



# ALPINE CLUB OF CANADA

## Fairy Meadow Ski Week



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## WELCOME TRIP ORGANIZER!

Over the next several months we will be communicating often. In the interest of clarity and accurate information, we ask that you are the only one with whom we correspond. Your cooperation and that of your group is greatly appreciated.

If this is the first time you have organized a trip like this, please see the “Tips for First Time Organizers” at the end of this document.

The following information will help you with your planning. If you have any questions unanswered, don’t hesitate to call or e-mail us. Please check out the [Fairy Meadow page](#) on our website for photos and more descriptions.

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Travelling in the backcountry can be hazardous. Contacts for avalanche and weather conditions are listed in this document. The safety recommendations in this document are simply meant as outlines. You are ultimately responsible for the safety of your group and yourself. These trips are self-guided and self-catered, if you require a guide, please contact us for recommendations.

*GROUPS / INDIVIDUALS ARE EXPECTED TO BE SELF RELIANT IN TERMS OF SNOW STABILITY EVALUATION AND ROUTE FINDING DECISIONS, SELF-RESCUE AND FIRST AID.*

## HELICOPTER STAGING AREA AND PARKING DETAILS

You will be meeting at Sorcerer Lodge Heliport near Heather Mountain Lodge off Hwy #1. The turn-off to staging is 54 kms W of Golden. Turn right off the highway at the Heather Mountain Lodge sign and immediately right again (away from the hotel). Go 800 metres down Rogers Road – towards the Rogers Pass Pusher Station and you will see parking on your right. The Heli-pad is on the left just up the hill. ACC staff will be there to meet you.

The helicopter flights are chartered by Alpine Helicopters and will be at the site and ready to fly at 12:00 p.m. (Mountain Time). Your entire group should be at the Heliport by **11:00 a.m.** so that you have time to organize bags, lock up your vehicles, change into ski boots, remember things you have forgotten, etc. Details of the staging area can be found under the [BOOKING section on this page](#).

Each return flight will take about 50 minutes. Alpine Helicopters requires that everyone remain at the Heliport during this time. If someone, or an entire group, misses a flight the extra cost for a flight in will be in the neighbourhood of \$300 per person; based on four people flying in (if one person misses, they will have to pay about \$1,200!!) This extra flight would be a cost in addition to the money you have paid for the hut and helicopter.

### Arrival and Gear

On arrival at the heliport, proceed up the short road to the left to the helipad and unload people, bags, and gear. As soon as you are unloaded, park your vehicle in the designated areas.

***On the day of transit, feel free to call the Alpine Helicopters if lost or delayed: 1 (250) 344 7444***

## HELICOPTER SAFETY:

### Loading and unloading the helicopter:

- Secure clothing, headgear and all luggage against rotor winds. Do not leave loose items lying around prior to the arrival of the helicopter.
- Protect your eyes against snow, dust and particles that will be blown around at the arrival and departure of the helicopter.
- Wait for a signal from the pilot before approaching or leaving the helicopter.
- Carry gear firmly at your side, never over your shoulder or above your head (e.g. skis and poles).
- Never throw items when loading or unloading a helicopter.
- If the helicopter is shutting down, wait until the rotors stop turning before approaching.
- If the helicopter stays running, crouch down when approaching or leaving; the wind could push the main rotor blades down.
- Approach and leave the helicopter by the downslope side for rotor clearance.
- Stay well to the side or front of the helicopter in a crouched position—never by the rear of the helicopter.
- Never approach the rear of the helicopter.
- Don't smoke in or around the helicopter.
- Load cargo carefully and secure it against movement.
- Ensure baggage compartment doors are properly closed and latched—do not slam the doors.
- Take a reserve of special medications you require in the event of en route delays.

### In the Helicopter:

- Secure seatbelts (and shoulder straps, if provided) while in flight.
- Use helmet or headset if provided.
- Remain in your seat unless given permission to move.
- Do not distract the pilot during takeoff, maneuvering or landing.
- Read instructions on the operation of doors, emergency exits, and the location of the ELT (emergency locator transmitter) and emergency equipment.



There are times when the helicopter cannot fly due to storms, high winds, and other weather conditions beyond anyone's control. The pilot will make all decisions concerning when to fly and conditions safety. Please respect his or her decision.

**NOTE:** If you are delayed or unable to fly into the hut due to weather, we will not be able to refund any portion of your payment. However, if you are “stuck” in the hut for extra days due to weather, you will not be charged for those days.

