



## The People's Park

Powell River is blessed with a magnificent forested waterfront park, uplands and salmon streams. For over a hundred years this forest has held recreational and historical significance for the people of Powell River. But dating back even earlier than that are important cultural heritage sites from the Tla'amin First Nation whose people have lived on these lands for thousands of years.

The origin of the Town of Powell River is very much tied to the construction in 1910 of the Powell River Company pulp and paper mill. At the time, the government granted a large tract of land surrounding the Townsite to the Powell River Company to be used as a greenspace in perpetuity. It is in this forested greenspace where Millennium Park resides today.

In the late 1990's the company that owned this property gave notice that it would commence the logging of the timber there and put the land up for sale. In response, in 1999, several organizations in Powell River formed the Millennium Park Committee, and drafted the Millennium Park Proposal, aiming to preserve this greenspace for the people of Powell River as parkland, rather than seeing it developed as a subdivision.

The waterfront portion of the Millennium Park Proposal contains the historic Willingdon Beach Trail, located on a former logging railway bed that today contains displays of historic logging equipment. Over 300 people walk, jog or cycle this level trail daily. The park also contains land along McFall Creek, which together with McGuffie Creek, are the only two salmon streams in the heart of our community. Its ecosystems are rich and diverse in flora and fauna including some very large ancient trees. It provides a vital link for hiking, biking and wildlife to upland wilderness and recreation areas.



**L to R:** Rudi VanZwaaij, Powell River Forestry Museum Society; Gerry Durnin, Powell River Gardening Club; Eagle Walz, PRPAWS; Shawn Gullette, CUPE, Local 798.

After several years of fundraising and promoting the idea of a waterfront park in the heart of Powell River the Millennium Park Committee reached out and embarked on an inclusive campaign that brought the community together and established the Millennium Park Fund that received contributions from over 2,000 people.

In 2003 Norske Canada, the then-owner of the mill and adjacent greenspace, announced that it planned to dispose of its nonstrategic lands in the community, including the proposed Millennium Park land. The Millennium Park Committee transferred \$75,000 to the City as seed money for the purchase of Millennium Park. Council agreed to attach a referendum to the municipal ballot for \$1.5 million to acquire the land. The electorate voted yes, the land was bought, and the City established Millennium Park.

Subsequently, since the timber in the park was not owned by the City, but by Island Timberlands, a private forest company, the trees had to be obtained separately. In the fall of 2014 Island Timberlands and Council came to an agreement and the City through its Community Forest Reserve Fund acquired all of the trees in Millennium Park. It was a momentous occasion in our community, a legacy generations will enjoy. 🐾



### INSIDE:

- 2 Hut & shelter upgrades
- 3 A new trail running record
- 3 Stamp your Passport
- 4 SCT a boost to tourism



# Troubridge Emergency Shelter

Late September of 2014, early one morning, a number of trucks fully loaded set out from Powell River towards Mt. Troubridge. Much legwork had already been done: getting permission, planning, cutting material, pre-fabrication, toil of hands and minds. At an old clear cut site the group unloaded. From here the crew of eight men would be flown with accompanying equipment, food and the materials to construct an emergency shelter on the summit of Mt. Troubridge.

In 2010, a log cabin had been built about 2 km from the summit, and this would serve as base camp for the current endeavour. As the clouds drifted away from the summit the helicopter arrived, with a familiar and trusted pilot.

The plan was as follows: a receiving crew of two would be flown to the summit, a crew of two to the base camp, and the four remaining would remain and help pack all goods for flying. After a safety meeting around the machine, the engine roared to life and the excitement started: the thrill of the ride and the power of the air wash when near the machine – a carefully planned riot of noise and wind.

With crews in place, the long line was attached to the machine and material started to move up the mountain. At the summit, as tools arrived, the crew started scraping moss off the solid granite base where the hut was to be erected. The crew at base camp received supplies and gear to provide for the crew for the five days to come.

