedroom **\$297,500**
- 305** Top Floor, 3 bedroom facing the ski slopes **\$399,900**
- 303** Top Floor, 2 bedroom facing the ski slopes **\$349,900**



Closest to Alpine Lodge!

3 bedroom townhome in tip top shape! Ski in and Out from this two level home. 3 bedrooms, two bathrooms and plenty of storage. Bright sunny exposure and a location hard to beat. **\$275,000**



Living Area Redone!

The living area is spectacular! Completely redone living area with custom cabinets and flooring. Downstairs 3 bedrooms and sauna. 2 bathrooms, 2 balconies and quiet location, close to skiing and parking. **\$324,900**



Features Include:

- Outdoor Swimming Pool, Sauna & Hot Tub
- Underground Parking
- Propane Fireplaces
- Ski Storage Room off Lobby
- Convenient Location to Amenities
- Mountain / Strathcona Park Views

- 111** 3 Bedroom facing Strath. Park **\$274,900**
- 209** 4 Bedroom facing Strath. Park **\$344,900**
- 403** Large 3 Bedroom facing slopes **\$274,900**
- 405** 3 Bed **SOLD!** slopes **\$249,900**
- 506** 3 Bedroom Penthouse facing Strath. Park and ski runs **\$264,900**



Hub of the Village!

Right smack in the hub of the Village! Easy access to the slopes (ski-in and out), yet close to parking and Village amenities. 4 bedroom townhome on 2 levels. Over 1600 sq. ft. with 3 bathrooms, sauna and loads of storage. Nice large deck. **\$325,000**



Family Wanted!

Affordability is the key with this inexpensive chalet located in the Alpine Village of Mount Washington. Very unique design with lots of vaulted ceilings and open cozy plan. Three small bedrooms and very solidly built. The living area is designed to have the Mount Washington rock chimney offer warmth. Hot tub room, loads of storage and more! **\$349,900**



Features Include:

- Slopeside Location
- Fully Furnished
- Hot Tub
- Front Desk Service
- Caretaker
- 15 Year Envelope Warranty
- Underground Parking

- 207** 2 Bedroom facing slopes **\$269,900**
- 409** Top floor, 2 Bedroom facing slopes **\$289,900**



Spacious

Townhome Living!

Over 1900 square feet of townhome living! Easy access to both slopes and parking and loads of natural light in this spacious mountain home. 4 plus bedrooms and incredible living area with vaulted ceilings. Plenty of storage too! Building envelope has been redone. **\$379,900**



Forbidden Plateau

Commercially Zoned Property with a View!

Commercial zoning allows for multiple uses. Chalets, restaurants, cabins, etc. Fabulous 180 degree views of Vancouver Island, Georgia Strait and the mainland mountains. Build your dream mountain retreat next door to Strathcona Park. Hike in the summer and ski in the winter. Year round recreation, only a 30 minute drive to downtown Courtenay on a well maintained road. Hydro available at the lot line. **\$399,900**





Nestled on a Knoll

Half duplex for sale in the Alpine Village located on a knoll with views of the ski runs. There is also a common area shared with the other side offering a large family room, sauna, laundry, and a totally private separate suite. Buy one side or both.

BUY ONE OR BOTH \$325,000 each



Parkview Place End Unit!

Located near the loading area of the Hawk Chairlift this unit has 3 bedrooms and 2,400 sq. ft.! Very spacious floorplan with 3 levels. Main floor features a large open kitchen and living areas, 2 bathrooms and laundry facilities. Upper level features 4 bedrooms and a bathroom. Bottom level is a double garage with loads of storage space.

\$449,900



Ocean View!

You can see the ocean from this chalet located in the Alpine Village of Mount Washington. On 3 levels, the lower level is a self contained suite whilst the upper 2 floors have spacious rooms and an open plan. Sauna on the main floor with huge living area. Close to parking and loads of morning sun!

\$525,000



Rock Faced Fireplaces!

Lovingly maintained chaleton Fosters Place with 3 bedrooms in the main area and a separate 2 bedroom suite down and an unfinished basement too. Each suite features a rock-faced fireplace and is totally finished. The upper suite can accommodate 12 people and the lower level 7. Other features include 2 decks, sauna and storage.

Price includes website. **\$564,900**



Perched on a Ridge!

3 bedroom executive townhome with stunning spectacular views of Strathcona Park. The Master suite encompasses the entire top floor and the Living room is vaulted

almost up the roof of the entire building. Common area includes, hot tub on it's own private deck and sauna. What more to say than "WOW!"

