

New hut at Confederation Lake

With the completion of the Golden Stanley Hut on the Sunshine Coast Trail in the spring of 2016, PAWS applied for, and received, funding from the Powell River Community Forest (nearly \$50,000) and BC Parks (nearly \$5000) to build a replacement cabin at Confederation Lake. The original cabin at Confederation was constructed more than 20 years ago under the auspices of Forestry and was in dire need of replacement for the safety and comfort of SCT hikers.

Confederation is a beautiful 2-km-long lake nestled in a large, high bowl of Mount Mahony within a remote corner of Inland Lake Provincial Park. It is a favourite spot with day and through-hikers on the SCT, and we anticipate that this cabin will be well-loved and well-used.

How did we do it?

After pre-building large components such as floors and walls for the new cabin and outhouse in town we assembled crews of eight or nine volunteers willing to rough it for a week at a time. PAWS began constructing the cabin beside the lake in July, scheduling four additional week-long expeditions spaced through the summer and fall. We finished building the cabin near the end of October. Its walls and ceilings are fully insulated and paneled with locally manufactured red cedar tongue-and-groove boards. It has a small pellet stove that will heat the cabin but requires pellets to be brought from town. They can be acquired by donation in smaller quantities at the

Powell River Visitors Infocentre at 4760 Joyce Avenue, or purchased in large bags at local building supply stores.

Besides building the cabin, PAWS also constructed another composting toilet, replacing the usual Parks' throne. The new toilets have two large adjacent composting chambers, one of which is in use while the other one is inactive. When the first one is full it will be closed off and the second chamber will be used instead, giving the first one the chance to fully compost. Since these outhouses are aerated they are quite a pleasure to use!

We are most grateful for the donations we received to make this project possible, and for the cooperation between the City (who owns the Powell River Community Forest) and BC Parks. Many thanks to all the people and organisations who have supported this enhancement of the Sunshine Coast Trail. "It takes a community to build a trail."

Thank you. 🐾



Confederation Lake: New hut building site with the old hut in the background.

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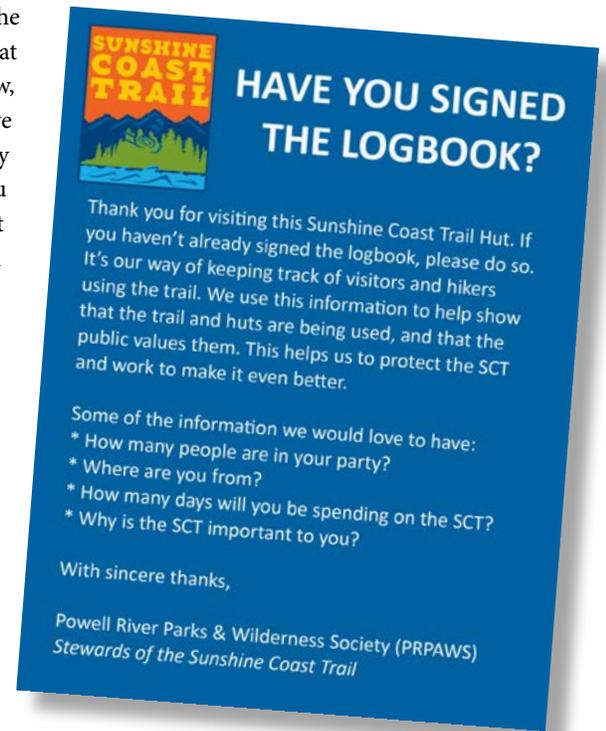
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Want updates on trail conditions?

WHY a Log Book?

If you've ever hiked a section of the Sunshine Coast Trail, chances are that you have come upon an incredible view, and at that viewpoint there might have also been a hut, or bench. You may have noticed a little box wherein you would have found a little book that has been left there, along with a pen or pencil, by PAWS, with an invitation to sign and to share your ventures along the SCT. These logbooks have more than just one purpose. Besides creating a record of hikers' thoughts and experiences of their adventures along the SCT, the logbooks provide valuable information regarding who is using the SCT, and evidence of the appreciation for this unique hiking trail, the longest hut-to-hut hiking trail in Canada. In addition, they help us to understand users' concerns for logging in the back country.