The local weather can be quite unpredictable, and there is a possibility that your group can get “stuck” in the hut for one or two extra days. Please pack your food accordingly.

Each individual in your group can bring **100 lbs** of gear and food in total. We advise when packing to be aware of bulk as much as weight. Pack wisely to ensure that all of your gear and food can be loaded on to the helicopter. Alpine Helicopters reserves the right to deny some of your group's gear or food from being loaded on the helicopter based upon weight restrictions or bulky packing.

To minimize bulk, ask people to pack in small bags and boxes (taped shut and marked with a magic marker as to group name and contents) rather than large duffel bags or large food boxes. Tell everyone to keep bulk to a minimum. There is no need to bring bulky food coolers—there is a fridge at the cabin for keeping food cool, and storage containers are supplied for dry food.

## COMMUNICATIONS

It is mandatory that you have a VHF radio or satellite phone at the hut in order to communicate with the helicopter company on changeover days, VHF are the preferred communication method for the helicopter company. Jock Weir at High Country Communications in Golden, B.C. rents satellite phones and VHF radios that can be pre-programmed to the appropriate channels. High Country Communications can be reached by phone at (250) 344-2504 or by e-mail at [hccomm@telus.net](mailto:hccomm@telus.net).

Radios can also be rented from Kootenay Communications in Cranbrook, B.C. The radio will be sent to Alpine Helicopters in Golden, already programmed for you. Kootenay Communications can be reached by phone at (800) 663-4302 or by e-mail at [sales@kootenaycomm.com](mailto:sales@kootenaycomm.com).

**NOTE:** The radio is for emergency use only and cannot be used to relay personal messages or to get weather reports. The radio uses the Louisiana Pacific repeater that they kindly allow us to use for free. Generally speaking, someone will be manning the radio frequency that your radio is set up for between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.



If you have your own radio, these are the frequencies you will need: Channel 5 – Rx 151.82, Tx 154.055.

## EMERGENCY INFORMATION AND PROCEDURES

It is important you understand that you are in a remote location where a helicopter flight is only possible during daylight hours and even then may not be possible in the event of inclement weather.

In the event of an emergency that requires helicopter evacuation you will need to do the following:

### Radio

Contact Louisiana-Pacific Canada on the radio between the hours of 7 a.m. and 5 p.m. Generally speaking Alpine Helicopters will also be listening to the radio frequency that your radio is set to during these hours.

Note that the radio is not a guaranteed method of making emergency contact due to the limited and sometimes periodic hours that the repeater is manned.

In all conversations involving an emergency and/or rescue situation:

- Be concise and precise in your statements and requests.
- Speak at a rate that others can listen to and record comfortably.

### Satellite Phone

In the event of an emergency please call the RCMP at 911 and they will dispatch the appropriate emergency services that are available 24 hours.

Alpine Helicopters are assigned for all emergency rescues and keep a cell phone 24 hours a day, which can also be called in the event of an emergency (always call 911 first).

Alpine Helicopters 24-hour cell phone: 1 (250) 344-7444.

It is strongly recommended that you take a satellite phone as well as the radio. The radio is necessary for communicating with the helicopter on the flight days, while the satellite phone is the surest way of contacting the outside world at all times.

Due to the relatively short life of your satellite phone batteries, it is highly recommended that you only use the phone for emergencies.

**REMEMBER:** Satellite phone batteries tend to only last 7-8 hours. Use your phone sparingly.



## Rescue Costs

If you use the proper procedure to call in an emergency, the British Columbia Government will pay for the rescue. It is essential that your party receives a “P number” – these are obtained through the RCMP or the B.C. Ambulance Services Provincial Dispatch (Air Ambulance).

If someone in your party needs to leave the hut for a reason other than a true emergency, that person will be responsible for paying for their helicopter flight.

## TRIP CANCELLATION/TRIP INTERRUPTION INSURANCE

The Alpine Club of Canada strongly recommends that you purchase Trip Cancellation/Trip Interruption Insurance to protect your investment. We offer Trip Cancellation & Trip Interruption Insurance using Travel Underwriters, which provides coverage and benefits toward a variety of pre-paid and unexpected travel expenses. For information please contact Micki Chong at (403) 678 3200 ext. 108 or [officemanager@alpineclubofcanada.ca](mailto:officemanager@alpineclubofcanada.ca).

