



# Shuffle shatters expectations!

The 23<sup>rd</sup> annual Marathon Shuffle has attracted a record-smashing number of participants. Over 300 people had registered for the event by the end of January, which prompted organizers to create a waiting list for those clamouring to take part in the hike or run on the Sunshine Coast Trail (SCT). After careful planning, it was decided to cap the event at 400 participants, an 88% increase over last year's 213 participants.

This year's Shuffle takes place on Sunday, April 24. Participants in the full 29-kilometre Shuffle travel the SCT from Malaspina Road to the Shinglemill. Those who prefer the Half Shuffle go from Wilde Road to the Shinglemill.

The Marathon Shuffle route on the SCT now traverses Tla'amin Nation's land, part of the treaty agreement which became effective on April 5. (Read more about this historic development in the President's Message on [Page 4](#).)

Powell River Parks and Wilderness Society (PR PAWS) members started the Shuffle in 1994, as a means of showing people the wonders of the SCT. While most participants choose to hike the SCT, trail runners from all over have been drawn to the Shuffle. Some

will be eyeing Graham Cocksedge's record time of two hours 22 minutes for the Full Shuffle, which has held since 2014. Female runners hope to better the record set by Nicola Gildersleeve in 2015 of two hours 52 minutes.

With a record number of participants, more volunteers than ever are needed. Emily Walz is once again working her magic in organizing those willing to help, matching them up with tasks such as time-keeping, staffing check-in stations, and directing parking. People interested in volunteering can email Emily at [sunshinecoasttrailbc@gmail.com](mailto:sunshinecoasttrailbc@gmail.com).

Members of the public can also cheer participants on, at key intersections of the SCT on access roads, or applaud them as they reach their goal at the Shinglemill.

While the number of participants has been capped at 400, a waiting list is available for people hoping to join in the fun. If people who are registered decide they can't participate, their spots will open up for those on the waiting list on a first-come, first-served basis. For more information or to add your name to the waiting list, visit [www.sunshinecoasttrail.com/events.html](http://www.sunshinecoasttrail.com/events.html). 🐾



Half Shufflers 2015 - the pre-Shuffle pep talk!

EAGLE WALZ

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# HAPPY FEET!

Hiking is a favorite pastime here in Powell River and many other places on the west coast. Both beginning hikers and experienced backpackers may get sore feet and blisters, which can turn a fun day into a nightmare pretty quick! So, keeping that in mind, there are a number of steps to take before your hike and on the trail to promote foot health.

There are many reasons these injuries can come about. Friction and moisture are the main causes of blisters. On the Sunshine coast, depending on the terrain and weather conditions, fine sand can get between toes, and caused abrasion. Snow and icy stream crossings leave feet cold and constantly wet. All this friction between socks, shoes, leaves our feet pretty unhappy!

Prevention of serious foot problems start before you get on the trail. Learn proper hiking form and pay attention to your gait. I would suggest using a lightweight pack to lessen the impact on your feet that happens each time you take a step. Remember to clip long toenails. Also, non-waterproof trail runners dry more quickly after they get wet, and allow more ventilation. Experiment with different types of socks and find which work best for you. Everyone is different, so it is worth taking the time to get to know what works well for your feet.

When on the trail, if you do get a hot spot or blister, bandage it up immediately! If you do not want to change your socks during a long hike, at least shake out the sand and dirt from socks and shoes regularly. Stretching feet and calves can go a long way for reducing foot pain and preventing problems. A foot care kit is also handy to take along. Kits vary considerably between people, but most include scissors or nail clippers, baby wipes or alcohol pads, moisturizer, anti-friction cream, blister pads, antibiotic ointment, and sports tape.

Now, have fun out there and keep those feet happy! 🐾

—Dr. Jeremy Buhay  
Marine Chiropractic & Wellness, 604-485-9896

## Shuffle

# Then & Now

What started in 1994 as a handful of hikers showing up for an amble on a rough trail is now an annual rite of spring for hundreds on Powell River's most important tourist attraction. The Marathon Shuffle, which traverses 29 kilometres of the Sunshine Coast Trail, is now in its 23<sup>rd</sup> year, attracting people from all over BC, and even North America.

