

**The Sunshine Coast Trail has a brand new hut-to-hut hiking passport!**



**T**his December Powell River Parks & Wilderness Society (PRPAWS) is launching a new initiative in partnership with local businesses and organizations. PRPAWS has produced a brand new full-colour passport for the Sunshine Coast Trail (SCT) that will highlight the huts, which have been built all along Canada's longest hut-to-hiking trail. The SCT Passport is available just in time for Christmas – and it's the perfect stocking stuffer for the hiker, or would-be hiker, in your life! Here's how the passport works:

1. Purchase a passport for \$5 from Tourism Powell River, or one of the participating businesses (see [www.sunshinecoast-trail.com](http://www.sunshinecoast-trail.com) for details).
2. Hike to one of the huts along the SCT and take a photo of yourself with the hut behind you.
3. Take your photo to the corresponding business and collect one of 12 unique stamps for your passport. Each participating business has its own unique stamp.
4. When you have collected all 12 stamps visit Tourism Powell River for your completion stamp and certificate, as well as have your name entered into a draw for some fabulous prizes!

"The Sunshine Coast Trail passport is something we have wanted to do for a long time, and with the huts in place the time is right," says Eagle Walz, president of PRPAWS. "According to Tourism Powell River the SCT is now the biggest tourism asset this community has. The passport is going to be

a wonderful souvenir for visitors who come to Powell River to hike the trail – and a fun incentive for locals to get out on the trail and visit the huts again, or for the first time."

The concept of the passport is based on similar models that have been designed for world-class trail systems around the world, such as the Camino de Santiago. PRPAWS Board Member Emma Levez Larocque and her husband Matt experienced the Camino earlier in 2013, and came back knowing they had to do something similar.

"Walkers loved the passport idea," Levez Larocque says. "We saw people going out of their way to get the special stamps, and on a long journey like that, it's a fantastic way of documenting your progress. And the completion certificate provides huge bragging rights! We hope the SCT passport will serve the same purpose here."

Walz says the passports are a great way to link the business community with the trail, and indicate to them how many people are enjoying the SCT.

"We have seen a large increase in traffic on the trail since the huts were built, especially this year's spike in visitations. It has become one of the reasons to visit or even move to Powell River, and we want to make sure that people understand the impact the trail has on the local economy."

The passport is available at Tourism Powell River and supporting businesses. All proceeds from this project will go towards the maintenance and enhancement of the SCT. For details about the passport and supporting businesses: [www.sunshinecoast-trail.com](http://www.sunshinecoast-trail.com). 🐾

