



Fall 2009

# Eddyline

Journal of the  
Vancouver Kayak Club

## Reports and Stories

2009 VKC Whitewater Festival Photo Contest

Lynn Grrr'ing Wood

The Good Ole Days - Tom's New Drysuit

Wind and Peel Rivers, Yukon and the NWT

Grand Canyon of the Colorado

## Club Announcements

Join VKC Celebrating BC Rivers Day – September 27th

Lafflines Comedy Club

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# Eddyline - Journal of the Vancouver Kayak Club

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**Cover:** Winning Photo, 2009 VKC Whitewater Festival Off-Water Photo Contest, Photo: Matt Smart.

**How to Contribute:** The Eddyline will be published quarterly, with the occasional edition as a hardcopy. Your stories, ideas, letters to the editor and photos are welcome and needed. Please send your contributions in digital format to [eddyline@vankayak.org](mailto:eddyline@vankayak.org) any time and especially before the deadline for the next issue.

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Electronic Version - Colour PDF: 1/4 Page = \$15, 1/2 Page = \$30, Full Page = \$50

Print Version: Black/white: 1/4 Page = \$20, 1/2 Page = \$50, Full Page = \$70, usually published in March

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# Club Announcements

## Message from the Pres

Claudia Schwab, VKC President

Another summer is coming to an end. We had excellent turn-outs for some of the bigger trips (almost 30 came to Tony's Clearwater trip) – thanks to all volunteers for organizing and leading. Many VKC paddlers discovered new rivers on road trips or even in our back-yard while others re-visited old favorites (Nahatlach, Clearwater, Coquihalla). Bring your stories and pictures to one of the next membership meetings or write a trip report for the next Eddyline! Thanks also everybody who helped out with the weekday evening sessions in Vancouver and Chilliwack and to Paddy and Jill for hosting our June BBQ. Now its time to move on to bigger water – even with the long spell of dry sunny weather Thompson, Squamish/Elaho and Skookumchuck have plenty water left.

Our friends from American Whitewater have some great successes to report – decommissioning of dams and re-vitalizing runs that were buried under man-made lakes for years. Unfortunately quite the opposite seems to happen in BC with hydro projects popping up on a number of creeks. We are lacking the clout of a nationwide organization like AW and legislation like the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, but there is always something that can be done. Keep an eye on the development. Support organizations like the BC Creek Protection Society <http://www.bc-creeks.org/> and the BC Rivers Alliance. Help record the usage of our rivers and creeks in the new river database <http://canadawhitewater.com/log/>.

See you on the water,  
Claudia

## Lafflines Comedy Club

Megan Leslie, Editor

There was a great turn out for this great comedy event held on August 13th in support of Peter Chisholm and spinal cord research. Donations are still being collected and can be made at any Vancity location, just say it is for Peter Chisholm.

Photo: Megan Leslie

## Join VKC in Celebrating BC Rivers Day - September 27th

Who: All VKC Members

What: BC Rivers Day Annual Chilliwack River Cleanup

Where: VKC's adopted portion of the Chilliwack River, just below the raft put in at Slesse Creek

When: Sunday, September 27, 2009

Why: Those who volunteered at the July clean up said that "the river's banks were in a very sad state". No doubt there will be lots more to clean up after the summer partiers have left.

For further details please keep an eye on the forum or contact Evelyn Feller, Access/Environment, at 604-270-4050.

PS: The VKC showed up with a big crew of 12 for the clean-up in July. Lets repeat this on River Day in September (when there will be an after-clean-up BBQ for volunteers)! CS

## VKC Membership Renewal

If you have not already done so, please renew your membership in the Vancouver Kayak Club for the 2009/2010 season. Sign up online at [www.vankayak.org](http://www.vankayak.org) or fill out the new membership form (attached).



Christian Vogl MCing



**Matt Smart**



**Philip Morley**



**Dominique Yupangco**



# 2009 VKC Whitewater Festival Photo Contest

The results are in! Here are the winning photos!

Off-River Photo  
**Matt Smart**  
(left/cover)

On-River Photo  
**Curtis McHale**  
(next page)

Winners in each category will receive a Gorillapod Original camera tripod. Thanks to Steve McConnell for organizing this contest and thank you to everyone that entered.