The first Marathon Shuffle took place in 1994 and attracted about a dozen people. This year, for the first time, organizers have had to cap participation at 400, to ensure that the trail (and volunteers) can handle all the walkers and runners.

"PAWS started the Marathon Shuffle to show people that the Sunshine Coast Trail existed, and that on it they could get to some of the beautiful areas that we had made accessible," says PAWS president Eagle Walz. "It has done its job well; over the years the Shuffle has helped to raise the profile of the trail both locally and outside of Powell River. And more than that, it made us realize how important publicizing the trail was in order to protect it and the wild places that surround it."

The trails that the Shuffle traverses were chosen because they were the first parts of the Sunshine Coast Trail to be developed and linked up – these were the areas that the PAWS team was able to get to easily on weekends and after work. The Half Shuffle distance was

not initially part of the event, and was only established about 10 years in to accommodate people who wanted to participate, but didn't want to do the whole 29 kilometres.

"Over the years the event has grown, and each year an increasing number of people from outside of Powell River have participated," Walz says. "This year we have over half of our participants coming from out of town – more than 200 people. What's great about that is we know that people come here to try out the Shuffle for the day, but many of them fall in love with the trail and Powell River while they are here, and they come back to visit again, or even to stay."

Many PAWS members and volunteers have been involved in the event over the years, manning stations, cheering runners and walkers on, "shuffle-izing" the trail before the event, and organizing behind the scenes. In addition, PAWS recognizes the valuable contributions of its partners Club Fat Ass and the BOMB Squad, who help to publicize the Shuffle, and ready the trail for the event, respectively.

"It's a huge amount of work, and a lot of people are involved in making it happen," Walz says. "But it's worth it because it gets the word out, and people love it – at the end of the day, it's just a really fun event." 🐾



A group of hardy shufflers ready to go, circa 2001.

# Power Foods for the Trail

It's Shuffle Day and you want to make sure you are adequately prepared for the big event. You've done your training, and you're ready to go! Enhance your chances of doing your best by giving your body the fuel it needs – before, during and after the event. What, when and the quantity you eat will affect your performance, strength and endurance. Here are some suggestions that will optimize your performance and recovery:

## BEFORE:

It is ideal to eat 2-4 hours before you start exercising – you don't want to feel too full, or too hungry, and obviously it is best if your stomach is settled. Full Shufflers start early, so a light breakfast of a whole grain cereal with milk/yogurt (or a plant-based alternative) a couple of hours before the event is a good idea. Half Shufflers have more time, so a good preparatory breakfast of oatmeal with fruit several hours before start time would be perfect. If you're still hungry, a pre-shuffle snack can be included 1-2 hours before start time –for example: fresh fruit, smoothie, yogurt, energy bar etc.

## DURING:

Because the Marathon Shuffle typically takes people longer than a couple of hours, consuming some carbohydrate during the event will help to maintain blood glucose levels, delay fatigue and allow you to perform longer at a high intensity. It's important not to let your blood sugar drop in an event like this one, because that's when you start feeling fatigued, light-headed, and that's when "hitting the wall" happens. An intake of 30-60 grams of carbohydrate per hour is recommended up to 3 hours, and it needs to be in a form that you can easily digest and absorb, such as 500-1000 ml of a diluted fruit juice (1:1) or sports drink. Bananas or raisins are another good option. After 3 hours up to 90 grams of carbohydrate per hour should be consumed to keep your energy levels up and fatigue at bay.



## AFTER:

The Marathon Shuffle is a pretty big event for most of us, and you need to refuel adequately to give your body its best chance for a speedy recovery. Start refuelling as soon as possible after the event; replenishment of muscle glycogen stores is most rapid for 2 hours after exercise. The optimal post-workout meal or drink should include 15-25 grams of protein to maximize muscle repair, as well as 60-90 grams of carbohydrate. Some examples of easy good post-exercise snacks include: 2 bananas + 500ml milk (or alternative); a whole-grain hummus and vegetable sandwich + glass of almond milk; 200 grams baked beans on 2 slices whole-grain toast.