As the machine came into view, with a 100-foot line and a load of goods attached, the pilot would poke his head out the door to place the load in the exact spot pointed to by a crew



member below. Soon holes were being bored into the granite to install steel pins to anchor the concrete foundation to the mountain. The loads kept coming, pre-fab forms were set in place, braced, water barrels dropped near the building site. Two thousand pounds of dry mix concrete was sitting right beside.

The crew checked the time and with the afternoon half over and loads still coming, they started mixing concrete and filling the foundation forms for the shelter. Finally the chopper was done, the shipping crew moved four-wheel-drive vehicles to the Elephant lake area, which is the closest walk-out point from base camp. The day was nearly done and the light was starting to fade and the shipping crew were flown to base camp.

Meanwhile, at the summit, the sun was dropping below the horizon and the concrete was not yet done. The crew kept mixing, knowing they had survival packs with them. Twilight had just about faded when the foundation was completed and the summit crew headed down the mountain feeling a little bone weary. In the gathering darkness of a clear night, on a well-marked and worn trail quick progress was made. Soon enough, not far from base camp, the two were met by the

light of a friend's headlamp. Soon they were in the company of their friends and a guest hiker from Australia at the base camp. Hot food and good cheer was had by all, a great success on the first day of the expedition.

Morning came, and after breakfast the crew headed up to the summit through the beautiful old-growth forest. Though it is familiar territory to this bunch, the marvel of the view and vistas with the straights below in fog and cloud and the sunrise burning across the mountains in the far distance was not lost. Beams and trusses were soon being placed on the plywood concrete forms, as others selected a site for the pre-fab outhouse. Work proceeded well through the days, with the beautiful hike to work and back to camp each day.

Throughout the expedition, the crew was met by more guests from England, New Zealand and California passing through on their hikes of the SCT. Talk about no room at the inn! The crew worked hard and stayed focused on the tasks. By the fifth day the emergency shelter and new outhouse were ready for use. The call was made and the chopper returned to fly out gear and tools. The crew boarded the machine and flew down to Elephant Lake, weary but happy. 🐾

## Fairview Bay Hut Upgrade



The first hut built by PRPAWS on the Sunshine Coast Trail was at Fairview Bay in 2009. Many other huts have been completed since, and this year we thought an upgrade to this hut would be a good idea for the purposes of getting out of the wind, weather and bugs. With donations of materials (windows, plywood and lumber) from several sources, and some free transport by barge to the site, as well as many willing hands we were ready to go. Work parties of up to 11 people showed up over several outings to do all work necessary on the hut and the grounds. Drainage was installed over muddy sections, the trail de-watered, outhouse roof upgrade, branches cleared etc. With a break over the summer months the last work party finished in early September. We hope you get out to this hut to take a look, and remember to take a photo for your SCT Passport!



# Running the Trail: A New End-to-End Record!

Read on for some excerpts from a longer article written by Joseph McLean describing his experience as a pacer for trail running record holder Nicola Gildersleeve, of Vancouver.

“Hey, what was that?” I skidded to a halt, stopping so quickly that Nicola ran into me from behind. We found ourselves alone and breathless in the middle of old growth forest, no one else around for miles. The night was dark with that finality of nature, the moon lost in the thick canopy overhead. Summer heat still radiated from the ground below, but I felt the skin on my neck go cold. Somewhere across the valley, a familiar howl rose soft and sweet into the quiet air...

“When Nicola Gildersleeve asked for some help running the Sunshine Coast Trail, I didn’t really believe her,” Joseph writes. “I’ve seen a lot of fools: a lot of other runners who tried to take the Sunshine Coast Trail end to end. A hundred and eighty kilometers of wilderness, of ancient paths and mossy cliffs, of working forests and non-working cellphones. Ean Jackson was the first, the first and best fool of them all. In 2004, he ran the entire shot in an exhausting 43 hours and 50 minutes.”

This year, Nicola smashed that record with a time of 33 hours and 50 minutes.

