

## **BMN HIKE REPORT**

### **Over the River & through the Woods: A Hike to Norvan Falls (April 30 2016)**

*By Vanessa Giannopoulos*



*Hikers on the log bridge. Paul Steeves photo.*

On an impossibly bright, warm day, we set out for Lynn Headwaters' Norvan Falls. Located in the Lynn Canyon Park, Norvan Falls is a 20 meter high waterfall off a narrow cliff nestled between high, forested sides. It empties into a series of pools below and joins Lynn Creek, following the 14km trail (round-trip) down to the entrance of Lynn Headwaters Regional Park.

Though the parking lots are packed, everyone in our jovial group of 19 makes it to the park entrance and eagerly starts forth across the Lynn Creek footbridge. We begin on a wide gravel path, deciduous trees lining the sides of the trail. The path, bright with filtered sunlight, has a few rusted remains of logging equipment still left on the trail from the early 1900s. Large old-growth stumps, perforated with logger's footholds and sapsucker holes alike, rise from the grassy shoulders of the trail. Just past the trees, Lynn Creek rushes past on the left. As we continue deeper into the park, the trees become thicker, evergreens spring up, and the gravel path changes to dirt. After a little over an hour of hiking, we reach the Debris Chute, an open, grassy clearing where two trails converge. Here, we stop for a short break and make our way down to the rocky banks of the creek. We rest on the rocks and watch the pale green water flow by. Soon, we are on our way once more.

The first noteworthy thing we come across after our break is a long bridge, made of a single wide log that has fallen. It has a handrail on just one side, made of slim logs that have been polished by the grips of other hikers. Strips of wire mesh provide a grip on the log, and our group crosses it without trouble.



**Norvan Falls.**  
*Paul Steeves photo.*

In under an hour later, we come upon the waterfall. Tall, framed on either side by cliffs and trees, it fills the area with the rushing sound of water. Those who are daring can get right up close to the falls, as a fallen log provides a bench a couple of meters away from the spray, suspended above the creek and pools flowing from the falls. A sunny ledge, opposite the trail, is accessible if one is willing to pick a path across the bare rocks that rise above the creek. For those who don't want to chance getting wet, there are plenty of spots to eat lunch on the bank of the creek. We take our lunch here, basking in the sunlight after trekking through forest for so long.

Not ten minutes after we begin to head back, we stop by a steel suspension bridge; though it isn't on our way, several group members test out walking on the bridge for fun. Its swinging, bouncing nature is taken full advantage of by kids and adults alike. Further on, we stop to admire the view of Goat Mountain and marvel at the flora: at one spot, six types of fern grow all in the same area. On top of the more common Spiny Wood, Lady, Licorice, Sword and Deer ferns, there is the Maidenhair fern. Maidenheads prefer wet, shady areas that are still fairly warm, and are somewhat rare in BC. Some kinds of Maidenhair fern (namely, the Southern Maidenhair) are designated as an endangered species.



After reaching the Debris Chute once more, some of the hikers make a detour to explore the rest of the Headwaters Trail where it splits from the Cedar Mills Trail. The Headwaters Trail continues along the same route as Cedar Mills, but higher up and deeper in the forest. There are several lovely lookout points, and some short, steep elevation changes, giving us a nice change from the fairly level Cedar Mills Trail. It is quieter, lending a different kind of atmosphere. We sight a woodpecker high among the boughs of a cedar. After a brief pause, we take a switchback connector and return to the Cedar Mills Trails. We rejoin the main group not long after they arrive at the base of the connector. Skirting around some muddy patches, we are grateful for the good weather; in the wetter seasons, these light mud patches quickly become large puddles. While easy to avoid, it is nice to have dry weather and not worry about them. Finally, we make it back to the footbridge over Lynn Creek and head home, satisfied with the day's adventure.



Hikers at Norvan Falls. *Paul Steeves photo.*