## INSIDE:

**2** Are You Up for Winter Hiking?

**3** Lita's Bench

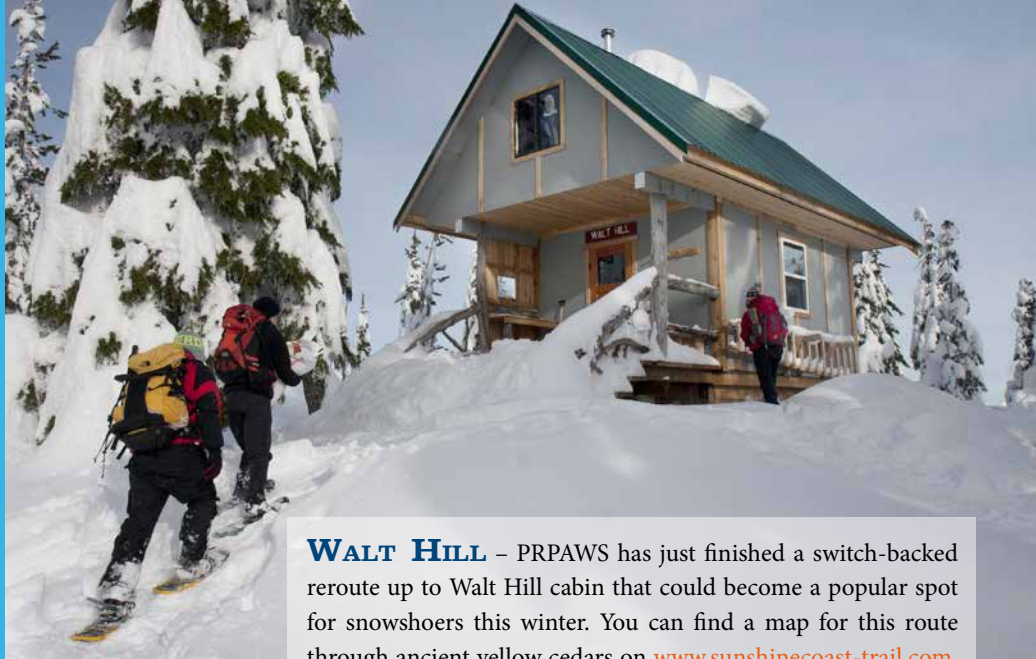
**3** NEW: Saltery Bay Kiosk

**4** Renew your membership

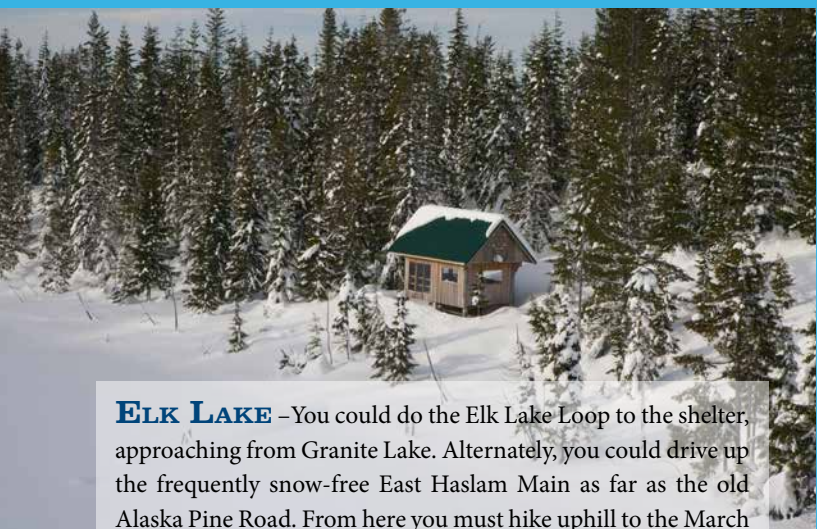


# Winter Hiking

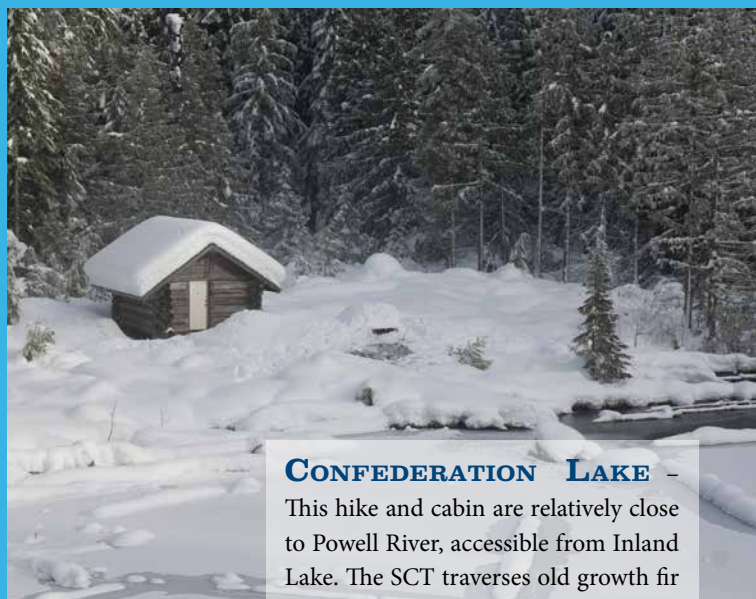
Are you looking for a great place to go hiking/snowshoeing this winter? We have some suggestions for you! As all of the winterized cabins are located in higher elevation areas, you must be prepared for snow and wintry conditions that likely require snowshoes. Often snow will be several feet high. Carry water and emergency rations and equipment. Start early in the day, not in the afternoon, because it will take you three to five hours depending on how high you can hike before you have to strap your snowshoes on. These hikes/snowshoe expeditions are all-day adventures during the short days of winter.



