



BCMC

BC Mountaineering Club
Newsletter

UPCOMING BCMC SOCIAL

At the ANZA Club 7:30 pm

Tuesday, April 10 - Adam Palmer reports on a two week expedition into the Stave Glacier area in August 2011

April 2012, Vol 90, No. 4

British Columbia Mountaineering Club
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CLUB EQUIPMENT FOR HIRE

The club maintains a satellite phone and ice tools, which are available for rental by members only.

Ice Tool - \$5 per day per tool
 Satellite Phone - \$60/week; \$10 per day + \$2 per minute used

Fees are non-refundable and payable in advance and a refundable deposit may be required, at the equipment custodian's discretion. Instructional Programs are exempt from rental fees, all other uses are subject to the rental fees.

The satellite phone is rented from Peter Gumplinger (604-733-8264), who should be contacted at least 3 weeks prior to the day it is wanted.

Ice climbing axes are rented from Werner Grzimek.

The **BC MOUNTAINEERING CLUB NEWSLETTER** is an official publication of the B.C. Mountaineering Club and is published 10 times per year (every month except July and August). All material within this newsletter is copyright © British Columbia Mountaineering Club.

Cover Photo: Darlene Anderson skiing near Mt Taylor in the Duffey (Photo: Helen Habgood)

Back Page Photos

Upper Photo: Gin Peak BCMC Group, photo James Clark
Lower Photos: BCMCers having fun on Brian Wood's 2012 Igloo Building Course Photos by Alena Prchalova and Sharif Entazari

Submit Your Content:
editor@bcmc.ca

Submissions: We want you to write for us! Any submitted news, events, trip reports, letters relevant to the BCMC will be published unless the club executive decides otherwise.

About Submissions: For photos, high resolution is much appreciated. Submitted material may be edited for clarity or brevity, or for consistency with club policies. Opinions and comments expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the BCMC.

Scheduled trips: How they work

Participation on club trips is open to any person with adequate skills and experience, subject to the approval of the trip organizer. All non-member participants must sign a disclosure and waiver form relieving the club and all other participants on the trip from any liability. A trip organizer is not a certified guide. The function of the organizer is to organize the trip, ensure that it gets underway, know the access to the area, and know a route or routes on the climb. It is expected that each person on a club trip has the necessary skills, experience, fitness, and equipment. The organizer may specify certain equipment mandatory for participation in a trip. Any person who attempts to participate in a club trip without such mandatory equipment may be requested to withdraw. Each person on a club trip is responsible for his or her own safety and for checking the equipment used. Please be considerate and call the trip organizer more than 1 day prior to the trip.

If you are given a ride, please remember to pay the driver your portion of the car costs. If you decide not to go on a trip for which you have previously registered, please be courteous and inform the trip organizer.

**TRIP SCHEDULE ~ Sign up, updates and details at www.bcmc.ca
All trips are skiing unless otherwise noted**

April 2012 Trips

4	Wednesday Night Indoor Climbing - Cliffhanger Vancouver	Matt Mussallem	604-551-1670
6-8	Mamquam Mt. - South: Skiing + Snowshoeing C3/4	Stanislav Liarsky	604-983-4476
8	Mt. Tszil (beginner friendly) C3	Don Montrichard	
11	Wednesday Night Indoor Climbing - Cliffhanger Vancouver	Matt Mussallem	604-551-1670
13-16	Spearhead Traverse C3	David Hughes	604-980-6484
14-15	Mount Jimmy Jimmy C2	Marcus Dell	604-831-4117
14-15	Wasp Creek - C2/3	Greg Stoltmann	604-926-6496
21	Howe Sound Crest Trail - B2-C2/3	Jim Vercammen	604 733-8914
21	Mt. Slalok - C3/4	Craig Speirs	604-925-3675
21-22	The Sphinx Cancelled - C3	Philip Kubik	604-266-5873
22	Needle Peak (beginner friendly) - C3	Don Montrichard	
28	Sugarloaf Mtn. Snowshoeing - D2	Alastair Ferries	604-329-1637
28	Mt. Harvey - North Face Ramp - Full - C4	Don Montrichard	
28	Mt. Currie - D3/4	Darlene Anderson	604-789-8020
28-29	Rock Climbing Multi-pitch Climbing In Squamish -	Adrian Lazar	
28-29	Mt. Shuksan via White Salmon Glacier - C4	Peter Gumplinger	

