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2012 has been a busy year! This summer PRPAWS built two more huts; one at Walt Hill, and another at Fiddlehead Landing (in partnership with the Powell River Rotary Club). Walt Hill Hut, which is located in the Smith Range south of Granite Lake and north of Suicide Pass by way of the Sunshine Coast Trail, is fully insulated with a pellet stove. It is the third winterized cabin that can be accessed in the snowy season by snowshoers and wilderness skiers.

The Fiddlehead Landing Hut on Powell Lake is located east of Dago Point, and provides access to Giavano Lake and sections of the SCT that lead to Confederation Lake Hut or, in the other direction, to Tin Hat Hut. Both of these new huts will make for wonderful winter hiking/snowshoeing destinations, so be sure to take

some time this winter to check them out (and the other great winter hikes on page 2). As a result of being able to offer hut-to-hut hiking, we are delighted that many more visitors have been enjoying the SCT this year, and the beautiful area it travels through. We have updated our website, and we partnered with Tourism Powell River to produce a SCT brochure with map and information on the trail. The brochure is on the ferries and in visitor infocentres across the province.

Along with blogs on our website, we now also have a Facebook presence that provides regularly updated information on what's happening on the SCT - like the new reroute we have just finished building at Cochrane Bay, and improvements at the Confederation Lake Hut. Please visit the page and LIKE us! facebook.com/sunshinecoasttrail

~ Eagle Walz, President

GREAT WINTER HIKING SPOTS ON THE SUNSHINE COAST TRAIL

TIN HAT HUT



The hut at the summit of Tin Hat Mountain is located at the halfway point of the SCT. This spot provides an epic 360-degree lookout, which is spectacular in every season. This hut is fully winterized. To access, follow the Tin Hat Mountain trail description in the *SCT Guidebook*. Challenging; 2 hours one way.

APPLETON CANYON



When the frost settles in there is hardly a more beautiful place in the lowlands of Powell River than the Appleton Canyon Trail, featuring several waterfalls that freeze over in wintertime. To access, follow the Appleton Canyon trail description in the *SCT Guidebook*. Moderate; 1.5 hours one way.

ELK LAKE LOOP



The Elk Lake Loop, located in the Smith Range, is quickly becoming a favourite destination for snowshoeing and cross-country skiing. A hut at Elk Lake makes for a nice place to stop for some hot chocolate. To access, follow the Elk Lake Loop description in the *SCT Guidebook*. Moderate; 4-5 hours, round trip.

MT. TROUBRIDGE



This beautiful hut is located at the highest point on the SCT, and in the midst of a vast section of old growth forest. It is fully winterized - a great winter adventure. Bring your snowshoes! To access, follow the West or East Mt. Troubridge trail description in the *SCT Guidebook*. Challenging; 4-5 hours one way.

Finding Walt

By Jim Stutt

Flying into a new hut site at over 3000 ft elevation makes for an exciting day. So it was that on June 19th, 2012 a group of PAWSters set out from the building supply store with a semi-trailer fully loaded and a convoy of pick-up trucks with volunteers and gear for a five-day work party. We were to rendezvous with a helicopter at the Deer Creek logging site to fly all and sundry up to Walt Hill. Some weeks earlier a party of four, including myself, had driven and hiked up to locate the hut site. Enroute – due to signage being torn down – we missed the short cut that would take us across the “Bridge of Doom,” a distinctive old growth log lying across a small ravine. Taking the long way around we eventually agreed on an ideal site. We marked the four corners of the hut, had some lunch, and proceeded to clear a site for the helicopter to land, marking this spot with a big red ribbon X. Feeling satisfied we headed home, this time taking the shortcut.

Back to June 19th...Arriving with the convoy of material, equipment, and a work group of seven at the Deer Creek site, we discovered that the Walt Hill area was completely obscured with cloud, meaning that the helicopter could not access the site. While we waited for the clouds to clear, we unloaded all the material and gear, which is in itself a big job. A few hours later things cleared a little and our pilot and machine arrived. After a mandatory safety talk with the pilot, three of the volunteer crew climbed into the helicopter and we were airborne. The plan was that we would be dropped at the new hut site and act as the receiving crew. However, no

sooner had we lifted off than the clouds started moving back in. Visibility on the ground got a little hazy, and things looked so different from the air. My memory of where we were going was partly obscured by mist, and a completely different outlook from the helicopter. Before we could locate the site, the cloud really came at us heavy. Our resourceful pilot headed up further along the range of hills to a radio transmitter site that has a helicopter landing pad. We set down there to wait out the mass of cloud, and hope we could get our bearings. Minutes later we were powered up and flying back in the direction of Walt Hill. I had a sinking feeling that I would not find the site, and have to return to our cohorts at Deer Creek defeated. Our tight budget and the sheer embarrassment wore on me.

The mist, cloud and open green forest below all started to look the same. But then I looked down and saw the Bridge of Doom. I now had my bearings; I asked the pilot to hang a left and moments later we saw the site. The chopper set down and we three filed out, greatly relieved. No sooner had we cleared the machine and given our pilot the thumbs up than the clouds came flying in again.

We were happy to be on site, even if we were in dense cloud. The machine proceeded back to the loading site, and shut down again to wait for the clouds to clear. A few hours later, using our radios to guide us, we were receiving nets and slings full of material and gear. Over 40 loads were flown in that day. Enough stuff to build the hut

to lock-up stage – concrete foundation pinned to solid rock, all done with volunteer labour.

For a current description and map for the Walt Hill Trail, visit www.sunshinecoast-trail.com.



Give a gift from the heart

Want your Christmas gifts to be extra special this year? With gifts to support the Sunshine Coast Trail, you can do just that.



This year give a gift that will help leave a legacy for generations to come, a gift that will help to maintain the SCT, and protect Powell River's back country. Buy a membership or make a donation to PRPAWS in a loved ones' name. For any donation, you will receive a certificate for the recipient, and a copy of *A Dream of Giants: The Story of the Sunshine Coast Trail*. **Here are your options:**

- 1) Individual membership for 2013: \$20
- 2) Family membership for 2013: \$30
- 3) Donation of \$50, \$100, \$250, \$500 or \$1000

To make a donation, find us in the mall this month (check our website for dates and times) or call 604-414-8399.

Other great SCT gifts:



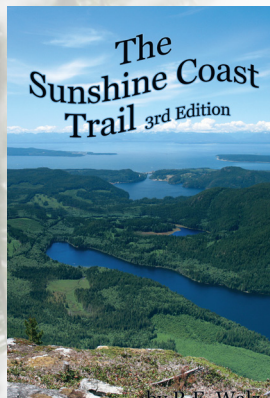
Sunshine Coast Trail T-shirts are available in various sizes and colours at the Powell River Visitors Centre on Joyce Avenue.

A Dream of Giants

The Story of the Sunshine Coast Trail



by Emma Levez Larocque



by R. R. Walz

* Books available at Breakwater Books in Powell River, or at www.sunshinecoast-trail.com

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