## GETTING TO THE STAGING AREA FROM CALGARY

Out of town hut guests often rent a couple of large vans or a fleet of minivans in Calgary and keep them at staging for the week. Alternatively, you can take a Greyhound bus to Golden from Calgary < <http://www.greyhound.ca> >. With this option you would need to take a taxi from Golden to the staging area, which is about 39 km west. The number for the taxi company in Golden is (250) 344-5237.

## ACCOMMODATION IN GOLDEN

Although Revelstoke and Rogers Pass are options, we would recommend staying the night in Golden prior to your flight. Avalanche control is not uncommon in Roger Pass resulting in extended periods of highway closures west of the staging area. If you are unable to make your flight time for whatever reason, you will not be reimbursed and will need to cover any additional flight costs. Accommodation options in Golden can be found at:

<http://www.goldenchamber.bc.ca/mList.php?task=getCat&catID=1> .

If you are looking for a hostel accommodation in Golden, there is the Dreamcatcher Hostel <http://dreamcatcherhostel.com/>.



## PAYMENT OPTIONS

We are able to take the deposit payments by Visa or MasterCard at the time of booking, but for the final payment (90 days prior to the start of the trip) we ask that this be paid by cheque in Canadian or US dollars (contact us for exchange rate), or a wire transfer through your bank.

As trip leader, you are responsible for all payments and refunds. No individual payments/refunds will be accepted.

## HUT DETAILS

The Bill Putnam (Fairy Meadow) Hut is a beautiful two-story wooden building with a legendary 10-person wood fired sauna. It is a wet sauna, complete with a shower, so bring your environmentally friendly soap and shampoo.

The living area has built-in benches and tables and a large fireplace. The kitchen has another set of benches and tables, a propane stove, and two ovens, which are of normal household kitchen size. A two-burner Coleman white gas stove and lanterns, as well as green bottle propane stoves, are stored in the cabin entrance for use in the event of a complete propane failure. The kitchen is well supplied with dishes, cutlery, utensils, pots and pans, and bakeware to provide for a full hut (including roasting pans, cookie sheets, and bread and muffin tins).

The upstairs area sleeps 20 people comfortably on four-inch thick, covered foams. If your guests decide to bring pillows, please remember that bulky items are the biggest problem with the helicopter capacity. Encourage group members who want to bring pillows to bring small pillows.

Water is available 100 metres south of the hut at the junction of a ravine and a small valley (see the map at the end of this document). Flagging tape marks the waterhole, so that it may be easily located after a heavy snowfall. Please use this option instead of melting snow as it conserves the hut's propane supply. Creek water also tastes nicer than melted snow. There are several pails of various sizes in the hut for gathering water.

Battery operated LED lights (batteries provided) are available for lighting in the kitchen over the kitchen tables and single wall lamps in the counter and sink areas. Double pendant propane lamps are available but should be used sparingly. Headlamps can be used upstairs in the sleeping area.

Grey water disposal can usually be dealt with directly down the sinks. Be very stringent about straining off food particles before draining water. If the system backs up, you will have to dig a snow-pit. The pit should be located off the path and in the general direction of the outhouse. The largest particles should be strained off and burned before dumping.



Garbage must be flown out at the end of the ski week. Consider separating your waste into garbage and recyclable materials. The best way to do this is to line empty cardboard food boxes with plastic garbage bags. The bags and boxes can then be taped shut when they are full, ready to be flown out at the end of the week. Recycle all glass and metal by removing the labels and washing containers clean then collecting in a box to be left at the recycle depot in Golden. Refuse must not be dumped in local containers in the town of Golden. It must be taken to **the transfer station located at 530 Golden Donald Upper Road**. The station is open Saturdays from 12-4 p.m.

**DO NOT LEAVE ANY FOOD:** Under no circumstances should you leave any food. Despite your best intentions, there is a very little chance that it will be used.

The outhouse is conveniently located a short walk behind the hut. The outhouse barrels are flown in and out of the hut once a year at great expense. Please do not put garbage in them as this attracts animals into the barrels. Also, we've found that groups tend to want to leave a fresh barrel for the next group (nice gesture), but this practice results in premature changing of the barrels. Please change barrels when they are within 6 inches from the top so those groups at the season's end don't have to search for barrels with space in them.

The main supply of wood is located in and around the two woodsheds by the sauna (see map). If you think the wood supply is running low, please let us know how much is left so that we can have more wood flown in for the next group.

