

JANUARY 2015

THE MOUNTAIN EAR



The Monthly Newsletter of the Rocky Mountaineers



Climb. Hike. Ski. Bike. Paddle. Dedicated to the Enjoyment and Promotion of Responsible Outdoor Adventure.

Club Contacts

Website: <http://rockymountaineers.com>
e-mail: info@rockymountaineers.com

Mailing Address:
The Rocky Mountaineers
PO Box 4262
Missoula MT 59806

President: Paul Jensen
paulfjensen@yahoo.com

Vice-President (and Webmaster): Alden Wright
rocky@wrightmontana.net

Secretary: Julie Kahl
jawkal@hotmail.com

Treasurer: Steve Niday
seniday@yahoo.com

Newsletter Editor: Dan Saxton
apologist497@yahoo.com

The Mountain Ear is the club newsletter of The Rocky Mountaineers and is published at the end of every month. Anyone wishing to contribute articles of interest are welcomed and encouraged to do so - contact the editor.

Membership application can be found at the end of the newsletter.

ABOUT THE CLUB:

Mission Statement:

The Rocky Mountaineers is a non-profit club dedicated to the enjoyment and promotion of responsible outdoor adventures.

Meetings and Presentations: Meetings are held the second Tuesday, September through May, at 6:00 PM at the Trail Head. Each meeting is followed by a featured presentation or speaker at 7:00 PM.

Please be sure to check out our **Facebook group** to receive the latest up-to-date news and post short-notice trip proposals:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/rockymountaineers/>

Cover Photo: Atmospheric turbulence, twisty trees, winter's ice from Three Lakes Peak, Reservation Divide. Photo by Dan Saxton.

TRIP REPORTS

Sunday, January 25, 2015 - Lolo Pass Ski

Due to the warm weather and questionable conditions the Pack Creek Road ski did not happen. It was warmer than freezing when we arrived a Lolo Pass and Roy R., Kristi D., Jeff S. and I. decided to stay high and ski the four miles back to the Lee Creek saddle, while Lois C. snowshoed in the ski trail area. Some of us had gone back towards the Lee Creek saddle last Thurs. and we had to break trail after leaving that older track. The snow got progressively softer as the day went on, but conditions remained skiable. We dropped down from today's "A" Trail, down to the original road that was both the "A" & "B" in bygone years, to come out. In places there were good sized trees growing on the old road, and I never saw the old sign that showed the location of the "B" Trail take off. All in all we made the best of a very nice day. *Julia Kahl.*

UPCOMING TRIPS AND ADVENTURES

Trip Notes:

Please contact the trip leader for more information regarding any listed trips. Mileage listed is round trip mileage. Elevation listed is gain only. For information on Class Rating see below:

Class Rating System

CLASS 1 – HIKING Mostly on trails, but may also include some easy cross country travel.

CLASS 2 – EASY SCRAMBLING Rugged off trail hiking, no hands required.

CLASS 3 – SCRAMBLING Use of hand to ascend some sections of rock. Little to no exposure; a fall would not likely cause serious injury.

CLASS 4 – CLIMBING Easy climbing, great exposure; a fall would quite possibly cause serious injury. Use of a rope and protection at times possible.

CLASS 5 – TECHNICAL CLIMBING Use of rope, protection and belay are a must.

CLASS 6 – AID CLIMBING Use of equipment to support your weight as you climb.

Friday, February 6 - Sunday, February 8 – MT. JERUSALEM (Bitterroots)

Rating: Class 3; *Distance:* 20 miles round trip; *Elevation Gain:* 5000'

Description: Mt. Jerusalem is a remote 9355' peak north of the Nez Perce Fork of the Bitterroot River. This trip will start on Friday after a drive to the end of the plowed portion of the West Fork Road (near Little West Fork Campground). From here, we will follow FR 5635 to FR 13480 then gain the ridge north of Sentimental Creek. Somewhere along the ascent of this ridge will be camp. On Saturday the plan will be to follow the ridge as it heads west then north to the summit. Depending on energy, conditions, etc., I may explore the possibility of

finding a route to Peak 9169 (North Jerusalem) approximately a mile to the north. Return to camp that night then head out Sunday.

