



Winter 2011

# PRP A W S

Powell River Parks and Wilderness Society



*The cabin at the top of Tin Hat Mountain is located in the midst of a magnificent local winter destination.*

*~ photo by  
Mike Massulo*

*N*eed to get out for a winter adventure? Two new cabins await you in some of Powell River's most wonderful snowy backcountry! This summer two more huts were completed along the Sunshine Coast Trail – a shelter with sleeping loft at Elk Lake and a fully enclosed cabin close to the summit of Tin Hat Mountain. If you haven't had the chance to check them out yet, be sure to put these destinations on your winter hiking schedule. Both are located in places that receive abundant snow in winter months, so come prepared with warm gear and snowshoes.

These two huts are numbers 6 and 7, making the Sunshine Coast Trail more accessible and usable than ever. (The other huts are located at Fairview Bay, Rainy Day Lake, Mount Troubridge, Rieveley's Pond and Manzanita Bluffs). To see an entertaining log of the building processes, visit [www.sunshine-coast-trail.com](http://www.sunshine-coast-trail.com) and click on 'New Shelters'. Thanks to the ATV club who helped to build the shelter at Elk Lake, and the many people who helped out on Tin Hat. Many hands make light(er) work. Although building has stopped for the winter, there is lots of work to

be done in putting up new trail markers. Get in touch if you're interested in helping out.

On page two of this newsletter check out Eagle Walz's brand new trail description for the new ORUG Trail to the cabin on Mount Troubridge. This new trail section allows hikers a more picturesque walk through some old growth forest in high altitudes. It's another great winter activity destination!

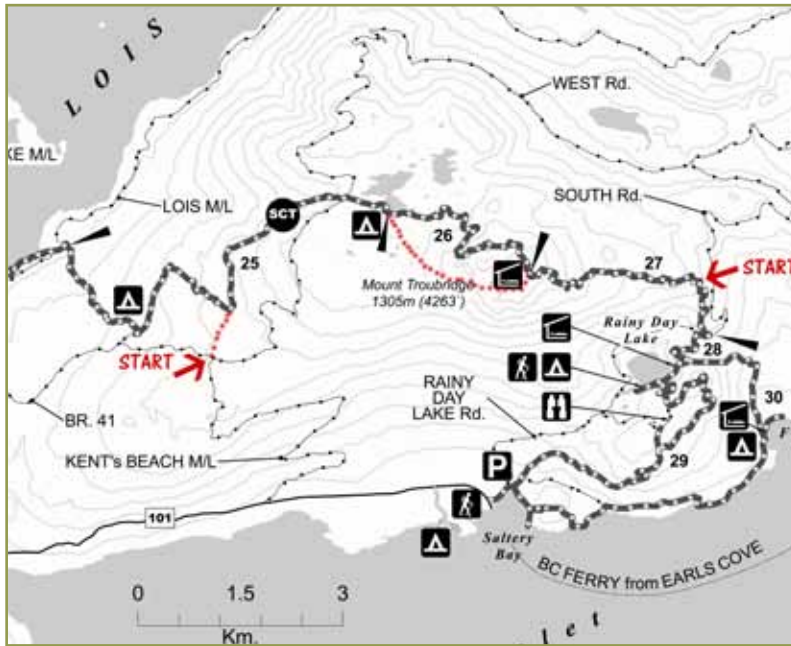
In other news, the Sunshine Coast Trail now has its very own coffee-table book! See details about *A Dream of Giants: The Story of the Sunshine Coast Trail* on page 3.

## WANT TO HELP?

- \* become a member
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# Trail to Troubridge Cabin



**Trail Description:** Opposite Kent's Main you will find the SCT sign at the start of Branch 43, and a number of orange square markers. Begin your hike here and pace yourself. This section of the trail rises gently through a green tunnel toward Elephant Lake. After an hour the trail levels out for 10 minutes and then climbs again, now on a narrower path continuing through a vibrant young balsam fir and mountain hemlock forest. Soon it levels out and emerges onto the upper reaches of Branch 41 (N 49°49.401', W 124°12.348').

