



T H E ALPINE CLUB OF CANADA, VANCOUVER ISLAND SECTION

ISLAND BUSHWHACKER

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MARCH, 2004



Rudy Brugger on Mt. Cokely in January. The best snow ever to fall on Vancouver Island was to be had that day!

Photo: Doug Hurrell

VI Section Messages

SOOKE POTHOLES - the TLC is helping us ... we can help them ...

The Land Conservancy (TLC) continues to work to expand and protect the Sooke Hills mountaineering environment and enhance our opportunities for day trips close to town. After spearheading the protection of two important parcels of land - the Seraphim Lands (or "Sooke Hills Properties") and the Thetis Lake-to-Mt Work connector, the TLC has begun working to protect the Sooke Pot Holes. See the backgrounder below.

They need our support to help create the political will to save this outstanding area from development. If you support, here's how you can help:

- read and respond to the front page article in the March 9th Times Colonist, "Conservancy Aims to Buy Sooke Potholes Property". You can respond on line at • www.canada.com/victoria/timescolonist, email your letter to letters@tc.canwest.com, mail your letter to The Editor, Times Colonist, Box 300 Victoria, BC V8W 2N4 or fax your letter to the editor at 250-380-5353
- send a letter to your elected officials urging them to support The Land Conservancy's efforts to save the Potholes. Email addresses for mayors and councils can be found at www.crd.bc.ca/govlink.htm. Email addresses for MLA's can be found at www.legis.gov.bc.ca/mla/3-1-1.htm
- make a donation to the TLC campaign and/or become a TLC member by calling 479-8053.



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2003

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ACC website:

<http://www.alpineclubofcanada.ca>

ACC VI website: www.alpineclubofcanada.ca/vi

The Island Bushwhacker is published 4 times a year by the Vancouver Island Section of the Alpine Club of Canada.

Submission deadline for the next Update is: Saturday May 1, 2004

**Send all submissions to :
holm@telus.net**

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Backgrounder:

On Monday, March 8th The Land Conservancy announced that it will be working to acquire and permanently protect the Sooke Potholes.

The property consists of 156 acres, running for three km along the east side of the Sooke River, where the deep and polished rock pools and carved canyons known as "the Potholes" are found. These clear green pools are linked by picturesque waterfalls and gorges and surrounded by the beautiful forests of the Sooke Hills. Along the eastern boundary of the property runs the Galloping Goose Regional Trail, a tremendously popular recreational corridor used by cyclists, equestrians, runners and hikers from every part of the Capital Region, and by visitors from around the world.

In addition, a fabulous network of trails links the Sooke Potholes site to the new Sooke Hills Wilderness Regional Park tying the area into the region's Sea to Sea Greenbelt.

The property lies immediately adjacent to the existing Sooke Potholes Provincial Park. The existing park is a very small site of only 7 hectares. Public use of this park site is limited primarily to the parking lot from which they access a small section of the river.

For more than 20 years, the property has been the subject of various development schemes which could have compromised public access and even the integrity of the potholes themselves. The property is now the subject of a court-ordered sale and TLC wants to ensure that its future is secured, and will not be lost either to inappropriate development or to private acquisition making it inaccessible to the public.

TLC hopes to be able to form a partnership with the District of Sooke, the Capital Regional District and the Province to make the Sooke Potholes a world class destination park.

IMPORTANT NOTICE TO ALL TRIP LEADERS AND PARENTS

New ACC policy on Participation of children

To All Section Chairs;

Parks Canada has issued a "strong recommendation" to organizations responsible for taking youth on backcountry trips. The recommendation is that if the youth are taken into any areas with potential for avalanches, that a ski or full mountain guide be employed to lead the trip. The exception to this recommendation is if the child's parent(s) are also along on the trip.

The ACC has been told by Parks that in the coming months, this will become a law, and not just a recommendation. At present, this Parks Canada recommendation only applies to National Parks in the winter months.

The legal counsel for the ACC has advised that all ACC Sections must adopt this policy on all trips regardless of where they take place (in a National Park, on provincial lands and elsewhere).

To summarize, Sections cannot allow children on any backcountry ski trips that have exposure to any avalanche hazard unless either a UIAGM guide or at least one parent of the child is also on the trip.

