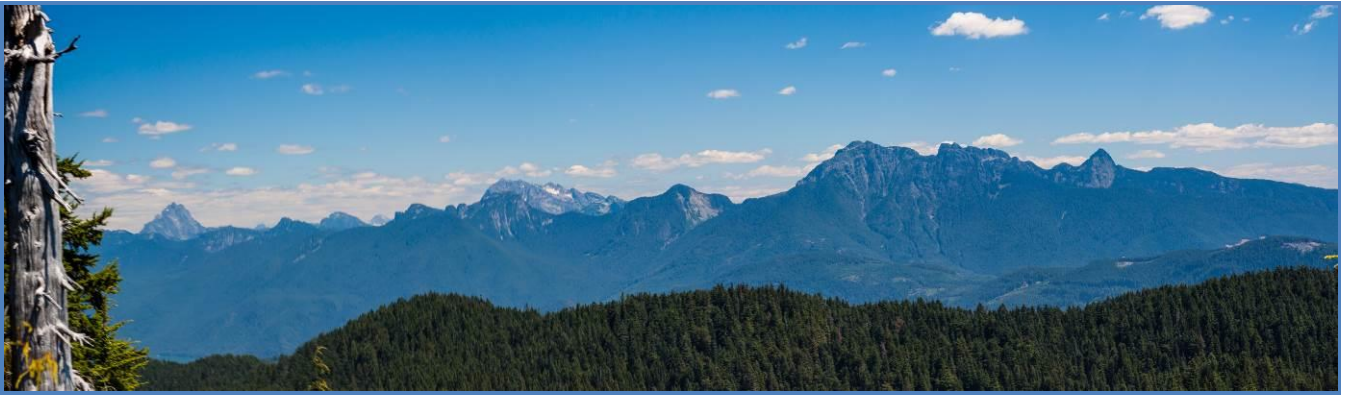


BMN HIKE REPORT

Dennett Lake Loop

(July 18, 2015)

by Rich Sobel



Panoramic view from Munro Lake Lookout. Mountains (left to right) are Judge Howay, Robie Reid, and Golden Ears.
Rich Sobel photo.

By 8:45 am we had a full group of 12 + 1 hikers, including our two trip organizers, at the meeting place on Harper Road. Participants were Rich and Janet, Ian, Valerie, Marc, Marvin and Norma, Erica, Rob, Valerie and Ken, Michelle and her four-legged companion, Mickey. We were quite fortunate to have Ian with us as he knows Burke Mountain inside out and actually created a few of the trails we used! The sun was out and it was promising to be a fairly hot day.

Rich started out by showing everyone the proposed route on the new Coquitlam/Burke Mountain Park map and with that, off we went. Essentially we were following Lyle Lützenberger's route for Hike 16 in his new *Burke and Widgeon* hiking book.

The hiking group pausing for a photo at the top of Mental Floss.
Rich Sobel photo.



A couple of shortcuts using bike trails were improvised to decrease the amount of time spent on the gravel Harper Road (Lower Triple Crown, Slayer, and Sandinista). One bike trail not on any maps yet, Mental Floss, was another nice way to get off Harper Road for a while.