**WALT HILL** – PRPAWS has just finished a switch-backed reroute up to Walt Hill cabin that could become a popular spot for snowshoers this winter. You can find a map for this route through ancient yellow cedars on [www.sunshinecoast-trail.com](http://www.sunshinecoast-trail.com). It is accessible via Suicide Pass between Walt and Connell hills in the southern Smith Range. Thousand foot drops offer gorgeous views.



**ELK LAKE** – You could do the Elk Lake Loop to the shelter, approaching from Granite Lake. Alternately, you could drive up the frequently snow-free East Haslam Main as far as the old Alaska Pine Road. From here you must hike uphill to the March Lake turn-off. More than a kilometre eastward you will find the hiking trail rising southward up to Elk Lake.



**CONFEDERATION LAKE** – This hike and cabin are relatively close to Powell River, accessible from Inland Lake. The SCT traverses old growth fir and cedar forests, and late in winter the lake is frozen solid. Mists can hang on the treed hillsides. It's a beautiful day-hike up to the cabin and back, but be sure to start early unless you're camping out!



EAGLE WALZ

**ELEPHANT LAKE** – Often, in late fall you can drive quite far up Branch 41. Park before the snow starts to get too deep at the higher elevations and continue your hike along Branch 41. Once you reach the Elephant Lake turn-off you are close to the old growth that surrounds this magic lake, a lovely setting in a frozen bowl, and surely no mosquitoes.





EAGLE WALZ

**Above:** Jim Stutt working on Lita's Bench, off Branch 42.  
**Top right:** Lita helping out at the Marathon Shuffle.

## Lita's Bench

How do you thank someone who has been a dedicated volunteer and supporter for many years? We at PRPAWS decided it would be fitting to build and dedicate a bench along the Sunshine Coast Trail.

Lita Biron has been a board member of the Powell River Parks and Wilderness Society (1992), almost since the group's inception and throughout that time she has provided valuable services to the organization. With her trademark laugh and smiles she has promoted the Sunshine Coast Trail and led many hikes on it for the local Weekend Hikers. Most notably, Lita looked after the books, making sure they were balanced and kept up to date, even after her health did not allow her to get out into her beloved backcountry anymore.

This summer a large group of PAWSters was involved in building a short side spur off old Branch 42 and a bench in Lita's name. This



seemed a fitting spot, a seat with a view along the SCT, which Lita has helped to develop and promote lovingly over the years. Once we were finished we roasted smokies at the adjacent campfire and toasted Lita, declaring the bench open for the use and enjoyment by the public in her name. The bench looks out over Lois Lake, the Horseshoe Valley and the Knuckleheads. Many thanks for your contributions, Lita. 🐾

## Sunshine Coast Trail Buffer Survey

We are doing a survey and we need your input. PRPAWS trail maintenance volunteer crews have worked more than 2,000 hours along the SCT so far this year, ensuring hikers and runners have a safe experience following a well-marked and attractive trail. Sometimes this means PRPAWS has to relocate a section of the trail that would otherwise go through a new logging clear-cut. An adequate treed buffer\* is critical to maintain the recreation and tourism values of the SCT, and its viability. To determine what size of buffer trail users view as adequate we are conducting a survey, which can be taken online and accessed through our website [www.sunshinecoast-trail.com](http://www.sunshinecoast-trail.com). Please take two minutes to visit the website and fill out this short survey – your valued input is a very important part of this information collecting process. 🐾

\* A buffer is a tree reserve between the trail and a clear-cut.

## New Kiosk at SALTERY BAY

Have you been down to the southern end of the Sunshine Coast Trail lately? There, you will have noticed the new SCT kiosk and parking lot that was built in March of 2013, 300m east of the SALTERY BAY ferry terminal. The style of this kiosk emulates that of the nine huts that have been erected along the SCT over the past four years, and contains information about the trail and the people who have been involved in building it. This kiosk was funded by the ICET (Island Coastal Economic Trust) grant that PRPAWS received to help build the huts. A celebration to officially open the kiosk and mark all the positive changes to the SCT that the ICET contribution and 14,000 hours of volunteer labour have brought about will be held in the spring of 2014. Watch our Facebook page for details! 🐾