If you would like to see the complete recommendation from Parks Canada, please download the pdf file from the following FTP site:

<ftp://142.179.149.175/Public/PCRecommendation>

Bruce Keith
Executive Director

This policy is effective immediately. It applies to all persons aged 17 and under, in accordance with our membership categories. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Bruce Keith, ACC Executive Director, at bkeith@alpineclubofcanada.ca or 1-403-678-3200

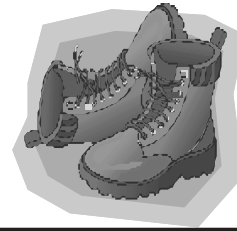
The Alpine Club of Canada - Vancouver Island Section
2004 BUDGET

Approved by the Executive Committee on January 15, 2004

ITEM	DEBIT	CREDIT	NET
Bank Assets on 1 Dec 2003			\$12,728.10
NET REVENUE ITEMS			
Banff Festival of Mountain Films November 2004	\$11,300.00	\$14,600.00	\$3,300.00
Section Membership Dues (ex FMCBC) Monthly remittance from ACC Canmore FMCBC dues (\$15 per membership in Fiscal 2003)	\$3,105.00	\$5,300.00	\$2,195.00
GST Rebate		\$720.00	\$720.00
Equipment Rental Income		\$700.00	\$700.00
Section Summer Camp 2004 Profit from 2003 camp	5682 317.25	\$6,000.00	\$0.75
Bank Interest		\$70.00	\$70.00
NET EXPENSE ITEMS			
Publications Bushwhacker Annual Newsletters (4) and Trip Schedules (2)	\$3,050.00 \$810.00		-\$3,860.00
Purchase of New Equipment	\$300.00		-\$300.00
Subsidies for Section Members Courses for Members Camps for Youth	\$1,000.00 \$400.00		-\$1,400.00
Section Meetings in Victoria December AGM January Volunteer Party October Meeting & Slide Contest	110 350 100		-\$560.00
Slide shows	\$200.00		-\$200.00
Website fees	\$220.00		-\$220.00
Section Banquet Speaker's fee and expenses	1200 300	\$1,450.00	-\$50.00
Donations and dues (ex FMCBC)	\$200.00		-\$200.00
Office, Library, and Travel Stationery, copying, PO box, plaques Library Delegate travel to ACC meetings	\$130.00 \$100.00 \$100.00		-\$330.00
ACC Coast Collection Agreement (one-time expense)	\$200.00		-\$200.00
TOTALS (including net loss for the year)	\$29,174.25	\$28,840.00	-\$334.25
Estimated Bank Assets on 1 Dec 2004			\$12,393.85

Notes to the 2004 Budget:

1. Hut Deposit paid in Fiscal 2003
2. Includes additional Island Net Website fees from 2003
3. Can. Avalanche Assn. & Climbers Access Society
4. Includes chequing account and a cashable term deposit of \$4,370.48



Up-Island News Fall 2003/Winter 2004

by Lindsay Elms

Feature named in Strathcona Park. A beautiful lake in the wilderness of Strathcona Park now bears the name of a Comox Valley pilot who perished during World War II. Fairbairn Lake (GR 965034) is located about 6 kms west of the Golden Hinde and is named after Doug Fairbairn who has no grave as he rests on the bottom of the ocean in the North Sea where his plane crashed while on a bombing mission. Doug was a noted athlete, especially in basketball. After teacher training, he was on the staff at Bevan School and later Comox Elementary as a teacher and principal. He joined the RCAF on February 12, 1941 and was granted a commission as Pilot Officer before proceeding overseas in December 1941. Less than three months later he was killed in action. His name is inscribed on the Runnymede Memorial in England for those who have no known grave. The Fairbairn Family will receive a certificate of remembrance signed by the premier to note the official naming of Fairbairn Lake. Information on Doug Fairbairn and the submission was supplied by Ruth Masters.

Further news from last Summer. On Sept. 21, 2003 John Waters and Aaron Hamilton visited the Mackenzie Range for the first time and put up a new route on the North Face of Redwall Peak. The route was 425 metres (II) 5.9. They used a few thin pins and cams and nuts to 2 inches. The route started at the lowest toe of rock on the north face and was easy scrambling for the first one hundred metres to where the face steeped. The climbing began when they crossed a chossy right slanting gully with large snow patch out to their right.