All of this collectable information is highly beneficial and treasured for the preservation and continuation of the existence of the SCT. Because there is no official registration required to hike any or all of the SCT, this is a good way to track who is using the trail, and how they are feeling about it. Over the past 25 years the SCT has been built and cleared with the purpose of encouraging the public to explore the incredible back country surrounding Powell River, and promoting the knowledge that being in and with the forest helps and heals us all. By virtue of putting one foot in front of the other we can reach a quiet, deeper place in the forest, and in ourselves.

In keeping with the findings of guides from other trail organizations around the world, PAWS estimates that the compiled information gathered from the logbooks represents about

20% of the actual users of the SCT. This is important information that will help us to continue to protect the trail! It is fascinating and exciting to see the numbers rising, year by year, as more visitors come to hike the trail and visit Powell River. So we ask for your help. If you are hiking on the trail, please sign the logbooks! And if you see visitors on the trail, please encourage them to do the same. In the image accompanying this story you will find a summary of the information we are looking for. The experiences, names and dates you share will in the end be proof of the overwhelming love and support hikers have for the SCT. Locals and world travelers alike know and feel the value of Canada's Longest Hut-to-Hut Hiking Trail, and for the sake of the trail, we need to hear about it! 🐾



We regularly post information about trail conditions, reroutes and road closures on our facebook page. We will also be posting these notices more regularly to our blog, so they are easy for users to find. Find us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/sunshinecoasttrail and our blog at www.sunshinecoasttrail.com under NEWS. For now, a quick teaser about a current reroute:

Fiddlehead–West Tinhat Trail Reroute

Currently a logging road is being built above Fiddlehead Farm along a section of West Tin Hat Mountain trail section of the SCT around KM 83. This section has been blocked off, and a road reroute using Giavanno Mainline is in place from Fiddlehead Farm until the Giavanno-Spring Lake Junction. Road building should be done by early December, or the onset of winter, at which time the trail can be used with snowshoes. The trail is also usable on weekends. Find all the details on our blog. 🐾

MARATHON SHUFFLE

GUESS WHAT? Registration for the popular annual Marathon Shuffle, taking place on Sunday, April 30, 2017 will open on January 1! Registration is limited, and these spots go fast, so be sure to sign up for this fabulous event early. Find out more here:

<http://sunshinecoasttrail.com/events>

Ultramarathon!

One of our Club Fat Ass friends is taking a serious look at putting on an ultramarathon from Sarah Point to Saltery Bay, 110 miles on the Sunshine Coast Trail.

Dylan Morgan is an experienced ultramarathoner and currently holds the Fastest Known Time on the SCT of 31:55 hours. He says that British Columbia offers some of the most spectacular running terrain in North America, yet lags far behind in providing events – there is currently only a single hundred mile race, the iconic Fat Dog 120 in Manning Park.

The Sunshine Coast Trail boasts some of the best that British Columbia has to offer the serious runner: beautiful scenery, massive elevation change, trail ranging from highly technical to open, and reasonable logistical access. Comparing it to Fat Dog, the distances are similar, the elevation change is comparable, and the degree of technical difficulty is at least a match; in short, it provides a course which could easily rival Fat Dog for the “best in Canada” crown.

Stay tuned to our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/SunshineCoastTrail) and our blog (at www.sunshinecoasttrail.com on the News page) for details! 🐾



How to light a pellet stove



If you stay at one of the SCT huts with pellet stove in the winter time, it is likely that you will want to use that stove. A lot of people seem to have trouble using these stoves, so we wanted to publish a little instruction guide to help you out. These instructions can now be found in all of the huts that have a pellet stove too!

So, the first thing you need to know is that these stoves are not that easy to start, and they require constant attention. They will NOT burn through the night, but the cabins are fully insulated.

Here it is, step by step:

1. Take off the small firebox cover plate at the very front.
2. Clean out ashes and old pellets from firebox (DO NOT put the pellets in the hopper yet!)
3. Build a small pyramid of tinder and/or pellets just below the hopper. Douse with lighting fluid.
4. Light pyramid and coax the flame along, blowing on it if necessary. The pyramid should be burning strongly BEFORE you

add few pellets into the hopper. Trickle in some more when the first ones glow.