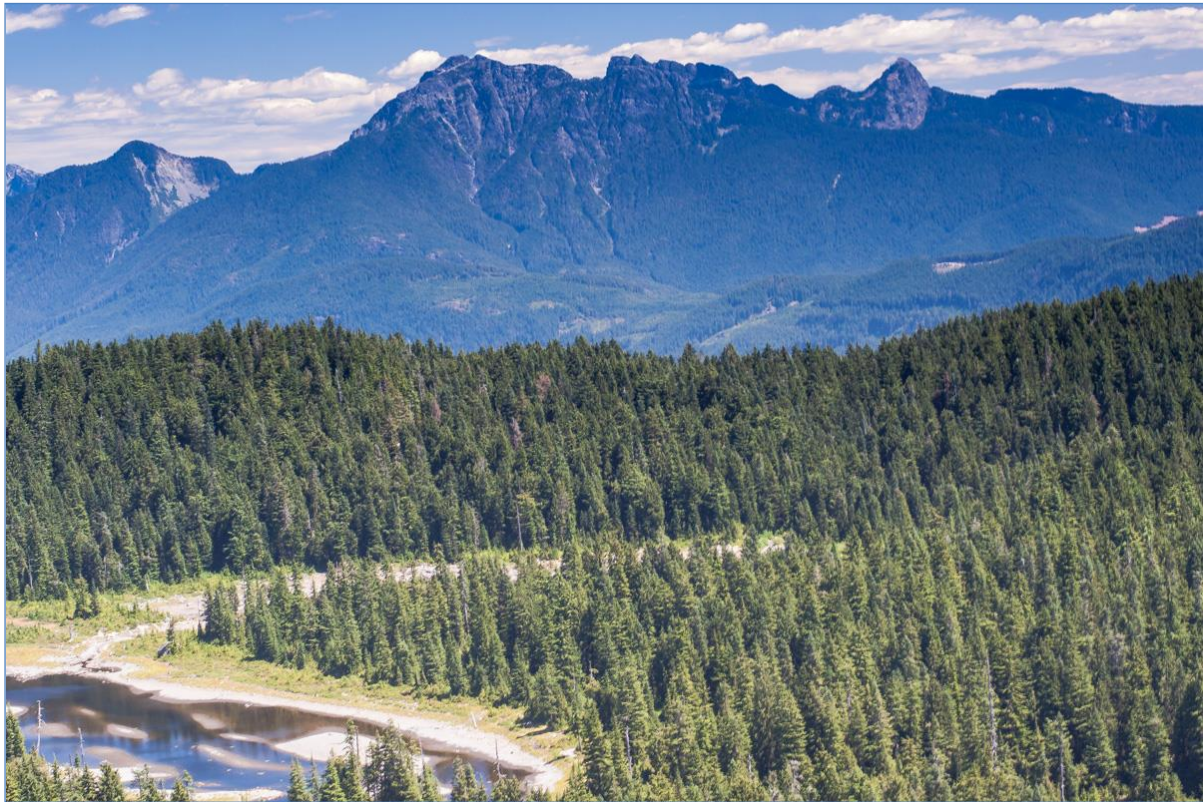


Once we got to the remnants of the ski lodge at the top of Harper, we entered the forest for our final push to the high point near Ted Kay Lake.

This western toad was encountered along the trail on the way uphill. The creamy white stripe down the centre of its back identifies the species. *Rich Sobel photo.*

Ian assumed “sweep” position in order to further improve the trail with the pruning shears and portable saw he had brought along. He never hikes the trails on Burke without them! We hiked past Twin Lakes and discovered—much to our delight—that the trails were just exploding in ripe blueberries, both black and blue types, for the picking. The pattern of walk a few steps, eat some blueberries, walk a few more steps, eat some more, was constantly repeated, and any time we stopped to get everyone back together, we made sure there was a good patch to browse while waiting for the catch ups!

The goal was to make it to the Munro Lake Lookout above Dennett for lunch by around 1:00 pm. We arrived at the lake about 12:40 and pushed on to the viewpoint to arrive there a few minutes after 1:00 where we settled in for a much needed break. We had been hiking steadily since 9:00! After enjoying the fantastic views east, south, and west from up there, we headed back down to the lake where six of us cooled off with a dip in the lake. Boy did that ever feel good!



View from Munro Lake Lookout, looking over Munro Lake toward the Golden Ears group. *Rich Sobel photo.*



A cooling swim in Dennett Lake.
Rich Sobel photo.

At the lake we encountered two other people who had come up via the Quarry Road route. As it turned out, they were the only other people we encountered the whole day with the exception of a couple of sets of bikers heading up the road right when we started and again when we ended our day.



A bear had enjoyed Dennett Lake not long before we did.
Rich Sobel photo.

In order to get to Dennett Lake on our route, we had to drop down about 120 m over a distance of 0.5 km from the Burke Ridge Trail. Ian is still working on improving the route with a few more switchbacks. It's pretty steep in places but very doable. I just knew that we had to go back up to continue the route planned for the return. Cooling down from the lake dip made it quite easy in the heat of the