P1 50m, Climb straight past a left facing corner and some bushes to a treed ledge and an obvious crack

P2 50m, Stem good crack, moving left then right to finish over a small bulge (5.9). Best pitch on route

P3 50m, Go straight up to bushy ledge. Great climbing on steep blocky jugs. (5.8)

P4 50m, Traverse right 20ft, and climb straight past bushes to a large ledge

P5 25m, Start at right side of ledge at a small block corner and tree. Climb up to the far right side of a large left slanting gully.

P6 40m, Traverse right 20ft, up mini arLtes and bushes to a right facing corner. Wet in spots

P7 40m, Up short corner to easy face above. Belay from tree.

P8 20m, Climb right and up past sub alpine firs to the summit. Rap "standard route."

At the same time that Aaron and John were putting this route up on Redwall, two others Rob Grant and Greg Killops were putting another route up further to the right. Their description is as follows: "On the west side of the NW Ridge route are two obvious weaknesses in the form of crack/grooves as viewed from the saddle to the west. Approach these by scrambling up a ramp to some small yellow cedar trees just before a small draw. We belayed from this point, traversing across the draw and up some blocks to the next (awkward) belay at another yellow cedar (fifth class). From here climb the right of the two cracks. We did one 55m pitch to a small ledge and a relatively good natural belay (5.10). Continue for one more pitch of easy fifth class to the summit of Redwall. Our descent was down the South Ridge route. We named the route Turtle Heads and Gophers and went at 5.10. "In one of the previous updates last year I reported seeing climbers on the bluffs beside the Kennedy River. This turned out to be Aaron Hamilton and Rob Grant from Port Alberni. Three routes were completed on the wall with one "almost" finished project (the rain stopped them.) Aaron said there is a ton of potential for many more quality routes and they plan to continue developing as soon as it stops raining! Aaron also reported seeing a bolt in situ on the bluffs. After talking with Bill Perry I found out that he and Clarence de Belle had attempted to climb the bluff back in the mid 1970's. Bill said they attempted to put a route up the vertical rock wall via a very thin curving crack. Clarence, who he said was a strong rock climber, was unable, even when using direct aid, to get very high and left a bolt in place from where he rappelled to the bottom. Aaron said: "We named this wall "Las Olas" (or "The Waves" in Spanish) which is made up of some sort of very solid rock (basalt) with incredible friction on positive flakes and edges. There are also many beautiful pockets. The climbing is steep yet slabby with many bulges

and undulations. The average grade is 5.10+ so far with future routes looking more challenging. There is evidence of other climbers visiting this crag, like the old pins on "Something About Natalie", and some rope found at the top for top roping. During the cleaning of the routes there was very little loose rock that came off. The wall is about 40m high and requires 2 ropes with witch to lower off. All routes are equipped with "bomber" rap stations located on the face below the trees on top. These routes were designed to be lead climbed as walking around to top rope is almost impossible.

The three routes described below have mixed protection and are "trad" rather than "sport" by feel with only a few bolts. The rest is protected by nuts and cams up to 1.5 inches. Protection is excellent and bolts were only placed when there was no natural pro to be found! There are power lines close to the rock so keep this in mind when throwing the rope to rap off! They are not near enough to pose a problem to falling climbers though.

From left to right of the crag, the routes are: Something about Natalie (5.10- 35m) FFA Rob Grant, Aaron Hamilton (Aug 2003). This route starts just to the left of an old bolt and follows a couple of new bolts up to the left past a bulge and gains a prominent crack line. A couple of old pitons and another old bolt are present in this crack. The route then veers to the right of the crack as the vegetation grows too dense (for now). It then finishes up a nice face with a couple more bolts and a few natural placements to the top. Gear to 1.5 inches and has ring anchors for getting off. Walking the Fine Line (5.11- 35m) FFA. Aaron Hamilton, Rob Grant (Aug 2003) Route starting 10 feet to the right of "Something¼". It starts up a slabby face with good pockets and flakes and heads straight up through a bulge past a couple of bolts to a nice rest. Do not forget your small nuts and cams for the top half. Always Wanted To (5.10+ 35m) mixed pro Rob Grant, Aaron Hamilton (Aug 2003). About 30 feet or so farther to the right of "Walking the Fine Line" is a weakness marked by the first bolt which is about 12-15 feet up. The first part of this climb is blocky and somewhat overhanging. Trend left and follow the natural pro found in the cracks and seams. Climbing gets more difficult about halfway up for a short crux near the fourth bolt then gets easier before getting a bit tricky on the next wave of steepness and

some nice jams, over that wave and to the rap anchors. Bring gear to one and a quarter inches and 9 draws.