Note: If conditions are no good, I will either not go, or change trip to an entirely different location.

Equipment: Skis or snowshoes, winter camping gear. May bring a short rope and harness for traverse to North Jerusalem.

Leader: Forest Dean, mtnear1@gmail.com

Sunday, February 15, 2015 - LOLO PASS SKI

Distance: 8 miles

Description: The trail rises 200 feet from the visitor's center for about 4 miles to the Lee Creek saddle, then the last 4 miles are all downhill, 1200 feet, to the Lee Creek campground in Montana.

Leader: Julia Kahl - jawkal@rockymountaineers.com

The Rocky Mountains: Making Sense of Them

All, Part 3



Snowpatch Spire in the Bugaboos. Photo by Peter Valchev.

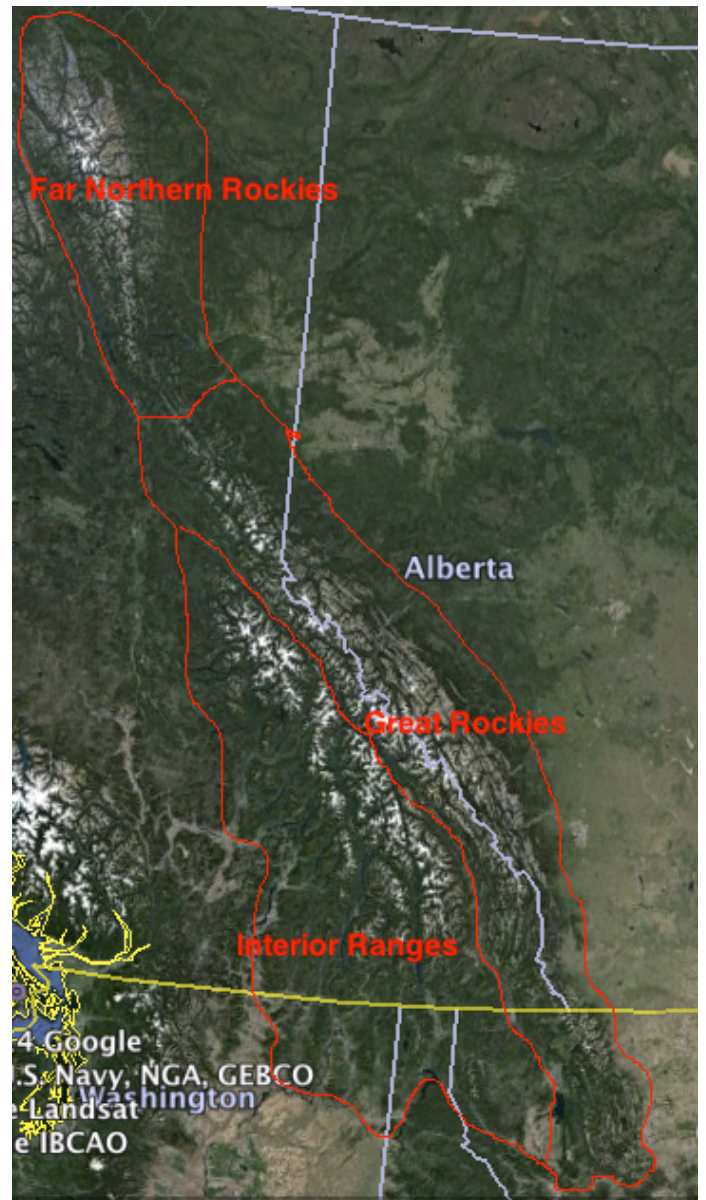
Northern Rockies

This is the final installment of a three-part series covering the geographical organization of the Rocky Mountains. It is a section I've been looking forward to write about, because it is here that the Rockies attain the climax of their aesthetic greatness. The Northern Rockies are the lowest peaks in the three sections that I've divided the Rocky Mountains into, yet they resoundingly take first place in prominence and majesty - if not necessarily in fame and general knowledge.