Cross this road and follow the narrow spur beginning directly opposite. Within a few minutes, the trail winds through blueberries and young evergreens to the old growth at the edge of Elephant Lake. The ancient forest is equally breathtaking in the wintertime as in summer. The trail skirts the shore and reaches the lake where a small creek tumbles into it. You're about two or more hours from the log cabin on Mount Troubridge. Next you veer up from the shore continuing through ancient forest and reaching a trail junction.

## Option 1 (Preferred summer, or warm winter access)

**Trail Location:** From the junction of Wharf Street and Marine Avenue head about 20 km south, out of town on Highway 101 until you reach Stillwater Main Logging Road (N 49°46.632', W 124°19.637') just past the Eagle (Lois) River Bridge. Turn left onto Stillwater Main and set your trip odometer at 0. Drive 0.9 km and take the Lois Main turnoff to the right. Next you will cross the new Canoe Main at 3.2 km, at the edge of a new cutblock. Look for periodic orange squares at junctions and signage that will help you find your way.

Keep driving straight on Lois Main until you reach a fork in the road at 4.5 km. Keep right (the left branch is the old Canoe Route road), and at the next fork, just a few yards farther along, you will reach Lois Main/Branch 41 Junction (N 49°48.020', W 124°17.830'). Keep right on Branch 41 for a little more than five kilometres, until your odometer reads about 10 km and you have arrived at the crossroad of Branch 41(40) and Kent's Main. Park here.

**Trail GPS Coordinates:** N 49°49.086', W 124°15.775'

**Altitude:** 600 m to 1200 m

**Hiking Time:** 3 to 5 hrs, in summer, more in winter, one way

**Distance:** 9 km, one way

**Difficulty:** Moderate to challenging, Level 3.5

**Other:** SCT Section 5, active logging road—check BC Forest Service for access, old growth, value-added trail, semi alpine lakes, tarns, panoramas

**Map:** 92 F/16, Recreation Map

Make a sharp turn to the right (south on the new OGMA trail) up onto an expansive shelf.

Eventually the trail crosses a small creek and starts the last climb toward the cabin, which lies in a bowl adjacent to Jocelyn Pond, about a kilometre below the summit of Mount Troubridge (N 49°48.715', W 124°10.580').

## Option 2 (Preferred winter access due to higher snowline)

Access via Rainy Day Lake (a.k.a. Saltery Bay) Main Line

Drive to Saltery Bay and turn left in front of the ferry terminal. Set your odometer to zero and drive onto the logging road past the parking lot and log dump. Turn left at the first junction you come to, uphill and cross the pole line, keeping straight ahead until you reach the next junction above the new transmission substation where the main line forks steeply uphill to the right. Follow the mainline, and the Plutonic wires, eventually passing by Rainy Day Lake below you and resuming to climb until you switch back up to the left (Ignore the narrow track that keeps heading east toward Saint Vincent Bay). About 7 km from Saltery Bay a wooden SCT sign directs you up and underneath the pole line and a few parking options along here. During many winters you can drive as far as this elevation (700 m) because it has southern exposure, a huge advantage over Option 1, which is on the north side in the winter shade and often not as accessible. Where the road dead-ends (N 49°48.573', W 124°07.963') the trail turns up through a juvenile forest and then enters the old growth. Four to five hours later you will reach the summit, and from there it's another half hour or so down the west ridge to the cabin (N 49°48.715', W 124°10.580'). Ω

(\*for more SCT trail descriptions, see *The Sunshine Coast Trail* guidebook, by Eagle Walz).

## Memories of Building the SCT

by Scott Glaspey (aka Mr. Natural)



*It was almost 20 years ago that PRPAWS started building the SCT. Here, Scott recounts the story of a day of schooling for some “young punks” who had been hired to help upgrade the Confederation Lake Trail. This lesson was taught by a merry crew of BOMB (Bloody Old Men’s Brigade) Squad workers, who had come to build a bridge in the same section.*

### Young Crew Becomes Trail Builders

In 1994, Mr. Natural had a crew of six unemployed youth working on outdoor projects, selected by the local forestry office. They started at Inland Lake, providing firewood for what was then a regional park. From there the crew moved on to forestry sites as diverse as Branch 41 (Lois Lake) and Shingle Beach on Texada Island. By the time they’d been employed about six months, the concept of the Sunshine Coast Trail had already been hatched. Whenever possible, Mr. Natural would shift the crew onto a trail project. At that time, the SCT had a few connected and scattered trails and was approaching 60 kilometres in total.