Mount Washington. The ski season has been somewhat damp on the island, however, in early January we had a dry, cold spell for a week where according to many local back-country ski enthusiasts, it was the best ski conditions they have ever seen. The back bowls on Mount Washington had beautiful powder and great stability and Mount Becher also had superb snow. Even the news from Mount Cain was exciting. This winter has also seen an increase in the number of Avalanche Awareness courses offered which reflects on the increased awareness of many back-country users. Greg Sorenson of Outer Limits Excursions said that the number of participants in his courses has increased by at least 50% from last year. The Canadian Avalanche Association has also said that the number of visitors on their website has increased by 30%. This information will come in handy with the huge expansion of ski terrain at Mount Washington on the north side in an area they are calling The Outback. The four hundred additional acres of steep, challenging terrain has technically been out of bounds but a \$3 million quad chairlift (called The Boomerang) will give access to the new terrain which will include Double Black Diamond runs, meaning it is meant for more experienced skiers and snowboarders only. Mount Washington Resort will employ a projectile-hurling "avalauncher" to control snow pack and make The Outback safe for users.

Mount Cain. On February 8, at Mount Cain, a large avalanche swept a skier over 500 feet down into the West Bowl. The skier apparently was aware of the potential danger but decided to take a gamble and ski the slope. As soon as he moved onto the slope he triggered the avalanche that swept down the bowl. Just as his two companions back at the top of the slope were switching their Transceivers onto the search mode, he popped out safe and unscathed but somewhat shaken at the bottom. It is skiers like this who know better but put many other people in jeopardy through their foolishness. Fortunately for him he wasn't to become a statistic but hopefully he will use his new gained knowledge more sensibly in the future.

Any reports or info on climbs for the next update can be emailed to: <beyondnootka@shaw.ca

Hard Times in Shangri-la

Russ Moir

I've never been comfortable around guns. I was an adult before I even saw one in the 'flesh' (parading soldiers seem sterile, non-threatening). Nor have I seen first hand the gruesome results of their effect on humans. So I walked back down the hill into the Nepalese village with some uncertainty as to how I'd react on finding myself in the midst of a gaggle of Maoist guerrillas. I spent the afternoons teaching the lovingly pacifist monks in the small Buddhist monastery high above on the hill. This was an intrusion into the peace and a jolt on the senses. The intruders did resemble a cluster of ducks on a placid waterway. For much of the waning afternoon I watched the group, around seventy in number, shuffle, jog, hop and jump around the dusty schoolyard, looking very much like they were waterfowl meandering from place to place, en echelon, seemingly without any clear agenda.

Most of these strangers were young; they strutted and postured like any group of teenagers hanging out before an audience. Except these all had small hip pouches sprouting grenades and many held on grimly to old, weathered Lee-Enfields and shot-guns.. These folks were lethal!

School had finished early for a shortage of teachers (another story), so several of the village children sat perched on the school wall, gazing in silent awe at a display of some strange behaviour. The squad was called to order by their tough looking commanders who wore much smarter camouflage uniforms. Their troops sheepishly mustered into several rows, though the lines didn't appear to satisfy the parade-drill orders of the officers, so there was an interlude of gentle pushing and prodding until they were in neater spacings. The action began.

Actually it was impressive. In this land of Sherpas, in the Himalayas of Nepal, life's hard but the people aren't prone to being disciplined in any military sense. Even the government soldiers assume a casual slouch whenever they're 'on duty', so the efforts of these peasant guerrillas to act as a tight fighting force were sufficient to grab my interest. After several rounds of drilling in formal ranks they changed to some stamina training. Rifles were stacked in the centre, while their owners made jocular attempts to get into groups for the next session. To my eye they were just like my grade nine and ten students in the Sherpa high school here; the same shy boy/girl approaches; the hesitant decisions, the side-long glances. Nearly half were dark-eyed beauties dressed in floppy, masculine fatigues.