What I have classified as the Northern Rockies is by far the largest of the three sections, a massive upthrust of icy summits extending a thousand miles from the Great Plains to the gateway of the Yukon. Fortunately, the Rockies here are easiest to order and classify, thanks to well-defined ridges and deep valleys - most notably the great Rocky Mountain Trench, cutting a straight knife slice through the heart of the range. They never fail to impress, dazzling the eyes of millions who visit the two Glacier National Parks and the renowned four Canadian Rockies National Parks - Banff, Kootenay, Yoho, and Jasper. But there are also here relatively unknown giants, seldom climbed despite their magnificence, especially in the Purcell, Selkirk, Monashee, Cariboo, and Muskwa Ranges. Indeed, once you get away from the “sphere of influence” of the population centers of Calgary and Edmonton, you’re almost guaranteed privacy among splendid mountains that would be overrun if they were close to Seattle or Denver. Wilderness lovers and intrepid explorers will find the best secrets of the Rockies here.

A word needs to be said here about some geographical differences that the USA and Canada have when it comes to nomenclature for this area. South of the border, the whole mass of mountains from Spokane to Great Falls is universally dubbed “the Rockies” by American geographers, but the Canadians restrict the term “Rockies” to simply the massive, sky-raking range forming the western wall of the Great Plains. All other mountains to the west, across the Rocky Mountain Trench, are considered part of the “Columbia Mountains” (or Interior Ranges) and are almost (unfortunately) seen as an afterthought, except for isolated areas like the Canadian Glacier National Park and the Bugaboos. In my opinion, I think it would be more consistent, make more geographical sense, and be a more deserving association for all of these mountains to be classified as part of the Rocky Mountains, since they comprise one magnificent whole. However, I will indeed refer to what the Canadians call the “Rockies” as the “Great Rockies,” for these are truly the culmination of that marvelous range. For the standard online introduction to Canada’s mountains, go no further than www.bivouac.com - for a minimal yearly fee you get a wealth of information including maps, trip reports, and stunning photos.

These are not easy mountains; in fact, some of them such as Mount Alberta, the Bugaboos, and Mount Robson host some of North America’s most difficult climbs. Marathon



approaches (if you forsake helicopters), hellish brush, sheer walls, hanging glaciers, and arctic-mantled summits mean that novices are not welcome here, but for the mountaineer who is armed with ice axe, crampons, rope, and fortitude, these are the perfect summits to explore, respect, and enjoy.