April 2012 Programs and Instructional Days

14-15	ISystems for Mountaineering – Haul System Basics	A5	Justin Bennett	604-813-4666
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NEWS AND NOTICES

New Members

The club welcomes the following new members: Lawrence Blatchford, Chris Brewer, Patricia Lee, Edward McCarthy, Michael Odell, Gabriel Piper, and Christopher Yarnell.

Upcoming Film on Sherpas (April 11)

Sherpas: The True Heroes of Mount Everest

A film by Hari Thapa, hosted by VIFF and Reel Causes. Climbing Everest is unimaginable without the support of hired Nepali Sherpas. In this compelling film, Sherpas share their stories and what it means to work for Western climbers. Q&A with director Hari Thapa via video conference from Kathmandu!

April 11, 7:00pm (doors at 6:30pm)

VIFF Vancity Theatre (1181 Seymour St., Vancouver)

Tickets \$15 (plus \$3 VIFF Membership if needed) (100% of ticket price will be donated to TRAS)

New Bouldering Gym: The Hive

A new bouldering gym called The Hive has opened at 570 Industrial Avenue and is offering a 10% discount to BCMC members on memberships. Check out their website at www.hiveclimbing.com.

COMMENTARY AND ARTICLES

BC government approves Jumbo Glacier resort

Comment by Michael Feller

On 20 March the BC government officially approved the highly controversial and divisive Jumbo Glacier resort, Glacier Resorts Ltd. The proposed resort, as such proposed developments in BC always do, received an Environmental Assessment Certificate in 2004, which included 195 commitments to mitigate environmental impacts. The resort master plan was approved in 2007. The Minister of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations is supposed to pursue the establishment of a large wildlife management area to protect Grizzly bear habitat, detrimental effects on which would be one of the major impacts of the proposed resort.

The resort could be North America's only year-round, glacier-based ski resort. The resort will be in the Purcell Mountains, 57 km west of Invermere, on the site of an old sawmill. The completed ski resort will feature up to 23 lifts, and a 3,000 metre-high gondola. Initial objections from different Indian bands, claiming spiritual affinity with the land, among other values, were overcome when the government and Glacier Resorts Ltd. offered the bands land, money, and "a benefits agreement" in the case of the Shuswap Indian band and Glacier Resorts Ltd. Objections from the majority of the inhabitants of this region of the Kootenays and the local regional district, as well as from numerous other people and organizations, were insufficient to sway the government from its blinkered 'develop at all costs' approach to our land.

- The minister approved the Master Development Agreement under the Land Act and Ministry of Lands, Parks and Housing Act.
- The Master Development Agreement is an agreement between the project proponent and the Province for development of provincial Crown land under the All Seasons Resort Policy.
- The Master Development Agreement contains all of the terms and conditions under which the resort can be developed, as well as outlining events of default, insurance requirements, fees to be paid and terms of renewal.
- The proponent has requested that Jumbo Glacier Resort be designated a resort municipality. The Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development will review this application now that the Master Development Agreement has been approved.

Further information can be obtained at the following websites:

Jumbo Glacier Resort Master Plan: http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/resort_development/resort_plans/approved/Jumbo.htm

Jumbo Glacier Resort: <http://www.jumboglacierresort.com/>

The Spearhead Huts Project and the BC MC

David Scanlon

Some feel that the wilderness should remain in its natural form and be visited only by those with the necessary skills using 'no trace' techniques. Others feel that it should be exploited like any other natural resource. There are many opinions between these two extremes. So where do the Spearhead Huts figure into the equation?

