

**FORRS – MAY 20, 2010 PUBLIC WORKSHOP
COMMENTS – HUTS**

Huts are the defining easy backcountry winter experience.

[Huts] create a sense of community.

Huts make day use safe and convenient for moderate users. (x3)

Day use shelters are important:

- Destination centers
- Social interaction
- Safety

Importance of huts: They are what makes the Rossland Range easily useable and provide a factor of safety for backcountry users.

Huts: Very important in winter, a major attraction

Very important to everyone who uses them.

How important? Very! Can't be overstated.

Importance? Very – Wonderful to have “destination” for lunch; good safety feature in case of bad weather or injury; unique feature of our area.

Very important – provide [...] breaks, also shelters in an emergency; used by hunters as well as skiers.

[Huts enable] family access.

Huts equal community culture.

The main attraction.

Day-use huts greatly improve the quality of the recreation area.

Very important to skiers and hikers, etc.

Huts are critically important and also [provide] a safety aspect.

Huts are not necessary.

Huts add value to the experience.

Kids love huts.

Managing:

- Hut keepers
- Hut wardens/guardians on a rotational basis for caretaking and maintenance (Swiss-style)
- Organize a “hut keepers” group – prestigious community position, dedicate some resources.
- Manage huts by summer volunteers, like the Old Glory hikes, e.g. have “Fix Up Sunspot.”
- Encourage groups of friends to take “ownership” of a hut that is being neglected.
- “Adopt a Hut”
- Communicate what is needed to maintain a hut so they know what to do.
- Community-maintained – work parties
- Organize events and work parties for maintenance or gathering funding (community involvement)
- An organizing committee for work parties. (Not everyone has a chainsaw and truck.) Work parties help people get active.
- Organized volunteer management
- Maintenance schedule for huts
- Establish criteria
- Criteria for viable hut
- Set criteria for each hut
- Establish hut building and maintenance standards
- Limit and control the type of cabin that should be built.
- Type of cabin: Only organic materials except for roof
- [Make] a defined hut area.
- Signage and education (x2)
- [Need] guidelines for use of the cabins. Write ethics that are appropriate and get people to be sensitive to the history and the value of the cabins to the community.
- Guidelines for minimal impact
- Establish a budget
- Waste management
- Select important huts only to include in tenure application.
- Limit number of huts (x2)
- Ideal number of cabins – 8 maximum
- Regulate location and numbers - Cookie Jar, Red Dog, Viewpoint, etc.
- Use peer pressure
- Other user pressure
- Sign with cabin etiquette
- Signage about history

- Day use only (x2)
- Keep the huts day-use to limit impact of users.
- Ensure unsuitable for overnight use
- [Rule]: Bring in –take out, leave nothing
- Write down the “obvious” common sense
- Traditional volunteer efforts
- By local volunteers (x2)
- Assign workers to specific huts
- Information in cabins about what is required – costs, time
- There could be information within the huts suggesting work parties and such.
- I think a simple invitation to come help work would bring a lot of new people to help out.
- Map huts to ensure we can locate them for other resource users, e.g. Atco.
- Make a plan for decommissioning cabins (x2)

Leave management up to individual users and user groups.

Hut building should not be restricted, but can be subject to guidelines.

Huts are a complex issue – Avoid or plan? Put values first.

Use should be free.

Huts that stay must be public.

Status quo, but with more volunteers who share the workload.

User groups and volunteers need to communicate to set up work parties.

Editorial in local paper

Use on-line paper to announce a work party at a certain cabin on a certain day.

Self-regulated, self-maintained, but need long term plan.

Inventory the huts. Do they meet standards, values?

What is the limit? When do they get torched?

Do we really need 15 cabins at “cabin flats” areas (Lepsoe and Crowe)? Could better manage a more limited number.

Consolidate: 5 today, 1 tomorrow

Just south of highway

Get more people involved with the caretaking and the feeling of ownership will prevail.

Some organization is necessary: make a plan to have a volunteer regularly inspect hut and keep track of its needs.

Look at other Parks situations/other similar recreation values to determine a strategy.

Day-use huts imply no ownership and are a volunteer effort – well-meaning

The problem now is that the new users are not doing maintenance or supplying wood.

[Think in terms of] a hut system.

Look for sponsorship, e.g. Columbia Basin Trust, FORRS, Trails Society.

Work with other groups, e.g. KMC, CFPT, WKN, BHBC.

Handout for ski shops to give to skiers about the cabins, to explain the amount of work that goes into upkeep and maintenance, and to make aware of the courtesies required when using these areas.

Assess the use of each hut and concentrate on the high traffic areas to build/upgrade huts to current standards. Promote use of those huts through FORRS. Other huts could still be used by locals, but not advertised (blind eye).

Concerns:

- Waste control
- Litter, human waste, over-use of firewood supplies, fire danger, structural issues, e.g. snow loads.
- With increased use, more waste, clean-up, wood
- Commercial use
- Overnight use
- Concentration of huts and the impact of concentrated use (on users and the area)
- Luxury huts
- Safety
- If you are managing the huts, you take on the liability. (x2)
- Liability issue? (x2)
- If formal management, legal issues (x2)
- Concerns are about all common-sense backcountry problems – water contamination, wildlife, over-logging for firewood, etc.
- Resource depletion – water, wood cutting, toilets
- Are there outhouses at each cabin?

- Squatting should not be permitted.

Write the hut history in a book; emphasize user importance in their stock[ing?], maintenance.

I think it's important to educate the users of the huts that they are user maintained. This education could stimulate community action to maintain the huts with wood, cleanliness, e.g. work parties and clean-up parties. Create ownership and awareness.