For most runners, Joseph writes, “the breaking point seems to be about halfway through the route, as you leave the safety of the front coast behind ... Nicola had never been past that point, and she was bringing along



Nicola Gildersleeve (at the back of the line) led by her pacers, looking happy, calm and enthusiastic!

a few friends who were equally unfamiliar. I knew she had a chance, I wanted her to have a chance.”

This is where Joseph stepped in to help.

“I was pacing her up the last and highest mountain of the run. At least, that was the plan. Then my phone began to ring. “Can you run tonight? Like, in a few hours?”...The Day 1 pacers were tiring earlier than expected, and Nicola didn’t have an escort for the hills beyond Inland Lake.”

Joseph guided Nicola along the trail from Inland, and then talked her through it when she hit the wall on the way up to Confederation Lake.

His pacing stint done, and out hiking the next day, Joseph bumped into Nicola on the approach to Mt. Troubridge. He writes, “She had 29 kilometers to go, and she looked

completely fine. Happy, calm, even kind of enthusiastic. “Only 8K up to the summit, so cool!” ... As soon as I ran with her, I knew that she was going to finish. Barring death or dismemberment, Nicola Gildersleeve was going to finish. And she did.” 🐾

The full article on Nicola Gildersleeve’s incredible journey can be read on Joseph’s blog here: [www.joseph.ca/hello/2014/09/18/fastest-on-the-sunshine-coast-trail/](http://www.joseph.ca/hello/2014/09/18/fastest-on-the-sunshine-coast-trail/)

## SCT Passport Stamps



Chris Anderson from Powell River is the latest recipient of the SCT Passport Completion Certificate.

More than 1000 passports have been sold for the Sunshine Coast Trail since we launched it in December 2013 – and several people have even received their completion certificates! We’d like to acknowledge all the passport sponsors and thank them for their ongoing support of this project and the SCT. This year we’ll be putting up posters in all of the huts to highlight the passport and the unique (and awesome!) stamps that people will receive when they show photo evidence to the appropriate business/organization sponsor. If you haven’t got your passport yet, it’s the perfect time of year! They make great stocking stuffers for anyone who likes to spend time in our beautiful outdoors. For more information about the passports, visit [www.sunshinecoast-trail.com](http://www.sunshinecoast-trail.com). Passports are available at the Powell River Visitor Info Centre and at participating sponsor locations. 🐾

## Sunshine Coast Trail Reroutes 2014

Early this year, PRPAWS rerouted the SCT where it crosses **Dixon Road** about three kilometres up from Lang Bay. The trail follows a corridor of trees northward between a new cutblock and one that’s greening up. You’ll pass by Beloved David’s bench.

Another new cutblock kept us busy in **Suicide Pass** this spring. This new 2-km-long hiking trail reroute lies within an Old Growth Management Area (OGMA). It has three little bridges crossing upper Suicide Creek. There is also a new outhouse along the way that PRPAWS built together with one of our partners, a team of local Royal Bank employees.

This summer a new cutblock along the

east side of **Lewis Lake** was harvested that impacted the Sunshine Coast Trail. Two kilometres of the hiking trail were logged, and were out of commission for a couple of months. However a temporary reroute of the SCT was established by walking a few kilometres on a logging road.

As luck would have it, Lewis Lake is also surrounded by an OGMA, which varies in width from 30 m to 50 m, approximately. We located a wonderful route through what is in parts a hundred-year-old waterfront forest and just finished constructing a stunning hiking trail.

Volunteer hours spent on all three reroutes totalled 800. 🐾

## President's Message

### *It Takes a Town to Build a Trail*

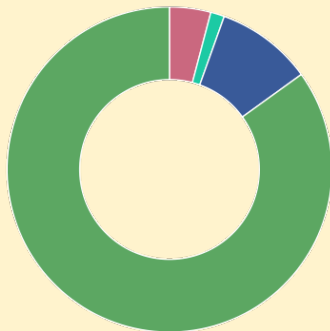
This year PRPAWS implemented the successful Sunshine Coast Trail (SCT) Passport Program; engaged in extensive promotions through local, regional and provincial tourism organizations and events; helped Tourism PR develop a new Recreation/Tourism Map; attended the Vancouver Outdoor Adventure show promoting SCT and other PR amenities; and marketed SCT through website and Facebook, reaching 5,000 Likes. Our SCT campaign at Vancouver International Mountain Film Festival resulted in more visitors to the SCT, and led to a new record non-stop run (33:50H).