The BC MC has a long history of hut building beginning from 1910. The first huts were a shelter from the elements, especially in the winter as well as a social center for the club, with little if any

opposition at the time. To build or not to build a backcountry cabin is an often debated topic of discussion. Many of the early club members came from Europe which has a strong tradition of mountain structures many of which are often close to a convenient cable car at a ski area and are not really in a wilderness setting. The club has received some very generous financial legacies over the years and also has a special account from royalties from sales of the “ 103 Hikes “ and thusly has monies in hand should it decide to contribute financially to the SHP.

Then there are the reasons for and against these huts. The SHC has finalized 3 hut locations suitable for winter and summer use. They are located in moderate skiing, low avalanche terrain, and in good hiking terrain so as to appeal to “ non-elitist “ skiers and hikers. Hut size has yet to be determined but the 35 to 40 number is the most often number used. That final figure will most likely be determined by the sleeping configurations. [for example, singles or doubles]. Keep in mind that whatever is drawn up has to be presented to BC Parks for their approval. For example, if they are presented with a hut size of 40 people they may give it back to the SHC and say no! It is too big. The SHC would then have to start over again and make the hut size smaller to get approval. Remember that BC Parks has the final say.

Then there is the contamination factor that is huge. Last weekend for example there were sited 40 to 50 people near the Pattison Tremor area, 15 to 20 on Pattison, 10 camping sites seen, 2 being as far back as the Diavolo Glacier. All these were seen on 1 day. Even the day trippers have to do their business somewhere and the mess in the spring has to be seen to be believed. By having cabins, most of this contamination would be eliminated.

It has been said that cabins are people magnets and I think that is a good thing. From an environmental standpoint, as well as a social standpoint. A meeting place. If accommodation is assured through the booking system that will be in place, there would be no need to carry camping nor cooking gear, thus enabling less fit / older persons to enjoy an easier trip into the cabins and have comfortable accommodation out of the weather.. Again on cabins being people magnets. People will and are coming into the Spearhead in greater numbers each year regardless of their being huts there or not.

With a caretaker on site people will be encouraged to clean up after themselves and to take out all of their garbage. Any extra cleaning will be done by the caretaker thus all users will have clean accommodations. Upon arrival. The caretaker will have route information, keep the hut at a reasonable temperature using only the amount of fuel needed, so as to not have users pile on the fuel using it up unnecessarily, keep a record of supplies used as well as supplies needed.

There is to be a separate small room in each hut for a caretaker.

By being a part of this world class project, and being a BCMC member, you would have a discount for your hut fees. This perk would then hopefully entice new memberships for the club as well as to perhaps keep members longer.

There are tent platforms to be constructed at each hut site for those who will still want to tent it. By having these the surrounding area would not be trampled.

Huts can and have been used as a base for rescues. People still will have accidents.

A concern that the huts will be “taken over” by commercial users is a topic that keeps coming up. With a booking system in place this won't happen. Any guided groups would have to be kept at a minimum and weekday times would be encouraged.

The possibility of a hut being booked by a small club group of 5 or so for a summer or winter course would be a definite asset . Anything along this line would in all probability be encouraged to be done during week days also.

Some people find some cabins [or at least some cabin occupants disagreeable], and therefore would not use them. The SHC design and construction committee is planning on having separate sleeping pods / rooms of 6-8 -10 users, insulated to keep the noise reduced. This would help separate those early risers, and stay up late people from each waking each other other.

The Spearhead design and construction committee is also doing research into what are the best kind of toilets to have, what are most efficient kind of heating units to have, the best kind of cooking stoves to get, the best, longest lasting kind of building materials to use. This list just goes on and on and that is where this committee is at the present.