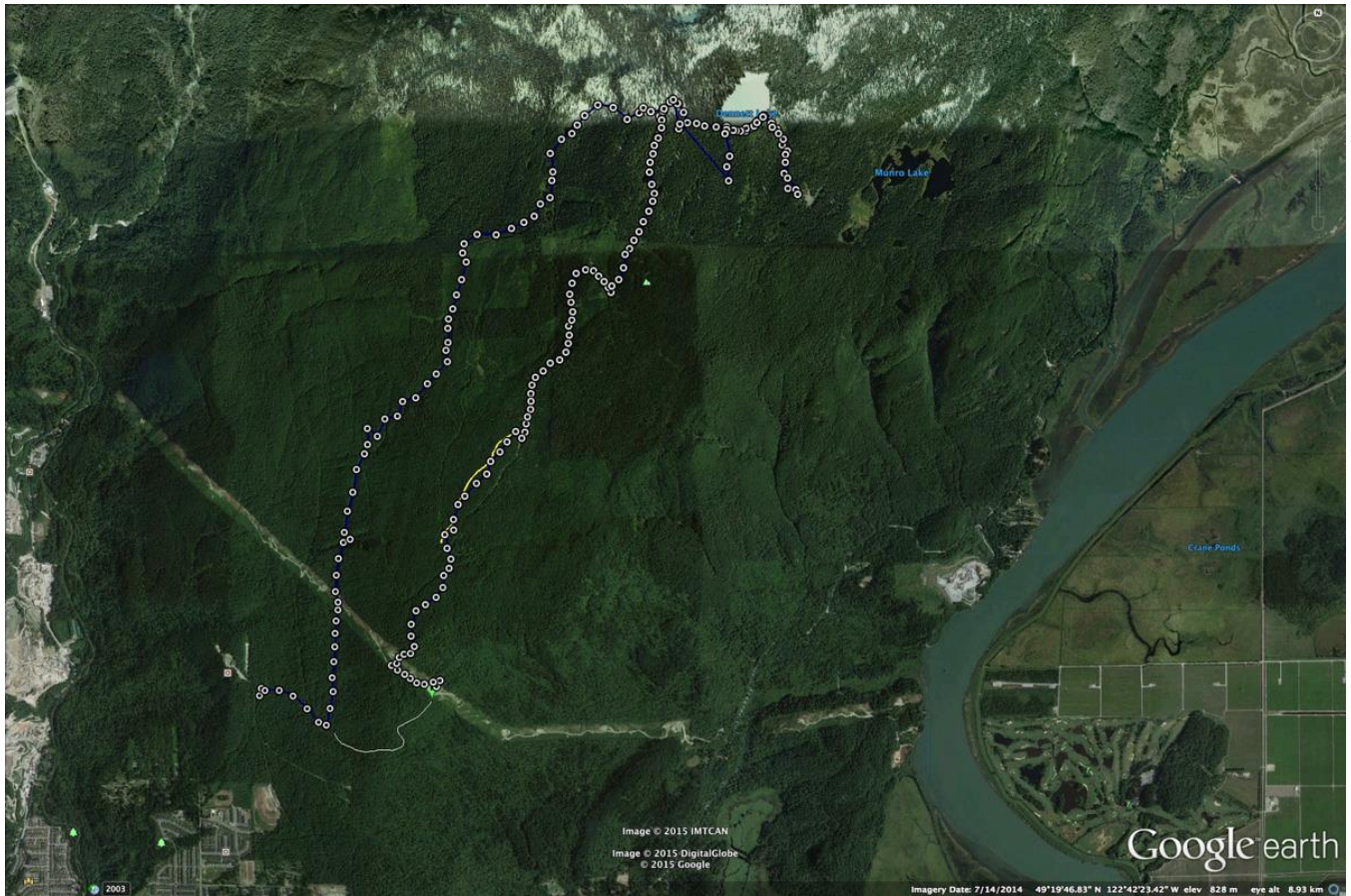
day. I had doused my shirt in the lake to help keep me cool and by the time I made it back up to the ridge, it was dry and starting to get sweaty again.

Back up to Ted Kay Lake, where we stayed west around it to pick up the South Slope Trail back down. This trail goes past Hourglass and Lily Pad lakes, follows Coho Creek, and then shifts over to Pritchett Canyon to follow Pritchett Creek down. There were a few cascades but with all the dry weather and lack of snow this year, water levels were way down. I really want to go back there when there's been a bunch of rain and hike the South Slope to see what it looks like when there's water in those creeks!

About half way down Pritchett Creek, you come across an old bulldozer left there from former days. Kind of strange to see a rusty old bulldozer in the middle of the forest but that's BC for you. Anything is possible!

The South Slope Trail takes you back to Harper Road, and we decided to stay on the road to shorten the distance back to the cars. We arrived back at 5:45 for a full and very rewarding day. Distance hiked was about 18 km with total elevation gain of about 960 m, counting all the ups and downs.

I highly recommend this route. It has good views on the way up, lots of blueberries to eat in the summer, and huckle- and salmonberries in the spring. (I like to snack on berries when I hike!)



Screen shot of our route on Google Earth. *Rich Sobel graphic.*