**Philip Morley**



**Catherine Morley**



**Fredy Riner**



**Tudor Davis**



**Catherine Morley**



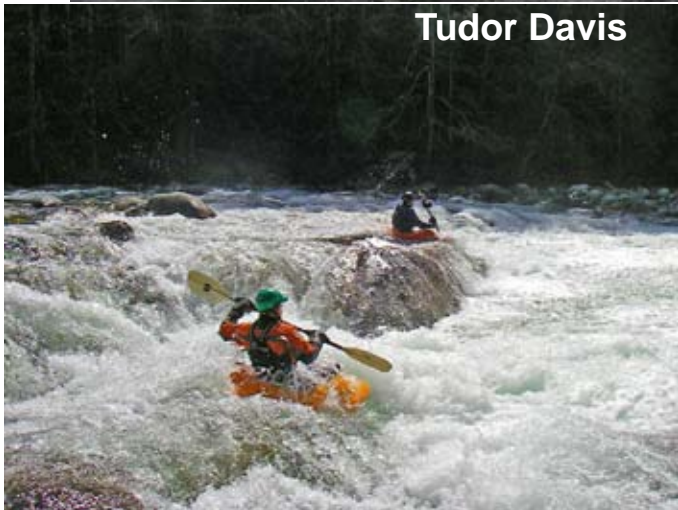
**On-River Photo Contest  
Winner: Curtis McHale**



**Matt Smart**



**Tudor Davis**



**Curtis McHale**



**Fredy Riner**



# Lynn Grrr'ing Wood

Story and Photos: Philip Morley, Training

The date was January 10, 2009. With the holiday season over and plenty of spare calories to burn, a group of five paddlers ventured into Lynn Creek. Thankfully, I was not one of them. The journey began as one might expect for winter paddling on the North Shore. In the words of Matthew, "the snow covered walk in trail covered with fallen trees was just the start of the day." There was actually a fair amount of snow on the ground, as can be seen in the picture taken at the Capilano River put in on the same day. After getting themselves nicely settled down inside Lynn Canyon, the fabulous five found conditions on the water not unlike that of the walk in. Keith later wrote that it was the worst he has seen and Annie, putting it bluntly, announced that "the Lynn is *f\*\*\*\*d* and will be for a while." A more accurate statement could not have been made, although uncovering the blank letters would be slightly more effective because the Lynn is indeed *filled* - with trees!



**Capilano in the snow (Jan. 10, 2009)**

Lynn Creek is a fantastic bit of whitewater right in the middle of Metro Vancouver's adult playground, the North Shore. Beginning just below Twin Falls in Lynn Canyon Park and ending at Bridgeman Park near Keith Road, this 3.8 km class III to IV run passes through a 1.2 km long canyon. While this setting is

about as urban as it gets, the creek has been carving away at the canyon since long before we arrived. As such, the elevation difference between House Rock rapid and the houses nearby is around 80 meters. The canyon is practically inaccessible by foot and the few potential hike out spots are extremely steep.



Back to January 10th, and our five common adventurers who found that a significant portion of the forest which previously surrounded the creek was now blocking their way downstream. Thankfully, the water level was low and, with no reasonable hike out option, Keith reported that they resorted to "hanging onto loose wood held to the bank by melting snow while standing on icy rocks, or equally loose branches, with strainers downstream." As if one portage from frozen hell was not enough, they had to do this two more times before exiting the canyon. An update was immediately posted on the VKC Forum under "Lynn Wood 2009" and the online discussion that followed between members of this expedition was enough to keep anyone from venturing down Lynn Creek since.

Fast forward seven months. On August 24th, Catherine and I went for a hike along Lynn Creek to see for ourselves what the wood situation was really like. Feeling full of energy,



I packed a hand saw but it quickly became obvious that there was nothing we could do to help clean up the Lynn. The wood along the trail has been cleared, but as soon as we were on the Twin Falls bridge, our hopes of paddling the Lynn anytime soon sunk as deep as the clear pools below us. On the rocks below the falls and above the put in, there were several large logs and stumps which we couldn't help but take as a sign of what we were going to find 500 meters downstream in the canyon.

True enough, right after the canyon entrance rapid, a long tree had slipped straight down into the pool. A hand shaped root from this log was reaching out of the water, almost as if it were waiting to grab onto paddlers and prevent them from continuing further into the mess downstream. Just beyond the first pool, there is a log jam on river left with a "Bear in Area" sign lodged in it. Keep an eye out and make lots of noise while portaging this one! Before the ledge rapids, there were several more logs in sight, either partially in the water or completely across the creek. As there was no way to travel along the creek bed, we took to the trail on river left.

**Vertical log at the canyon entrance (looking downstream)**



We soon realized that the trail does not actually follow the canyon edge, but turns away from the creek to climb along a ridge above the steep slope ascending from the canyon wall. In order to see more of what lay in the creek below, we decided to leave the trail and bushwhack along the lip of the canyon. Although there were not many chances to peer into the creek, we did manage to see that the

**Log jam below the ledge rapids (looking upstream)**



ledge drops appeared to be fairly clean. Our next opportunity to get to the creek bed was down a steep route which took us to the upper bend above House Rock.