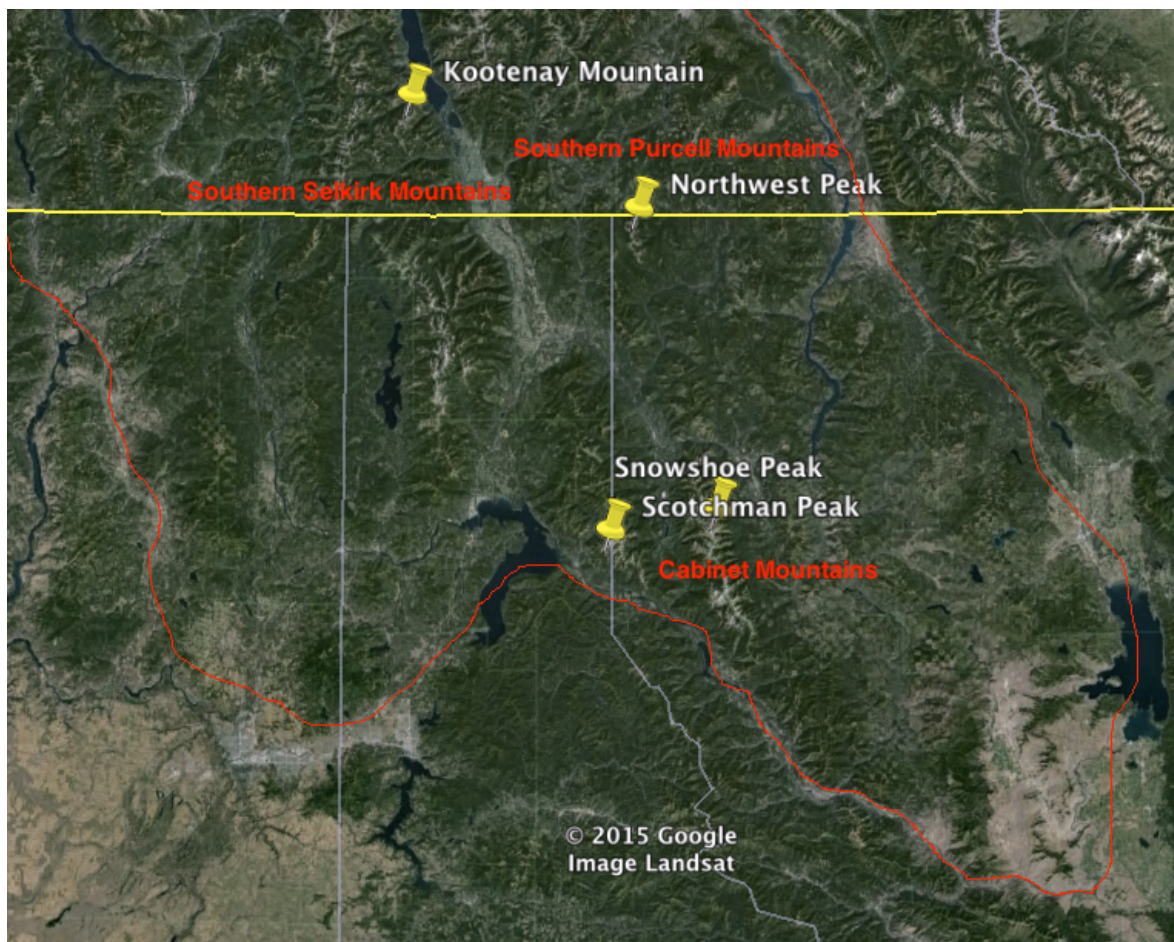


Mount Saint Nicholas, one of the premier peaks in Glacier National Park. Photo by SummitPost member “distressbark.”

A. Interior Ranges

The “Interior Ranges” of the Northern Rockies are basically a continuation of what I designated as the “Interior Ranges” in the Central Rockies. In the USA, they are somewhat low and humdrum, with the exception of the Cabinet Mountains and southern Selkirks, but once Canadian territory is reached, they rise up to great heights. In Canada, where they are also called the “Columbia Mountains” since they are largely located within the Columbia River watershed, there are four major subranges: the Purcells, the Selkirks, the Monashees, and the Cariboos.

The Interior Ranges are much wetter than the Great Rockies and thus contain incredibly dense vegetation, all too often a merciless hell to bushwhack through until you get to the high country. All of the important sub-ranges harbor significant glaciers in their highest sections. Just as in the section of the Interior Ranges in the Central Rockies, there are numerous granitic intrusions, especially in the Purcells and Selkirks, giving rise to some of the most famous rock climbing in North America (as well as many unknown gems). Heli-skiing is very popular in various sections of these two ranges as well. However, the Interior Ranges of Canada as a whole see rather sporadic use, even more so than the Great Rockies, with most people sticking to high-profile areas. They are especially obscure to outsiders, which is somewhat unfortunate since those who venture into them have nothing but words of high praise for their rugged, uncompromising beauty. As a result, some areas are vulnerable to logging and development; hopefully more exposure of the Interior Ranges’ beauty will lead to more balanced and principled ways of preserving their magnificence.