I've tried to cover everything here but there will be other points of view. That is why again at the April social we want to have another open mike session for you: the BCMC membership, to make your views known. Whether it be for or against your opinion counts

Squamish Gondola Proposal

Comment by Anders Ourom

There is a new proposal to build a tourist gondola through the heart of Stawamus Chief and Shannon Falls Provincial Parks (the "Parks"), at Squamish. It is by Ground Effects Developments Inc. The proposal would have substantial impacts on the Parks. It still needs some government approvals, in particular for removing a significant amount of land from the centre of the Parks. Please take a few minutes to learn about the proposal, and express your opinion. There's still time for you to make a difference.

The reasons that I believe this proposal is not in the public interest, and the interest of the climbing, hiking and conservation communities:

1. Land should not be taken from provincial parks for private development, with rare exceptions. What's the point of parks, if they're not truly protected? The Chief and area has outstanding natural, scenic and recreational values. The priority should be protecting those values.

2. There is nothing in the master plan for either of the Parks that would allow such a development. The Parks are well-established, with hundreds of thousands of annual user-days already, and make a huge contribution to the culture and economy of the area.

3. The impacts on the Parks and their users will be substantial, and greater than the developers claim. The benefits will likely be less.

4. There is a superior location nearby. A gondola to Goat Ridge, a few km south, could be based either in the established tourist centre of Britannia, or perhaps off the highway a few km north of Murrin Park. It would have better views, more room, still give access to the upper Shannon Creek basin, offer equal or better recreational opportunities, spread out development in the Squamish area, and not conflict with existing users or values, or the Parks. It may also fit better with the developer's long-term plans. That location should at least be thoroughly considered before a proposal to cram a gondola into the Parks is considered, let alone granted.

5. If the project proceeds, and fails, who will clean up the mess? What financial guarantees would the developers provide?

This is much more than a local issue, and those who come after us will have to live with the consequences. Now's the time to say what you think about this.

How You Can Help

At this point the most effective thing to do is to write, and to inform everyone you know about what's happening. You can write to:

Premier Christy Clark premier@gov.bc.ca or (604) 775-1003
Terry Lake, Minister of Environment env.minister@gov.bc.ca or (250) 387-1187
Joan McIntyre, MLA joan.mcintyre.mla@leg.bc.ca or (604) 981-0045
Chief Ian Campbell, Squamish Nation chief_ian_campbell@squamish.net or (604) 982-8646
Mayor Rob Kirkham rkirkham@squamish.ca or (604) 892-5217 (see <http://www.squamish.ca/city-hall/mayor-and-council/meet-your-councillors> for contact information for councillors)
Chair Susan Gimse, Squamish-Lillooet Regional District sgimse@telus.net or (604) 894-6371 (see <http://www.slrd.bc.ca/siteengine/activepage.asp?PageID=20> for contact information for councillors)

State your views, the reasons you have them, why you're interested in this issue, who you are, and where you live. Remind them that government's job is to protect and manage parks, in the public interest.

The Proposal

Ground Effects' website is at <http://www.seatoskygondola.com> There's lots of information there about its proposal, naturally presented in as positive a manner as possible. Its owners are from Whistler. The proposed gondola would go from a base at the gravel pit between the Parks, through the middle of the Parks to a knoll in upper Shannon Creek, at about 900 m. For it to go ahead, it has to get a substantial strip of land taken out of the Parks. The only way that can happen is if the provincial government allows it.

Background

The Stawamus Chief (Siyám Smánit) and area was made a provincial park in 1995, after decades of lobbying, and years of study and discussion. It's a heavily used park, with over 100,000 annual hiker-days, a similar number of climber-days, a popular climbers' campground, and innumerable viewers and tourist visitors. Shannon Falls Provincial Park, just to the south, was created decades ago, and is primarily a viewing attraction, but offers some climbing. The Parks are contiguous, and both are bounded above and to the east by a line of bluffs and cliffs, below upper Shannon Creek basin. They are iconic natural features of British Columbia and Canada, and the Chief is an international climbing destination.