We hosted the 21st Annual Marathon Shuffle, the most successful ever, with 217 participants. We also continued improvements to various trail sections together with BOMB Squad, plus built two short access trails to new Rec Sites & Trails BC footbridge across Haywire Creek. We constructed three SCT reroutes totalling 5 km at Dixon Road, Suicide Pass – with RBC team – and, recently, Lewis Lake. We manufactured four outhouses; upgraded the Fairview Bay Shelter, now a fully enclosed hut; assembled a Troubridge Summit Emergency Shelter that sleeps six; and finished Fiddlehead Landing shelter, installing a fire ring and cutting trail. Soon we'll be nailing up more markers from Powell River Rotary.

PRPAWS partnered with many organizations and individuals. It takes a town to build a trail. We are aiming to be world-class, and with your help we are getting there. Thank you. —Eagle Walz 🐾

## Buffer Survey Results

How important is it to you that there is a treed buffer between logging cut blocks and the walking path of the Sunshine Coast Trail?




4% Not important at all   1% Not very important   10% Somewhat important  
85% Very important

The results of this online survey show that, generally speaking, hikers on the Sunshine Coast Trail prefer to have treed buffers between the trail and new logging.

We will leave the survey open for a while yet so you too can provide your preference. You can only vote once. Go to [www.sunshinecoast-trail.com](http://www.sunshinecoast-trail.com) and scroll down to the survey button, or download the PDF.

If you are not familiar with metres just multiply them by three and that will give you a rough idea of the wooded distance in feet. Zero (0) metres means that the trail would be located in the logged areas that can be up to one or two kilometres (roughly a mile) long. 🐾

 For trail updates, find us on Facebook at:  
[www.facebook.com/SunshineCoastTrail](http://www.facebook.com/SunshineCoastTrail)

## SCT is Good For Tourism!

By Paul Kamon, Marketing Director, Tourism Powell River

The Sunshine Coast trail in Powell River is unique; it is known as the longest “hut to hut” hiking trail in Canada. This important fact helps distinguish our trail from the multitude of other trails that are popping up all over the country as communities look to develop amenities not only for their own enjoyment, but also for the attraction of visitors to help fuel their local economies in need of a boost.

The Sunshine Coast Trail is big. At 180 kilometres, the SCT is part of a select group of iconic trails known in tourism circles as “Mega Trails”. In BC, this would include the West Coast Trail, The North Coast Trail and the Juan de Fuca Trail, which consistently draw visitors from around the world. Right here in Powell River, we are seeing a growing number of international tourists (United States, UK, Germany, Netherlands, Switzerland and Australia) travelling great distances to experience what sits right in our own back yard.

At the Powell River Visitor Information Centre, we gather daily statistics from tourists to our community to help us understand who is visiting the region and why. The Sunshine Coast Trail, year over year, is the number one amenity that our guests most frequently inquire about. The SCT lure brochure, which is distributed on BC Ferries, is very popular and is the number one pick-up on coastal ferry routes. As the number of visitors increases, our local businesses benefit because visitors require accommodation, transportation, food and other supplies for their adventures.

The Sunshine Coast Trail is good for the health of our community, and good for Tourism. 🐾



Visitors from the far north! Logbooks at trail shelters show that, besides many local hikers, many visitors from all over the world visit Powell River and hike the Sunshine Coast Trail.

## Renew your PRPAWS membership!

Have you renewed your PRPAWS membership for 2015? If not, please do it now! Your membership is important to us, and the dues contribute to the upkeep, maintenance and development of the Sunshine Coast Trail.

Student: \$10 • Individual: \$20 • Family: \$30 • Mail a cheque 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)