The hut has a good supply of tools: shovels, axes, splitting mauls, and wedges are kept in the cabinet on the front deck.

No one goes into the hut to clean up between groups, so the rule is: please leave the place cleaner than you found it. Many groups find it very useful to have a clean-up signup sheet that can be passed around on the Friday night before Saturday's departure. On Saturday morning, everyone has a job to do before taking the last couple of runs and then flying out. There is a sample clean-up sheet at the end of this package.

Please record the amount of propane left at the end of your week and include that information with your snow report.

The hut is supplied with: bleach, dish soap, pan scrubbers and washing up gloves.

**Don't forget to bring:**

- sleeping bags (rated to -5°C to -10°C or 14°-23°F)
- toilet paper



- newspaper for lighting the fire
- matches
- dishtowels (please pack out)
- dishcloths (please pack out)
- garbage bags (please pack out if there are already enough)
- duct tape
- magic markers
- paper towels
- first aid kit
- tarpaulin or two for covering your gear at the staging area (in case you must wait in bad weather)
- indoor footwear

Waterless hand cleansers are becoming very popular and we recommend that you bring some. Most groups also bring in a spare set of skis or two in case of a major breakdown. There is no first aid kit at the hut—bring your own.

**Remember that everything you take to the hut will need to be brought out with you at the end of the week. Please dispose of the garbage in Golden, and do NOT leave any garbage at the heliport.**

## THE SKIING

The skiing around the Bill Putnam (Fairy Meadow) Hut is truly world famous. You get to choose between short slopes just outside the door and peaks, long tours, and experts-only chutes. Of course, the powder is unbelievable too. The area is for strong, intermediate skiers at minimum and is certainly not suitable for beginners. Groups must have a very good understanding of avalanche terrain and glacier travel in order to ski safely around the Bill Putnam (Fairy Meadow) Hut.

We have been asked about snowboarding at the Bill Putnam (Fairy Meadow) Hut and have the following comment from a backcountry snowboarder: “The hut is an excellent backcountry boarding location, although some of the best riding/skiing locations require somewhat long approaches.”

The book *Summits and Icefields – Alpine Ski Tours in the Columbia Mountains* by Chic Scott is the best source of info concerning skiing in the area. This book, as well as maps, can be ordered from the ACC. Visit our online store at [www.alpineclubofcanada.ca/store](http://www.alpineclubofcanada.ca/store).



The maps that pertain to the Fairy Meadow area are 82N/13 (Sullivan River) and 82N/12 (Mt. Sir Sandford). The hut is located at 51° 46.0' N -117° 52.41' W, UTM 11U 4394100 – 57354800, grid reference 394352 on 82N/13.

Please note that there are some mistakes on the map sheets:

- The Bill Putnam (Fairy Meadow) Hut is misplaced on 82N/13—it should be in the high forested zone south of the Granite Glacier.
- Friendship Col is misplaced on 82N/12—it should be between Mts. Damon and Pythias.
- Ironman should be west of Austerity.
- Gargoyle should be the next peak southeast of the East Peak of the Gothics.

## WEATHER AND AVALANCHE INFORMATION

We recommend that you keep your eye on the conditions prior to your trip—check out the following websites:

### Weather:

<http://weatheroffice.ec.gc.ca/> (click on “British Columbia”, then “Golden” or “Revelstoke”) or click on “text forecast” and go to “Columbia Districts”. The area that you are interested in is known as the “North Columbia”.

### Avalanche Hazard and snow pack information:

<http://www.avalanche.ca/weather/bulletins/index.html> (click on and review the section for North Columbia). Also, on this webpage you can click on a link called “Glacier National Park” and you will be connected to the snowpack and avalanche forecast for Rogers Pass (similar area and snowpack to Bill Putnam (Fairy Meadow) Hut).

BC Environment Snow Pillow Data is a great website that shows satellite operated snow study sites around the province of B.C. Go to <http://wlapwww.gov.bc.ca/rfc/index.htm>. From November to early January, the area to refer to is “Molson Creek” (it is about 100 kilometres northwest of Bill Putnam (Fairy Meadow) Hut). In early January, the man-measured snow plot information starts up, and the areas to look at are “Sunbeam Lake” (15 km south of Fairy Meadow), or the Bush River site (40 km east of Fairy Meadow).

Groups must be self-reliant in terms of rescue and choice of ski terrain. There is an avalanche information record book in the hut. Please fill this book out to the best of your ability as the information contained in it will be important to future groups. Hopefully your group will also find it useful.