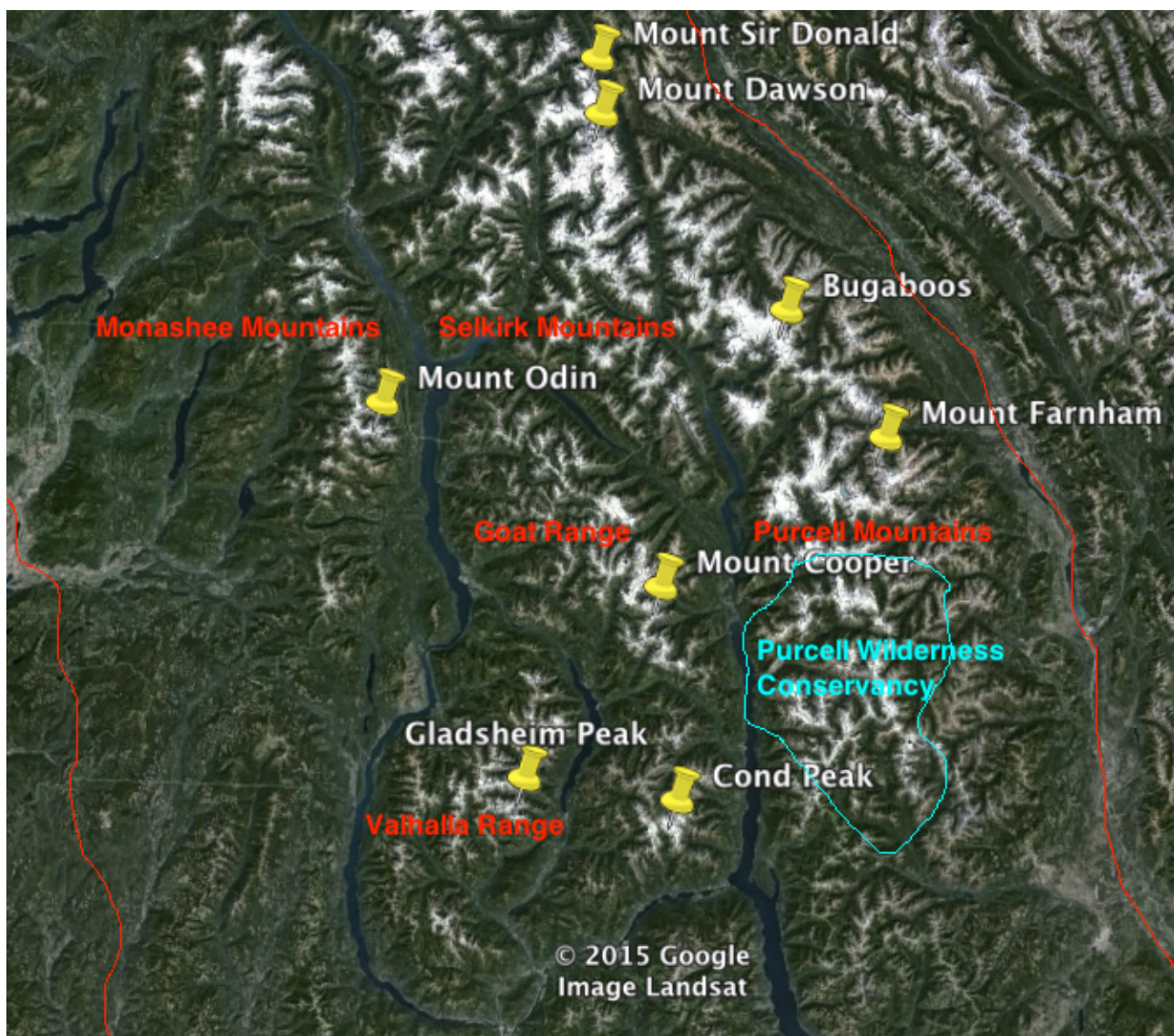
Looking northwest to “A” Peak from the summit of Snowshoe Peak. Photo by Dustin Olano.

In Montana, the Cabinet Mountains present something different from the country immediately across the Clark Fork to the south; towering, jagged sedimentary heights above deep valleys. Even though they are one of Montana’s lowest ranges in absolute elevation, they are in fact among the state’s most prominent mountains; **Snowshoe Peak (8,738’, P = 5,438 - 3rd most prominent in MT)** towers more than 6,000 feet above its base and even has a small glacier on its north side. The main Cabinets require work to scale, but have some of the best alpine country in the northwestern part of the state. A western subrange of the Cabinets extending into Idaho, the Scotchman Peaks area, is not very high in absolute elevation but also has some quite stunning scenery overlooking Lake Pend Oreille; fortunately, it’s a trail hike to the summit of **Scotchman Peak (7,009’, P = 4,669’ - 5th most prominent in Idaho)** itself.