From water level, we were able to walk both upstream and downstream of House Rock. There are two large pools between the third ledge drop and House Rock rapid. In the short rapid between the pools was a logjam that made me cringe. Trees from both sides of the river had fallen into the creek at the same spot and any gaps between them had been filled with smaller logs and stumps from upstream. A decent sized landslide on river right was the source of the larger trees as well as a few additional rocks in the rapid.

By the time we got to House Rock, I thought that I had an idea of what to expect. In January 2007, Keith and I came across a pair of small trees blocking both sides of House Rock. We were able to portage on river left that day and the trees were eventually flushed out with high water. The situation this time was much worse, however, as another landslide on river right

**Gross woody debris at House Rock (looking downstream)**





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had brought down some large trees and dumped them in between the boulders leading up to House Rock. A significant amount of debris from upstream was caught up on these logs and blocking the route down river left.

Reusing the steep route upstream of House Rock, we went back up to the trail and then down to the creek again at the next access point (which is not as bad a route) just upstream of Picket Fence. By now, I was getting used to seeing the creek choked up with wood so what was lying in front of us came as no surprise. A large tree and a few of its larger cousins were stacked up on each other on the right hand side of the approach to Picket Fence. One of the trees extended across to the left bank and a good amount of debris was already wedged into this mess. Picket Fence itself had only one log in it and both Sky High and the entrance to the slot canyon were clean.

**Blockage above picket fence  
(looking downstream)**



To finish off our tour, we hiked around to the exit of the slot canyon and found the huge log that was hanging above the creek now had a twin at water level. Suffice it to say that these logs and most of the wood upstream will be around for a while and probably only get worse before an enormous flood cleans out Lynn Creek. Pray for rain! For more pictures, see my album on the VKC Gallery.

## The Good Ole Days - Tom's New Drysuit

**Tom Hoskin, Director at Large**

I began paddling on the Cowichan with a Lettmann Mark IV, a large volume sun-rotted fiberglass boat that crackled when you placed it on roof racks. I was required to wear a PFD and found an old kapok horse collar in a boatshed. It was suspiciously heavy, probably had holes in the plastic. For attire, I had the choice of a 5 mil diving wetsuit which severely restricted arm motion, or a zippered raincoat with a ventilation flap across the back.

When I graduated to the Chilliwack, I obtained a used Image raceboat, new PFD etc, and it was time to upgrade to a drysuit. I found a new 2-piece windsurfing suit that had rubber waistbands on the top and bottom that you rolled together. If you rolled up a triple layer with your spraydeck, the lump made it kind of hard to breathe.

So I drove out to Tamihi with junior slalom champ Matt Kelly for some training. I found a nice shiny BROWN picnic table. And proceeded to put my gear on it. Matt was on the river and there were women on the bridge watching. "I'm going to be HOT out there," I thought, "Nothing holding me back gearwise anymore." I arranged booties and pogies, polypro and hood, helmet etc. and my new drysuit on the shiny BROWN picnic table. Looking to check that there was no one around, I whipped off my drawers and sat on the shiny BROWN bench. HEY! Something doesn't feel right. The paint was wet! I jumped up as Graeme Anderson came toddling around the corner. "Hi Tom, can you run shuttle for us to..... Hey, what did you do, sh\*\* yourself?"



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# Wind and Peel Rivers, Yukon

Evelyn Feller, Access/Environment

## Vista of the Wind River Country

Several years ago a number of VKC members saw a presentation about the Three Rivers area by Juri Peepre of the Yukon chapter of the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society. The aim of this presentation was to raise public awareness of the beauty and threats to the Three Rivers area in the Yukon so the public would support and lobby for the protection of the area. The slide show and beautiful book Juri had produced showed grand country with excellent opportunities for hiking and expedition paddling. It certainly raised my interest in a paddling trip to the area.

Yukon paddling trips, particularly ones lasting three weeks require considerable advance planning. Last summer six of us managed to make the arrangements to paddle the Wind River to its confluence with the Peel River and continue down the Peel to Ft. McPherson in the NWT. The Wind is one of the Three Rivers, the Wind, the Snake and the Bonnet-Plume which

start in the Werneke Mountains in the central Yukon and flow into the Peel River. The Peel in turn flows into the Mackenzie River.

Because of the food and gear involved, we chose to use covered canoes but there are opportunities to do the trip in kayaks with raft support. While the Wind is generally class 2 with some 2+ drops and a class 3 rapid on the Peel, there are some challenging Class 4 sections on the Bonnet-Plume with Class 5+ drops on the Upper Peel canyon.