We are often asked about the use of harnesses and ropes on the glaciers around Fairy Meadow. You should know that there are monstrous crevasses capable of swallowing trains on the glaciers, and all skiers venturing onto this terrain should have the appropriate glacier travel gear and crevasse rescue knowledge.

## EQUIPMENT CHECKLIST

Every day on the slopes, each person should carry:

- Avalanche transceiver
- Sturdy collapsible shovel
- Collapsible probes or probe poles
- Headlamp
- First aid kit
- Spare pole basket
- Duct or hockey tape
- Tools to repair bindings, spare binding parts
- Extra warm clothing
- Extra food
- Space blanket

You should consider having people with current training as small group or party leaders. Good courses include:

- Canadian Avalanche Association Level I or Level II ([available through the ACC](#))
- Recreational Avalanche Course Introductory or Advanced
- C.P.R. training (Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation)
- First Aid training (S.O.F.A., Wilderness First Aid etc.)

## PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

Check the weather forecast and recent patterns along with the avalanche hazard before leaving on your tour. Register all parties each day in a “daily trip plan” signup sheet in the hut. Each party should enter their destination, estimated time of return and proposed and alternate routes.

- Ski in groups of no less than three people.
- Practise with transceivers, probes and shovels.
- Watch out for terrain traps when you are moving up and down terrain.
- Space party members across traverses and have spotters watch from safe points.



- Ski without binding safety straps and pole wrist straps.
- Perform a slope analysis before skiing a slope (e.g. snow profile analysis, shovel shear test, Rutschblock test, etc.) Be satisfied that the hazard is acceptable before you ski any slope.
- Ski slopes one skier at a time.

## OTHER SERVICES

If you are interested in hiring a cook or having food pre-prepared for your group let us know and we will provide you with contact information of local backcountry caterers. Also, if you would like to hire an Association of Canadian Mountain Guides certified guide check out [www.acmg.ca](http://www.acmg.ca), or let us know and we will provide you with a quote for services.

We hope this information will be useful to you. If you have any other questions or comments please call us at (403) 678-3200 ext. 104, or e-mail us at [facilities@alpineclubofcanada.ca](mailto:facilities@alpineclubofcanada.ca).

## TIPS FOR FIRST TIME ORGANIZERS

The ACC has been witness to the high stress levels of some first-time trip organizers over the years. The following tips are based on both the organizational successes and difficulties we have observed.

- Start advertising your trip EARLY. You will be surprised at how many people cannot go if you ask them less than several months in advance.
- Don't accept anyone as a confirmed "yes" until they have given you a deposit. Make the deposit substantial (we suggest at least \$200 per person).
- Set a deposit deadline and stick to it (even with your friends). We recommend a deposit deadline of at least 15 weeks prior to the trip.
- Payment is due in full to the ACC three months prior to your trip, so you will definitely need to get final payment from your participants before that.
- Share the previous logistic and hut information letter with your participants. Good luck, and please do not hesitate to call us if you have questions!

## BILL PUTNAM (FAIRY MEADOW) HUT CLEAN-UP SHEET

### Kitchen & Living Room

- Wipe tables (daily)
- Wipe counters (daily)
- Clean and organize inside cupboards (Saturday a.m.)
- Clean stovetop & oven (Saturday a.m.)



- Burn all burnable garbage including all cardboard boxes (daily)
- Clean out wood burning stoves (Saturday a.m.)
- Empty ashes and wash glass doors (Saturday a.m.)
- Sweep and mop living room and kitchen floors (Saturday a.m.)
- Wipe tables and surfaces in living room (daily)
- Wipe windowsills and cupboards in back hallway (Saturday a.m.)

### Upstairs

- Shake mattresses (Saturday a.m.)
- Sweep under mattresses (Saturday a.m.)
- Sweep and mop floor and stairs (Saturday a.m.)

### Sauna

- Chop wood & restock wood supply under inside stairs and in sauna (each use)
- Wipe down benches in sauna (each use)
- Re-shovel & level stairs going to sauna (each use)

### Outhouses

- Clean outhouses (daily)
- Change outhouse barrels when they are within 6" of top (as needed)
- Cover your urinal with snow (Saturday a.m.)
- Re-shovel & level stairs going to outhouses (daily)

***Do your best to leave the hut cleaner than you found it and above all, have fun!***



Fairy Meadow  
area plan  
(not to scale)