5. Put the cover plate over the opening once the pellets are burning well and screw on the wing nut. Then add more pellets gradually. DO NOT LEAVE at this point – you will need to keep attending to it to keep it burning, and always adding just a little. Don't smother the fire or you'll just have to start again.

NOTE: DO NOT START A FIRE IN THE OVEN! This is dangerous and will not work. There is no stove pipe connection. You will fill the cabin with thick smoke.

Also note, if you are headed up to a hut and wish to use the pellet stove, you will need to bring some pellets and lighter fluid with you as we don't guarantee that there will be any on site. You can get small amounts of pellets from the Powell River Visitor Centre, or large bags from a local supply store.

Stay warm and safe! 🐾

Annual General Meeting

The next AGM for PAWS will be held on Monday, January 9, 2017 at 7 pm at Westview Elementary School. We would love to see you come out for this meeting when we do our annual elections for the Board of Directors, as well as planning for the year ahead. Please consider letting your name stand for the board. There will also be a slideshow of the work we have done in 2016 with Golden Stanley Hut, Confederation Lake Cabin and more. Currently the pellet stove at Mount Troubridge Cabin is not functional. We are looking to fix the problem as quickly as we can, but until then the stove can't be used and it will be cold. Look for Facebook update soon. Save the date for the AGM! 🐾



The Sunshine Coast Trail is a great place to get out and enjoy the snow! Head out into higher climbs on trails such as Elk Lake Loop, Mt. Troubridge Trail, Walt Hill Trail and Tin Hat Mountain to find some snow during the winter months. Check out more winter hiking ideas at www.sunshinecoasttrail.com.

President's Message

We thought that the replacement hut for the venerable log cabin at Confederation Lake, which was rotting away and infested by ants and rodents, might be the last shelter we would need to build to provide fairly evenly spaced hut-to-hut hiking. However, throughout the year we kept hearing from hikers that the start from Sarah Point to Manzanita Bluff Hut in the Gwendoline Hills was very difficult and sometimes just too far to reach, especially when tides forced a late start on the first day of people's trek. And so we have come to the conclusion that we will build a simple shelter somewhere along that stretch at some time in the future provided the funding and the permits can be acquired. Two years ago, Tla'amin and BC Parks had asked PAWS to relocate the SCT and the campsites at Cochrane Bay up to the Bliss Portage waterfront. PAWS agreed and built a reroute of the SCT skirting Cochrane Bay, and we are now thinking of making the area at Bliss Portage a little more hospitable when it becomes feasible. We will keep you posted on the progress!

—Eagle Walz

 For trail updates, find us on Facebook at: www.facebook.com/SunshineCoastTrail

Got your membership?

It's that time of year again...Christmas is coming and it's time to renew your PAWS membership!

It costs but \$20 a person, or \$30 for a family, and do you know where that membership money goes? It goes directly to help pay for maintenance and enhancements on the Sunshine Coast Trail. So if you use and enjoy the SCT, please consider becoming a member. PAWS is a non-profit society run solely by volunteers, and we could not operate without donations and membership fees.

Want to renew/become a member online? Go to www.sunshinecoasttrail.com and BECOME A MEMBER (in the PAWS menu). If you would like to send a cheque, please make it out to Powell River Parks and Wilderness Society and mail it to: **Box 345, Powell River, BC V8A 5C2**

Thank you for supporting the Sunshine Coast Trail!

SCT has Christmas gifts!



Looking for a special gift for that outdoorsy person in your life? Look no further!

Did you know there is a wide array of Sunshine Coast Trail **T-shirts**, **patches**, **passports** and **books** available at the Powell River Visitor InfoCentre, 4760 Joyce Ave?



Both the definitive *SCT Guidebook (4th edition)* and *A Dream of Giants: The Story of the Sunshine Coast Trail* sell for \$24.95; SCT T-shirts are \$20 - collect the whole series - there is an original design for each SCT hut! Sew-on SCT patches are \$5, or get one for free the hard way by completing your SCT Passport (passports are available for \$5 at the InfoCentre, as well as at many of the passport sponsorship locations).



Enjoy your Christmas, and no matter what else you do, be sure to get out on the Sunshine Coast Trail (the ultimate holiday gift) for a hike or two - it's a great way to work off those holiday meals! 🐾