There is a gravel pit between the Parks, just off Highway 99. In 2004, a Whistler developer proposed building a gondola from the gravel pit to the second summit of the Chief. The Climbers' Access Society of B.C. helped lead the successful opposition. After our success, and with help from Mountain Equipment Co-op and others, the Land Conservancy of B.C. ("TLC") bought the gravel pit, for \$900,000. We wanted to ensure the Parks could never again be threatened by inappropriate development, such as a gondola. The gravel pit was rented to the highway project, to help pay for it, and the agreement was that the land would either go to the Parks, or possibly to a private buyer for some suitable, low impact purpose. Either way, it would have a restrictive covenant on title, to legally prevent unwanted developments such as gondolas.

That isn't what happened, and now we have to deal with the consequences.

From what's known, TLC tried to get Squamish to rezone the land to protect it, without success. BC Parks didn't have the purchase price for the land. (Chronic underfunding of BC Parks is an ongoing scandal.) TLC put a covenant on the land, which "...prevents a gondola going up the face of the Chief or ending in either provincial park..", and eventually sold the gravel pit to a buyer who

“..proposed a low key commercial use”. The price was \$2 million. He resold the land to Ground Effects. There may, of course, be more to the story.

The proposed gondola would avoid the restrictive covenant on a technicality. First, the top station would be outside (above) the Parks. Second, Ground Effects wants a strip of land taken out of centre of the Parks, to connect the gravel pit to the top. (It was quoted as saying a 20 m strip, but it seems likely to be wider.)The gondola would then neither be in, nor end in, either of the Parks. An unfortunate bit of legerdemain, and a nightmare for those who thought we’d dealt with this for once and for all in 2004.

(For more, see <http://www.straight.com/article-634541/vancouver/gondola-split-chief-park>)

Perhaps Ground Effects would say that it worked within the letter of the law, and blame (or credit) TLC for the covenant’s inadequate wording. If it is prepared to advance its plans by such tactics, it does not bode well. Complete transparency in these matters is in public interest. Any dealings between the various governments and Ground Effects, and any proposed agreement between it and the provincial government, should be entirely public. Also, just because it’s public, the land isn’t “free”. Ground Effects should pay a fair and public price for it, if it’s allowed to proceed. That’s no compensation for the impacts the development would have, but is the least to be expected.

Hopefully TLC is taking steps to enforce its rights, both legal and moral, against the intermediate buyer and against Ground Effects. It’s the least one would expect it to do. TLC should stand up for the public’s rights, even if it may not succeed. It seems to have made enough money on the sale to pursue the matter, and a court might see things differently.

Required Approvals

The required government approvals are:

District of Squamish.

Squamish-Lillooet Regional District.

B.C. Government.

Squamish Nation.

Ground Effects plans to obtain the remaining approvals, including possibly legislation to remove land from the Parks, by summer 2012, and then begin construction. Now’s the time to send your comments, especially to Premier Clark and the provincial government. They have an election coming up soon, and apparently haven’t decided yet what they’ll do. They advertise B.C. as “super, natural”, and should live up to that claim.

Impacts

Despite the vague, rosy claims on Ground Effects’ website, the gondola would have substantial impacts on the Parks and existing users.

Visual: Ground Effects claims that “.. our initial analysis shows there will be very little view impact from downtown Squamish, the Sea to Sky Highway or the Stawamus Chief.” What nonsense! The development would be highly visible from the Chief, Squamish, and the highway. The company probably wants it to be – good advertising for it, an ugly intrusion to most. The cleared strip, the trams (no doubt brightly coloured), and development at the upper station will be unmissable. There are photos on their website showing the view from different points, and if the Chief, the highway

and Squamish are visible from the gondola, the reverse is also true. Isn't the view half the point of the thing?