We found there is quite an infrastructure in Whitehorse for organizing trips to the Three Rivers. Up-North Adventures rents canoes and provides transport to Mayo. Boats can also be transported back from Fort McPherson. Blacksheep Aviation's twin-otter transports people and canoes into the headwaters of these rivers.

The flight from Mayo to McClusky Lake



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on the headwaters of the Wind over the rugged ridges of the Werneke Mountains was a highlight of the trip. Evidence of mining and claims from the days of the rich silver mining past of Keno could be seen in surprisingly high places.

Our first days at McClusky Lake were spent assembling canoes, sorting food into barrels, assembling the bug tent and practicing our paddling on the lake. Finally canoes and gear were portaged about a kilometer to a small stream which we would mainly line down to the confluence of the Wind. McClusky Lake was an attractive lake which reflected the grand vistas of the mountains characteristic of the area.

The water in the tributary was not enough to paddle but easy to line down to the clear, green sparkling waters of the Wind. The next week that followed was very enjoyable paddling. As the river wound through the sweeping ridges of the Werneke mountains, one needed to concentrate to select the right channels in heavily braided sections and sweepers needed a wide berth. There were often 2+ wave trains as the Wind met tributary streams like the Little Wind. While we didn't see a lot of wildlife, we saw caribou, dahl sheep, moose and the highlight of probably a lynx swimming across the river in front of our canoe. The one draw back was the bad weather. Unfortunately for about 21 of the 23 days we were on the river it rained, often teeming down through the night till the next midday. While we did less hiking than anticipated, the views from the ridges were spectacular panoramas of rugged ridges and peaks and intricately braided streams. The nature of the river changed from the sparkling clear water of the Wind once we joined the turbid waters of the Peel. In fact clear water became increasingly more difficult to find the further we paddled down the Peel. The canyon walls of the Peel were dark black, contorted strata and it was here we met the main challenge of the trip-a large wave train with very swirly eddies on either side. One feature as we traveled through the Peel Canyon was the evidence of coal with smoking hillsides. While I expected the landscape to flatten out into low tundra forest, the river landscape continued to have high steep banks on one



Loading the boats for the flight in

corner of the bends.

We finished the 500 km journey at Fort McPherson, a small Gwich'in settlement with good community resources. While the weather was shorts and t-shirt weather, a visit to the graves of the Lost Patrol reminded us of the climate extremes of this area. Here a team of Mounties lost their lives in a mail run from Dawson after struggling with -70 degree temperatures and difficult snow conditions. The remainder of the trip was spent in Inuvik and Tuktoyuktuk, the highlights of which were the Inuvik Community Gardens in a refurbished hockey rink and the Tuk Community Freezer where the locals carve out rooms in the permafrost to age their beluga and seal meat.

The trip had more than lived up to the expectations raised by Juri's slide show. The Three Rivers area is a magnificent wilderness area and the headwaters of these key Yukon river systems must be protected. Unfortunately the area is also rich in minerals such as coal, methane, uranium, copper and iron-ore. There plans to build a winter road up the Wind for uranium exploration in the summer and the area is heavily claimed. A Peel Watershed Planning Commission is deliberating on the land-use options for the area. For more information the 'Wild Rivers of the Yukon's Peel Watershed', 2008 by Juri Peepri and Sarah Locke is a key starting point. For those who love expedition river adventures this area is highly recommended.



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# Grand Canyon of the Colorado River

Claudia Schwab, President



The highlight of the summer for me was a trip through the Grand Canyon. This was our second trip and although expectations were high, the 'Big Ditch' didn't disappoint in the least.

There are about 150 named rapids between the two big man-made reservoirs Lake Powell and Lake Mead. Some of the rapids are enjoyable rollercoaster rides, like Sockdolager or Hermit and some (like Lava) can pummel an 18 ft raft. Here are more numbers: trip duration was 16 days, distance covered 360 km, elevation lost 500 meter.

But there is more to the Grand Canyon: getting up and close to earth's history more than 1.7 billion years back, baking in hot sunshine, exploring cool side canyons with fossils or bizarre rock formations, and relaxing in refreshing waterfalls and pools. Last but not least: the growing rumble of the rapids and the thrill as one slides over the horizon





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line into huge crashing waves.

If you get a chance, this trip is well worth doing (and private permits are now much easier to get, especially for those who are able to make a short-term commitment to go on a trip).

More info about permits here: <http://www.nps.gov/grca/planyourvisit/whitewater-rafting.htm>







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