EAGLE WALZ

**Standing (L to R):** Terry Roberts, Don Krompocker, Bill Otto, Scott Glaspey. **Sitting (L to R):** Ron Diprose, Jim Stutt (designer of huts and building boss), Richie Bird, Eagle Walz

## The Missing Link!

Do you want to help us build one more shelter at Lois Lakeshore that would close the 35-km gap between Walt Hill Hut and Troubridge Hut? The ICET project is now complete and no further funding is available, so we need to find other sources of funding. Please make a donation at [www.sunshinecoast-trail.com/becomeamember.html](http://www.sunshinecoast-trail.com/becomeamember.html); \$20 will buy a bag of nails, \$50 a sheet of plywood and \$100, some lumber. With more, we can buy a roof. The donations will go toward building the missing link, and we will issue a tax receipt to you. Thank you very much in advance. 🐾

## President's Message

It has been another busy year for PRPAWS! For ongoing updates, please join us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/SunshineCoastTrail](http://www.facebook.com/SunshineCoastTrail) or check out [www.sunshinecoast-trail.com](http://www.sunshinecoast-trail.com). In a few quick points, this is what we have been up to:

This year we completed the Sunshine Coast Trail Enhancement Project that saw nine huts and a welcome kiosk built with the help of the Rotary Club of Powell River, the BOMB Squad and the Powell River ATV Club, as well as numerous other volunteers. The four-year project was made possible through the provincial government's Island Coastal Economic Trust (ICET), which paid for materials and transportation. PRPAWS matched \$160,000 through volunteer labour. BC Transmission Corporation, UBCM, the City of Powell River and the Regional District of



Eagle Walz on trail maintenance detail.

Powell River all made significant financial contributions; many smaller donations came from individuals, businesses and groups.

We have been working hard to promote the SCT. By partnering with Tourism Powell River over the last five years more than 30 articles and blogs about the SCT have been published locally, across Canada, the US, even England and China. Visitors from all over the world started showing up in numbers after the screening of the SCT trail running movie "XS-NRG" and the presentation of a SCT slide-show at the Vancouver International Mountain Film Festival this January past. Brochures, maps, our website and Facebook page are some of the ways people can find out about us – and they have been attracting growing international attention. The SCT has become Powell River's biggest tourism asset.

The City of Powell River purchased a private lot adjacent to Mowat Bay Park. We have already cleaned out and marked the trail through the lot. Now hikers can once again enjoy the direct route of Tony's Trail to and from Haywire Bay. Members of the PRPAWS Board and of the public appreciate this significant support for recreation and tourism.

We are very excited to be launching our SCT Passport this December, and hope that this initiative will help to raise some funds for trail maintenance and enhancement. Of course the use of the trail and huts is still free and it is not required that people buy a passport, but we hope that you find this a fun addition to your hiking experience and enjoy the trail in good health and spirits. 🐾



Find us on Facebook at:

[www.facebook.com/SunshineCoastTrail](http://www.facebook.com/SunshineCoastTrail)

## Renew your PRPAWS membership for 2014!

Individual: \$20 • Family: \$30

As a PRPAWS member you will be kept informed of PRPAWS activities, work parties, projects, events and more by email and through this newsletter. All membership dues and donations go to the maintenance and build out of the SCT. Please mail a cheque, with your name and email address, to:

**PRPAWS**

**Box 345**

**Powell River, BC V8A 5C2**

Or make an online donation at:

[www.sunshinecoast-trail.com/becomeamember.html](http://www.sunshinecoast-trail.com/becomeamember.html)



*Proud community supporter  
since 1939.*



Tel: 604.485.7135  
[www.oceanviewhelicopters.ca](http://www.oceanviewhelicopters.ca)

Great Coffee • Great Food • Great People



Coffee Roaster, Urban Bakery & Eatery  
#108, 4871 Joyce Ave, Powell River, BC V8A 5P4  
Crossroads Village • Tel 604.485.0011 • [rocoffee@live.ca](mailto:rocoffee@live.ca)

All photos by Emma Levez Larocque, unless otherwise noted.

Design and production by Melany Hallam, [www.maywooddesign.com](http://www.maywooddesign.com).