Clearcut: The clearcut strip would likely be 60 - 80 m wide or more (not 20), through the middle of the Parks. The area is bluffy, but heavily treed. The trees are up 30 to 40 m high. Squamish is a windy place, and trees often fall – especially at the edge of clearcuts. It is standard practice to clear a strip on both sides of such developments at least equal to twice the height of the adjacent trees. Just look at any gondola or powerline. The result? An 80 m (or more) wide clearcut. Instead of the claimed two hectares, probably closer to eight or ten. “Only” 8 - 10 hectares out of 517, but in a key location.

Noise: There would be much increased noise at both Parks, due to vehicle traffic, base operations, and an overhead gondola. Visit the base of an existing gondola, to hear for yourself. The noise would probably most affect the Chief campground, the lower part of the backside trail, and Shannon Falls. The base area is within a few hundred m of the campground, and the gondola would pass near the campground, and the start of the trail.

Facilities: Ground Effects makes vague statements about what will happen at the upper terminal. What would it actually build, when? It talks about a “first phase” – what's the “next phase(s)”? Does it know that there's a band of cliffs and bluffs below the proposed top station, making suggested hiking and mountain bike trails linking up with those at the Chief improbable?

Benefits to the Parks: None. You'd think that Ground Effects would at least promise that it would contribute to badly-needed trail work at the Chief, or something of the sort, whether or not it meant it. The Parks don't need any more development – there's already more than enough happening there. Why cram more in?

Precedent: The provincial government has a long history of allowing commercial and industrial development in parks, and of land withdrawals from parks for the benefit of developers. It is rarely of any benefit to the parks, or the public. Perhaps the most conspicuous example of this is Garibaldi Park. Allowing this proposal to go ahead would be an appalling precedent. The government needs to show some backbone when faced with these proposals.

A Better Alternative – Goat Ridge

Luckily, there is a superior alternative location for a tourist gondola, close by. (Assuming, that is, that a tourist gondola makes sense anywhere in the area.) That location would be from a base at Britannia Beach to an upper station on Goat Ridge, between the Parks and Britannia. (An alternative base would be off Highway 99, a few km north of Murrin Park, with the same upper terminal.) The advantages include:

Existing room, tourist infrastructure and traffic at Britannia – parking, B.C. Museum of Mines, restaurants, gift shops, etc. Parking and a base area at the second ‘level’ of Britannia may be most workable. A tourist gondola might even kickstart redevelopment at Britannia.

The gondola would be on mostly undeveloped private land, owned by the successor to the Anaconda Company and sitting for decades, or provincial government forest land.

The gondola and upper station would have much better views. The terminus would be 2 -3 km south of the proposed location, at about 900 m on an open shoulder of Goat Ridge, instead of in a valley with dense second growth forest.

A Goat Ridge gondola could still link into a trail network in upper Shannon Creek, and there's lots of room for a hiking and mountain bike trail network west and south on Goat Ridge, in the Petgill

Lake area. It's less bluffy, and Goat Ridge is more open than upper Shannon Creek.

The gondola and facilities would be less visible from Squamish and area.

No impacts on the Parks, and no need for cutting the heart out of them. A respectful separation would promote respect, and neighbourliness.

Few conflicts with other users – there are trails to Petgill Lake (popular) and Goat Ridge (not often hiked), perhaps some mountain bike trails in upper Shannon Creek basin, possibly traditional uses by the Squamish Nation, but that's all.

Spreading out recreation and tourist development in the Squamish area in a reasonable manner – not everything has to be crammed into the same place.

Good will, for being reasonable.

Lots of room to expand, if it's ever desired. (The history of private developments within parks is often messy, as they grow and increase their demands.)

