



Alpine Club of Canada - Whistler Section Spring Newsletter



ACC Whistler Club Goals

The club's goal is to unite outdoor enthusiasts who share a common interest in non-mechanized mountain activities in the Whistler Area. Since Whistler is a community with significant population dynamics, the club helps to connect people, regardless of how long they have been in Whistler.

The ACC Whistler Section has a policy against using motorized means, whether helicopter, plane, or snowmobile, to access any area that can be reached by human power whether on skis, snowshoes, or by foot in a day.

Founding Director, Todd Bush has resigned

The board of directors is sorry to announce the resignation of Todd Bush. Thank you, Todd, for your dedication and all your volunteer hours these past 23 years. Todd was a founding member, served as Chair, vice chair and as a director, as well as many other roles. Todd has led many, many trips over the years and is responsible for a large portion of our members gaining a love for ski touring and the necessary knowledge to be safe while in the backcountry.

Reservation coordinator position filled

Our reservation coordinator position has been filled by Dawn Minet. Thank you Dawn for taking on this important duty. Hopefully the Wendy Thompson Hut will be open soon.

New ACC Whistler -Spearhead Representatives

ACC Whistler representatives are now on the board of directors, of the Spearhead Hut Society.

We received 7 applications. Thank you all for putting your name forward. It was certainly a difficult choice to pick two people from such a variety of talented, knowledgeable and experienced individuals.

Our representatives are Colin Knudsen and Robin O'Neill

Colin has an MBA and is chief operating officer of a large, family run furniture business. Quoted from his letter "My strongest areas of expertise that I can offer are in the business operations, governance and financial aspects..... I believe that the operation of these cabins will provide its guests with a connection to the land and environment, a

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thrill of being close to nature, and an appreciation for the values that the ACC- Whistler Section is built on.”

Robin is a professional ski and lifestyle photographer and has been living, skiing and ski touring in Whistler for the last 20 years. I hope to be of service as a liaison between the ACCW and SHS. I hope to bring my documentary skills, fundraising experience and passion for the mountains to the board of the SHS.

The huts seem like a natural extension to our backcountry experience. Being able to spend more time exploring, connected to our natural environment and sharing memories with the mountain community are values I can get behind. Thank you for affording me this opportunity to serve.

Let's hope the Spearhead Hut project is now on track for a balanced budget and cooperative good governance.

Wendy Thompson Hut News

The BC Forestry agency of Rec. Sites and Trails has released their Covid Winter Operations Plan. Huts with a reservation system can open. The directors are working on opening but discussing the options; positive and negative of having the hut open under such restrictive health orders. The challenge for our club is how to enforce our covid protocols at the hut. There is the problem of no available funds to prep the hut for opening. There is no firewood or clean outhouse barrels; as the unauthorized people using the hut and camping near it in the spring and summer were not paying guests but used up the firewood. There are ways you could help get the hut open without volunteers this can not happen.. Please see the volunteer options below.

Spearhead News

There is a Covid Plan in place for the hut and as soon as our Health Board recommendations allow inside gathering of people besides your household the hut will open.

They are still fundraising to complete the water system at the Claire and Kees Hut. Project ideas and architecture are being worked on for the next hut.

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Your Board of Directors continue to work on Backcountry Access

Probably the biggest issue facing us as outdoor enthusiasts is our access to the wilderness. This issue has been underscored by the incredible increase in backcountry users in the Sea to Sky area. Over the years yellow gates have gone up at the start of forest service roads, bridges have been removed, park gates closed, culverts removed and roads decommissioned and Forest service roads (FSR) receive less grading. When hiking, biking, ski touring or snowshoeing an added 4km because of a gate can mean that it is no longer feasible to do the trip.

The club directors and especially the access committees are constantly working with all the agencies involved. Most issues are related to BC Hydro, BC Forest service, BC Parks, Whistler Blackcomb, Whistler Olympic Park (WOP) and Highways.