The decision was made to try to upgrade the daunting Confederation Lake Trail. This trail had a reputation for being tough and had even been dubbed “Draggin’ Ass Trail” by Jim Koleszar, one of the original BOMB Squad members. Built by one of the owners of Fiddlehead Farm, there were several steep sections requiring switchbacks. After about a week of gouging out sidehills the crew was working on a flatter section near a creek crossing.

### Surprises in the Woods

At about 9:30 am one morning, the crew heard the sound of a group coming down the trail from Confederation Lake. The kids were surprised to see a group of 60- and 70-somethings carrying all kinds of weird equipment, including big chainsaws and ancient-looking block & tackle. Mr. Natural introduced the crew to members of the BOMB Squad. Roger Taylor (75 years old at the time) explained that they’d been dropped by helicopter at the lake. Their job was to build a bridge across the creek.

“There’s no lumber here,” said one of the young crew.

“Watch and learn,” advised Mr. Natural.

## Old Guys Gain Some Respect

Without any orders being given, the old guys started dispersing into the woods and industrial activity began in earnest. Within a couple of hours a 30-foot-long cedar snag about 2½ feet in diameter was felled and hauled across the creek with a chain block. Tony Mathews, 60+ at the time, jumped up on it with his chainsaw and proceeded to cut it down its length ‘til it flopped open like an empty submarine sandwich. Those became the bridge stringers. Little by little other material was hauled to the bridge site. At about 3:00 pm everyone stopped work and marched off down the hill to waiting cars. The next day, this scenario was repeated and the bridge was all but finished. The young crew was gobsmacked. As the BOMB Squad marched off again, laughing and joking, one of the youngsters remarked, “Boy I hope I can do half of what these guys do when I’m their age!”

## NEW BOOK Features Sunshine Coast Trail

*A Dream of Giants*  
*The Story of the Sunshine Coast Trail*



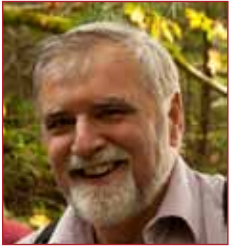
by Emma Levez Larocque

*A* new coffee table book about the SCT is coming out this December! **A Dream of Giants: The Story of the Sunshine Coast Trail** by Emma Levez Larocque features 150+ full-colour photographs.

“It’s the story of how the trail came to be, the people who built it, and the land it passes through,” Emma says. This book will take you on a journey into Powell River’s beautiful backcountry and give you a sense of the special community it has taken to build the trail.

A Dream of Giants will be available for sale after December 8th at Breakwater Books, Paperworks Gift Gallery and Tourism Powell River. Ω

## President's Message



On June 12, 2012 PRPAWS invited the community to celebrate the grand opening of Manzanita Hut. We were delighted that around 160 came, including people with mobility issues who used the Trail Rider to reach the hut.

Since then we have partnered with the Powell River ATV Club to build the Elk Lake Hut in the Smith Range along the SCT. Our thanks go out to the ATV Club for their excellent work. We celebrated the grand opening on a misty September Sunday.

Meanwhile construction on the Tin Hat Cabin proceeded at a steady pace with many volunteers helping out, often participating in the week-long expeditions, or coming up in day trips. The hut – complete as of mid-October – is fully winterized and has a cooking counter and a table with movable benches. It can accommodate up to a dozen people in a pinch. Visitors to the huts need to bring everything they need. Please pack out what you pack in.

We have now built seven huts, with two of them fully winterized and open for snowshoers. We will be building one more cabin in the Smith Range, and two smaller shelters in 2012. We will also have a parking lot and a kiosk with maps at the new Saltery Bay trail-head of the Sunshine Coast Trail.

Enjoy the trails during the winter months. Many of the low-lying ones are pretty well snow-free year round. Others can be experienced with snow on them. Over the last eight months we have been installing 8,000 of our new orange square markers (southward) and diamonds (northward) all along the Sunshine Coast Trail. This should help you find your way even in snowy conditions. We are over 80% done with this task, which allows hikers to see the next marker from the last one. Check the Current Trail Conditions blog on our website for the most current info. Ω

*Thank you to these sponsors who contributed to the printing of this newsletter.*

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