\$499,900



Remarkable Location!

You will discover the Frozen Frog. Separated into two suites, this single family home has all the space you will need. Rent out part or all. Beautiful southwest views out towards Strathcona Park. Easy access to skiing and parking. Three bedrooms up and twodown. Two woodburning fireplaces, updated kitchen and more!

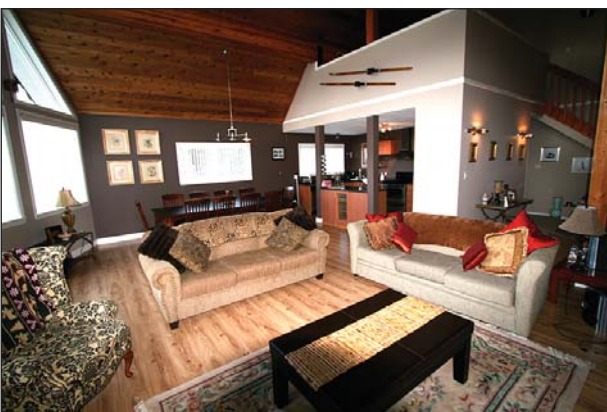
\$525,000



Near New Village Core!

A SPECTACULAR MOUNTAIN home with truly ski in, ski out access, a few minutes stroll from the Alpine Lodge. This is absolutely the closet chalet to the proposed village core. Many options for this property from family living to rental opportunities. Well cared for with cathedral ceilings and low maintenance. Unique property in a spectacular location.

\$589,900



In a word... Stunning!

Located on the upper side of Fosters Place on Mount Washington is this STUNNING mountain chalet. 4+ bedrooms and a HUGE living area! This mountain home boasts a beautifully appointed interior finished to the highest of standards. Ski in and out access and close to Strathcona Park for nordic skiing in winter and summer hiking. Golf courses, beaches, international airport all just 30 minutes away.

\$699,900



Builder's Own Home!

Located in Nordic Heights adjacent to Strathcona Park! Interior finished with loads of wood and windows to take advantage of light and to create a cozy warm feel. Easy access to ski slopes just out the back. Where else can you purchase a gorgeous home in an alpine setting! Three large bedrooms, open living area, large sauna, loads of storage & inviting architecture. Enjoy "The Strathcona Mountain House".

\$699,900

Why List your Mount Washington home with Rick Gibson and Royal LePage in the Comox Valley?

- ▶ The Royal LePage website receives over 800,000 visits a per month.
- ▶ Rick Gibson's 3 web sites receive over 8000 unique visits per month.
- ▶ 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 over 20 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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from \$209,900**



2 Separate Owner Suites!

A very unique property in the Alpine Village. Only 14 years old, this spectacular property is perched to take in the sunset views of Strathcona Park, yet virtually ski in and out and close to parking. 14 foot ceilings, open plans, 2 separate owner suites plus self-contained suite in the basement. Sauna, loads of storage and more. **\$749,900**



2700 Square Feet of Luxury!

Never before has a home of this style and quality been available on the Mount Washington market. Over 2,700 square feet with 6 bedrooms and 4 bathrooms. No expense has been spared from the silestone quartz kitchen, hardwood floors, solid cedar beams, log styled exterior to the open hearth style gas fireplace. All rooms are open and spacious. Fosters Place is Mount Washington's only drive-in, ski-out location. If you have been looking for the "something special", this is the one. **\$799,900**

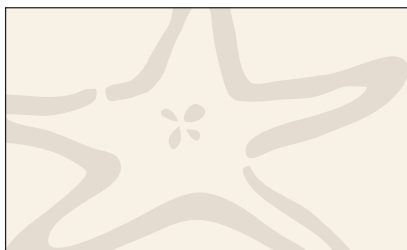


Large Custom Built Log Home!

Looking for a large property on Mount Washington? This log home on Fosters Place offers ski-in, ski-out access and can be partitioned off to be anywhere from a 2 bedroom suite to 11 bedrooms. Home includes 4 separate living areas complete with kitchens, 4 large decks, hot tubs, sauna, and a fantastic location. Property can be rented to 4 different groups. **\$899,900**



Contact: Rick Gibson, Royal LePage in the Comox Valley Ph: 250-334-3124 (24 hrs) Direct: 250-338-1723 www.rickgibson.ca



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