It should not take long to properly examine this alternative, and the provincial government should require it. That is, similar studies and planning as were done for the Squamish proposal, and similar discussions. Not a cursory review, but a genuine detailed consideration of a better alternative. Ground Effects, or at least the investors behind it, must be in it for the long term, 20 – 50 years anyway. They say they'll spend \$15 - \$20 million, just on the "first phase" – whatever that is. But however much they and others may be emotionally committed to their proposal at the Chief, it's in their longer-term business interests to carefully look at a real alternative, and how their public and private plans might better work at Goat Ridge. They might also make more money.

As for the gravel pit? It should be bought by the provincial government, as it ought to have been all along, and added to the Parks. It would provide much-needed parking, and possibly room for camping.

Conclusion

Thanks for reading this, and please send in your comments as soon as possible. Your priority should be to write to the governments, ASAP. Of course, I welcome comments and feedback.

TRIP REPORTS

Gin Peak

Trip Date: Jan 28, 2012

Participants: Robin Roff, Anne Sophie Massard, Mike Hamata, Michelle Cohen, Rory Seaton, Caren Van Gastel, Darryl Leniuk, Jeff Ross (Organiser), James Clarke (Reporter)

Friday's avalanche and weather forecast were favourable and the scene was set for skiing off the summit of Gin Peak. The next morning was different and it was raining steadily when we headed to Whistler Olympic Park (WOP).

Jeff and I arrived at the gate at 8.22am and were told to wait as the park didn't open to 8.30am so we waited..... 8 minutes later the barrier was raised and we pulled forward, it was like entering some kind of research complex. When we explained we were here to back country ski the gate

person radioed ski patrol and told us to meet them in the lodge. Feeling like we were slipping behind the iron curtain we entered WOP.

The mood changed when we met ski patrol who told us no one had been up to Gin Peak since the last big snowfall so we would get the dual pleasures of breaking trail and fresh tracks. After handing over money for tickets we skied over to the trail head and signed out at the information board.

It was a great climb through the trees to the lake where we had a snack and were joined by another group of skiers. We headed across the lake and up a faint ridge to the treeline, at the treeline we were met by a windy white out and at a point that may or may not been the summit the group elected to turn back a go ski the short runs down to the lake.

Back amongst the tree the skiing was great, our turns were made in knee deep powder and we enjoyed three short laps before heading back to WOP through the trees. Through out the day Jeff had been the complete leader route finding, trail breaking and finally tail gunning on the way down, his reward, cruelly, was falling into a tree well immediately next to the information board at the trail head.

We skated back along the XC trails to the lodge, just in time for it to close, however two of the group managed to get them to sell slices of pizza.

Gin Peak is a great day trip, however the pay parking, signing in and out does stop it feeling wild. We were also able to report hearing snowmobiles that may or may not have been in the watershed. Finally we would have loved to got a beer and snack at the lodge but it seems like the Nordic scene in Whistler doesn't believe in apres.

Hollyburn Mountain

Trip Date: February 25, 2012

Participants: Joe Blakeman, Denise North, Murray Lashmar, Stetson, James Clarke (Organiser and Reporter)

The late announcement of the trip and avy conditions had meant the potential participants had changed quite a bit by Saturday morning when our small group headed out to Hollyburn. Unsurprisingly we were not the first there and the uptrack was well set. We climbed through the forest as the first skiers came back down watching their turns in the fresh snow. Expectation was building as we climbed onto the summit. Whilst eating our snack we were joined by more skiers, a snowshoer and one more dog. Stetson took the opportunity to simultaneously hunt a raven and to raid other peoples lunches.

We skied off the summit down the hiking trail across the plateau back to the trees for great skiing in the light snow (for the coast). All to soon we were back at the road. Murray left as it was his first trip out this winter and I decided Stetson should go back to the car for a sleep.

Joe, Denise and I then headed back for another run, near the plateau it was my turn around time so I left Joe and Denise and skied back to the car, more fresh tracks and more great snow.

Back home at 1.15 I was full of North Shore stoke and a couple of days later I received an email Denise thanking me for laying on the great conditions, if only it that easy but when the North Shore is good it is great.