When their bosses had finally sorted them into cohesive groups they began some much energized running and jumping sequences, all of which were accompanied by squeals and laughter, especially on the frequent bumps and falls which they made. The whole scene began to devolve into.....fun!

It wasn't fun for Sonam. She and I were watching this drawn-out display from the upstairs of my friend's house. Sonam's husband is a police inspector and even though here in Junbesi there have been no deadly incidents recently, she knew well that in many villages around Nepal police and government officials had met grisly ends. She glanced nervously over to me and clutched her infant son closely. Only two years before, the Maoists vainly attacked the government army base four hours walk down the valley and in a vicious fire-fight lost over two hundred dead. So that even though the scene was, on the surface, an innocent display of healthy activity, it did have a much darker side.

After a seeming eternity of this continuing 'sweat shop' the signal was given to break off and groups of up to a dozen ambled off to the village lodges for a long-awaited meal. In my 'home', Maya and Chomale had been peeling, cutting, steaming and frying all afternoon. They knew how hungry these marauders would be. They had no choice but to feed on demand and these troops were ravenous.

By now it was dark; the village generator was pumping out its niggardly voltage and in the dim light of the two small bulbs in the kitchen the horde gathered around the tables in a calm, expectant hush. These bands move mostly at night, away from the prying eyes of the government forces who themselves cover the hills in hesitant patrols. Before long the youngsters would have to shoulder their meager possessions and sortie out along pitch dark mountain tracks to their next rendezvous. They were too pensive to chat loudly but what talk they did manage again smacked of any high-school party out on a field trip with their teachers. When the meal was ready a 'monitor' appeared from each group, passed out dishes, collected empty plates and even wiped down the tables at the end. All very civilized.

The scene became almost theatrical when the generator coughed its nightly spluttering, died out and the candles were lit.

The warm glow revealed tired, innocent looking faces gazing into space in pensive moods. A few had the energy to organize their arms and this was when I discovered how I'd react to facing down a gun barrel.

One of the younger ones had a heavy gauge shotgun which had obviously jammed. With the help of a brush, gum-chewing older one he casually began to bang and pull the pump action in order to release the shells. My thoughts turned to stories I'd heard of guns going off at unforeseen moments, of the death or maiming of innocent bystanders. The two lads continued in their growing frustration to clatter the gun against the table and to rattle the slide mechanism. Slowly the barrel swung round in an arc. Within seconds I was looking down the sinister open-

ing pointed directly at my forehead and only centimeters away. I felt my hands gripped on my chair and my face clenched in horror. Without blinking I stood up and in my best, broad Yorkshire dialect directed the handler to stick his barrel somewhere else! Not needing translation, he got my drift and took the gun and his comrade to the other side of the room where, with much grunting and rattling, they achieved satisfaction with the state of the weapon. I began to unclench bit by bit.

After several false alarms through the evening, the order to move out finally came from out of the pitch darkness outside. The youngsters sleepily gathered their small packs together, wrapped themselves up with scarves and hats and shambled out into the cold, stark night. I felt a wave of sympathy for them. They were all much younger than my own two children back home. Their lives were devoid of comfort, filled with constant turmoil and danger lurked around each move they made through the countryside.. There are daily reports on the radio of casualties among them, though few have occurred in this idyllic valley.

All warfare's a sad reflection on the human condition. This situation in the Khumbu struck me doubly so. Just a few weeks beforehand I'd attended, along with most of the villagers, a puja at the ancient gumpa (church). It was slap in the middle of the Hindu festival of Desain (most Nepalese are Hindu) This "celebration" culminates in the bloody slaughter of hundreds of goats, sheep and chickens, followed by the ritual daubing of participants with the blood. The Sherpas are devout Buddhists; there are notices in the valley pleading for the salvation of all

the animals in the area. Meat is only eaten from a 'natural' death. Not once have I seen the slightest sign of anger, violence or animosity between the people here, even, dare I say it, from the virile adolescents I teach in the village high-school. Nothing but good natured bantering and jousting is the way they follow. To the Sherpas the intrusion of an alien fighting force, even of fellow Nepalese peasantry, is a situation they cannot come to terms with. they have no experience of violent conflict.