Club director and chair of the Alpine Access sub committee set up a meeting, Feb. 1st. Jordan Sturdy, our MLA, met by zoom with the club representatives to see how he can help with these issues. We will meet again in 6-8 weeks and in the meanwhile we will identify the key points we would like to see amended on the government regional plan. Jordan will try to use his influence to get some replies from BC Parks and Whistler Blackcomb. Apparently, BC Parks receives \$42 million for the whole of BC Parks annually; from a general Government budget of \$60 billion. Parks desperately need more funding!

The important issues discussed were:

The gate WOP has installed on the road leading to Madley Lake. This adds 4km to walk there effectively blocking off the forest service camping rec site and the hiking trail around the lake. This also restricts access to the popular and long-established trail leading to Hanging Lake and looping to Rainbow Lake trail.

Access to the start of the singing pass trail by vehicle through Whistler Blackcomb. Most likely the new route for vehicles will be through the sliding center area.

The closing of park gates for far too many months each year at Brandywine and Nairn Falls. With the addition of no parking outside the gate a large trail system at Brandywine is inaccessible for snowshoeing and for about 5 months of the year for hiking. Joffrey has now been closed for about 10 months, with no set plan or opening date.

The lack of parking pull-outs plowed on the Duffey Lake Road for winter activities.

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Mitch has been trying to get approval from BC Parks to Maintain Moose Meadows Trail which is the ski tour access to the musical bumps and Spearhead Hut leaving from the bottom of Harmony and therefore usable when the upper Mountain is closed.

The pulling out of the Roe Creek bridge that the ACC, Federation of Mountain Clubs (FMCBC) and other recreation groups tried to prevent. This cancels access to the Brew Hut and the Brew Lakes Trail. Also access to one of the trails to Cypress peak.

Unfortunately, Jordan explained tourism is not considered a resource by the government and local communities are not consulted as “valued stakeholders”. So, the basic management of lands by the ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resources doesn’t have a coordinated strategy for access to recreation in our area.

There is a growing pressure from motorized users as snow machine technology and range advances and the many crown land lease holders (snowmobile and quad companies, heli, and lodges)

The good news is funds have been found to plow the rubble creek parking area. There has been such high use of the parking that there is talk that it will be plowed in future years.

In April the BC Ministry of Forest Lands and Natural Resource Operations created an implementation order regarding our regional plan for motorized and non-motorized areas. (LRMP) This means that if snowmobilers are in a non-motorized area the RCMP or conservation officer can now enforce the rules. One good spring ski touring area that has been used by snowmobilers even though it was a non-motorized zone is the Miller Bench in Pemberton Meadows. That area has now been enforced so it could be a new ski spot to try.

Bryce, our chair and also who is the access and environment director of the club e is working with the BC forest and lands representatives in conjunction with the motorized groups to tweak the management plan that divides the use zones (LRMP)

Volunteering Info

YOUR CLUB WILL NEED YOU!!

When we come out of COVID-19 lock down we are all of a sudden going to need volunteers.

We will need people to help get the **Wendy Thompson Hut** opened when the time comes; with firewood and clean outhouse barrels. There are so many people in the

backcountry now and we must follow covid protocols to stay open, we may set up a **custodian** rotation. Our pressing issue is lack of firewood at the hut and no funds to buy it and Heli it in. This would be a good time for people to volunteer by cutting and donating cords of firewood. We may be able to raise some funds through an event. Any ideas? **Could someone volunteer to set up a go fund me page?**

Trip Leaders. Right now restrictions are such that there are no trips but to plan ahead we need some new people. Please consider volunteering. Many opportunities exist. Most of you could lead an avalanche transceiver practice, hiking, snowshoe or cross-country ski to one of your favorite locations. In the past we have also had some weekly sessions on learning to cross country ski and one on learning to river canoe. There have been one or two day courses on crevasse rescue, navigation, emergency shelter building, Avi 1 and 2 and many more. Maybe you have some special knowledge? Climbing? Bouldering? Route finding? Using new GPS apps and technology? All the trips are graded for ability and all new leaders are given some guidance and vetted by our trip coordinator Bill.

Please email Accwhistler@gmail.com or sign up on our **new volunteering sheet on the Acc Whistler website**. Another option for volunteering is **checking the calendar** for special volunteering events.

Please pass along any ideas for articles or news on interesting developments for this newsletter to our ACCWhistler@gmail.com account.

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Whistler, BC



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