Happy Shuffling! 🐾

## What does the Marathon Shuffle mean to you?



**Carina Rempel:** It's a beautiful day in the tranquil forest, connecting with nature, friends, making new friends and challenging myself. I gained a new appreciation for my hiking poles!!



**Joseph McLean:** When I'm on the trail, I feel a deep sense of connection ... to the old growth forests, to our history as a town, and to the much longer sweep of First Nations. I feel the respect of the trail builder, tying this all together. The Trail is the thread that connects us to the wilderness. I am so proud to have this in my own back yard.



**Ann Paul:** I love trail hiking and know that PAWS makes that experience possible. I'm able to explore the forests and lakes in the area anywhere along the Sunshine Coast Trail. The Shuffle gives me the opportunity to make a donation [towards] the development and maintenance of these beautiful local trails.



**Anne Vath:** I have spent countless hours running many sections of the trail. As I traverse along the 29-kilometre course of the Marathon Shuffle I feel a connection of my body and mind and develop a mental fortitude to conquer the miles ahead. Every step I take through the statuesque old growth forests fills me with a sense of pride ... Thank you to all the volunteers that make the Shuffle so amazing!



**Ean Jackson:** The Shuffle is an annual pilgrimage to one of my favourite places in the world. An opportunity to catch-up with friends I usually only see once a year. A chance to quaff some of the best beer around straight from the tap. It means great chats on the ferry, campfires, *ceilidhs* and the best deal going for a well-organized run in the woods.

## Donations fuel upkeep

With 180 kilometres of trail and 12 shelters, built by the Powell River Parks and Wilderness Society (PAWS), maintaining the Sunshine Coast Trail takes both people power and funds.

A dedicated group of volunteers keeps the trail in tip-top shape, but this work needs tools and gas for vehicles to access places that need some tender loving care. The shelters need maintaining as well.

The last two structures were built with money PAWS raised, mainly from donations along with a few small grants. "We are now raising funds for our remaining projects," said PAWS President Eagle Walz. "We are saving money for a hut at Confederation Lake and a shelter at Bliss Portage, plus a trailhead kiosk in the Sarah Point area, the northern start of the Sunshine Coast Trail. We will also have to build outhouses for these structures."

The SCT is truly a community trail. Over the past 23 years many dozens of people and many organizations have been involved in helping to build it, maintain it, improve it, and keep it safe. Some people have been involved in small ways; others in much bigger ways. But no matter the individual contribution, it all adds up to a massive community effort that has resulted in Canada's longest hut-to-hut hiking experience. Today the SCT is the biggest tourism draw to the area; an amazing asset that everyone in Powell River, and many from further afield, can benefit from and enjoy.

Any donation of \$20 or more will get a tax receipt. Donations can be made using PayPal on the SCT website, [www.sunshinecoasttrail.com](http://www.sunshinecoasttrail.com). Donations can also be mailed to PR PAWS, Box 345, Powell River, BC V8A 5C2. 🐾


## President's Message

As we near completion of Golden Stanley Hut, our 12<sup>th</sup> shelter on the Sunshine Coast Trail, PAWS plans to build a few more structures, and we ask for your support.

In the last couple of years the number of visitors to the trail has been climbing steeply. Feedback from trail users has been positive, and we receive constructive comments that enable us to make further improvements to Canada's longest hut-to-hut hiking trail. A plethora of media reports, visitor centre statistics, water taxi trips, logbook entries, and interest by tour groups has put the Sunshine Coast Trail on the map.

Now we are entering a new era. PAWS congratulates Tla'amin Nation on concluding their Treaty. What it means to the Sunshine Coast Trail will need to be fully realized yet, but the important part is that Tla'amin Nation, the province and Canada have agreed to continue free public access via the Sunshine Coast Trail footpath. The Treaty Settlement Lands extend roughly from Malaspina Road to Scout Mountain – the Marathon Shuffle route. We recognize that we travel through the traditional territory of the Tla'amin Nation and hold our hands up to them, a friendly gesture of appreciation and respect. —Eagle Walz



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

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