From early successes in garnering support, the Maoists have become pariahs. They began with projects of much needed rural land reforms. Now, after several military set-backs, they rule by fear and by force. The relaxed, happy mood of the villagers changes the instant the Maoist bands enter the scene. In the monastery, the student monks become sullen, wary spectators, a complete reversal from their normal demeanor. There are no welcoming calls as I puff up the steep path, no endless games of throwing walnuts or laughter-laden conversations. Just grim expressions and puzzled eyes.

The subsistence farmers have little cash available. Now they have to contend with 'hefty' monthly levies, imposed by the In all of this brouhaha, fears by tourists of the actions of the Maoists have cut back drastically on their numbers, especially those passing through the valley. So far, there have been no incidents with tourists being in any immediate danger. The drop in custom has put the region into economic downspin. especially for the lodge-keepers. The Sherpas look at it all and shrug their shoulders. "Ke garne?" is their reaction – "What can you do?"

New FMCBC Executive Director Appointed

I am very pleased to announce that Evan Loveless will be the new Executive Director for the FMCBC.

Evan says that his passion for adventure and the outdoors started as a child in the late 70s when his school class spent a week at Strathcona Park Lodge. He joined the Vancouver Island Section of the Alpine Club of Canada as a teenager. He later moved to the Rockies and joined the Rocky Mountain Section of the ACC. Evan, his wife, and two year old son now live in Victoria and are again members of the ACC-Vancouver Island Section. (Evan and his family will be moving to the Vancouver area in the next few months.)

Evan's career has focused on the tourism/outdoor recreation industry. As a consultant, Evan's projects have included a mix of business and economic planning and development, and land and resource management planning. His work focused on wilderness, eco and adventure tourism, First Nations and Community projects, and the areas of conservation and sustainability. Evan also has good business experience: he was a co-owner of an adventure tourism company that offered packaged tours in Canada and abroad. Additional industry experience includes guiding and the management of programs in the eco-adventure tourism sector including sea kayaking, canoeing, hiking, mountaineering, skiing, dog-sledding, wildlife and culture interpretation, and adventure-based education.

Much of Evan's recent work is with the Kitasoo/Xaixais First Nation part of which includes the development of a tourism enterprise for the Community of Klemtu. He is also involved in the planning and management of tourism as it relates to interim measures protocols and the Kitasoo land and resource management planning processes.

Evan has, and is, actively involved in a number of tourism and outdoor recreation planning initiatives. Through 2002/2003 he was part of the Coast Ecosystem Based Management (EBM) Planning Team, including Government, First Nations, Forest Companies, ENGOs and other key stakeholders. Evan is a member of the Coastal First Nations Tourism Steering Committee and he participates in the Coast LRMP process. As a member of the Sea Kayak Guides Alliance of BC, Evan has been active in the land management committee and worked with Government (MTSBC, MELP, MSRM, WALP, LWBC and BCAL) to address the needs of commercial sea kayaking and develop an appropriate Commercial Recreation (CR) policy for sea kayak operations on the BC Coast. Much of this work was incorporated in the recent Sea Kayak Commercial Recreation Policy Directive (2003). He was able to initiate a management plan proposal for sea kayak activity in the Johnstone Strait area (2000). This proposal was written for the Sea Kayak Guides Alliance of BC and looked at

(Continued on page 9)



Section Library/ Archives News

New in the Library:

John Gibson: newly created CD of John's climbing history consisting of
diary entries, prints, slides

Howkins, Heidi, "One Woman's Quest for the Summit" donated by Jules Thomson

The Section Library/Archives is accessed by contacting Judith Holm, 477-8596, and the Section website Library link has :a searchable database of the Library contents: www.alpineclubofcanada.ca/vi>

ALPINE FLORA

Are there others who would also like to learn more about alpine flora??

I have some ideas. Please call me if this might be of interest to you.

Judith Holm, 477-8596,



management issues facing present and future kayak use in the Johnstone strait area including revising the existing CR policy. Some of this work was included in the North Straits Coastal Management Plan.

Evan has a Bachelor of Tourism Management from the University College of the Cariboo with specialization in tourism resource and land management planning.

Please join me in welcoming Evan into the FMCBC as our new Executive Director! He starts April 1.

Finally, a big thanks to Richard Keltie who chaired the ED search committee and to Don Morton who was very active in the committee. Thanks also to Sandra Nichol and Dave King who also provided valuable input to the search/selection process

Manrico Scremin

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