Across the Kootenai River begin the Purcell Mountains in the Yaak country, which is a low point of sorts in the Interior Ranges - largely wooded, logged, and with plenty of old fire

lookouts. However, from **Northwest Peak (7,705', P = 4,424')** just a few miles from the Canadian border you have a good view of things to come to the north.....

The Purcells may begin their rise slowly, but fifty miles into Canada they become truly magnificent and wild. The country in the great 500,000-acre Purcell Wilderness Conservancy and the St. Mary's Alpine Provincial Park is the closest big mountain area of the Interior Ranges to Montana and one of the best places in the Rockies for pure, rugged wilderness lovers. I profiled the "Leaning Towers" last year in one of the newsletters for this club. It is amazing granite and ice country with many significant peaks climbed maybe once every few years.





Aerial photo of St. Mary's Alpine Provincial Park (foreground) and the Purcell Wilderness Conservancy in the far distance, including the Leaning Towers. From <http://blog.bctravelguide.ca>.



Lake of the Hanging Glacier.

Further north one comes into an interesting geological hash in the highest portion of the Purcells, with peaks above 11,000 feet but with rotten, sedimentary rock areas mixed in with the granitic intrusions. This section is more popular among skiers and recreationists (the Lake of the Hanging Glacier being a particularly unique

place), and is most (infamously) known for the battle for the Jumbo Glacier development. **Mount Farnham (11,460', P = 6,965')**, a massive hulk of sedimentary rock, is here - the monarch of the Purcells.

Mount Farnham, with Farnham Tower at left. Photo by Sandra McGuinness.

The northernmost high area in the Purcells are the famous granite **Bugaboos**, with revered pinnacles like **Bugaboo**, **Snowpatch**, and **Howser Spires** (the last being the highest; 11,194', P = 4,262') tantalizing the hearts of all climbers.



Mount Roothaan with Chimney Rock (right), the most distinctive summit in the Idaho Selkirks (<http://www.portlandhikers.org/forum/viewtopic.php?f=8&t=16381>).

Immediately to the west, across the “Purcell Trench” formed by the Kootenay River and its tributaries, rise the Selkirk Mountains. This range is split into several sections by deep valleys, several of which are filled with ribbon-thin lakes, and there are provincial parks protecting most of these sections. The Selkirks begin just north of Spokane and present a modest, though attractive array of granite crags in northernmost Idaho. The highest point in the southern Selkirks is **Kootenay Mountain (8,058', P = 5,909')**, on the Canadian side.

Just across the Kootenay River, north of the village of Nelson, is the Kokanee Glacier massif (topped by **Cond Peak (9,190', P = 5,643')**), containing the first large glacier in the Canadian Interior Ranges. But to the west across Slocan Lake are one of the most spectacular granitic areas of the Interior Ranges - the Valhallas (**Gladshiem Peak, 9,285', P = 6,745'**). They present many fine rock climbing testpieces as well as challenging explorative potential.



Mount Gimli, some of the best climbing in the Valhallas. Photo by Marc Toso.

The next mountain area of the Selkirks to the north is the little-known Goat Range, but with a lofty giant of its own: **Mount Cooper (10,151', P = 7,608')**, a most difficult and seldom-climbed peak despite its huge prominence.

Mount Cooper from
Meadow Mountain.
From West Kootenay
Photo Blog.



The Selkirks' most popular area is Glacier National Park, traversed by the Trans-Canada Highway over Rogers Pass. It is there that many of the first alpine climbs in

North America were done. **Mount Dawson (11,079', P = 6,709')** is the highest peak in this area, but **Mount Sir Donald (10,774', P = 2,867')** is by far the most striking and perhaps the most famous Selkirk summit, hosting one of North America's 50 Classic Climbs on its northwest ridge.

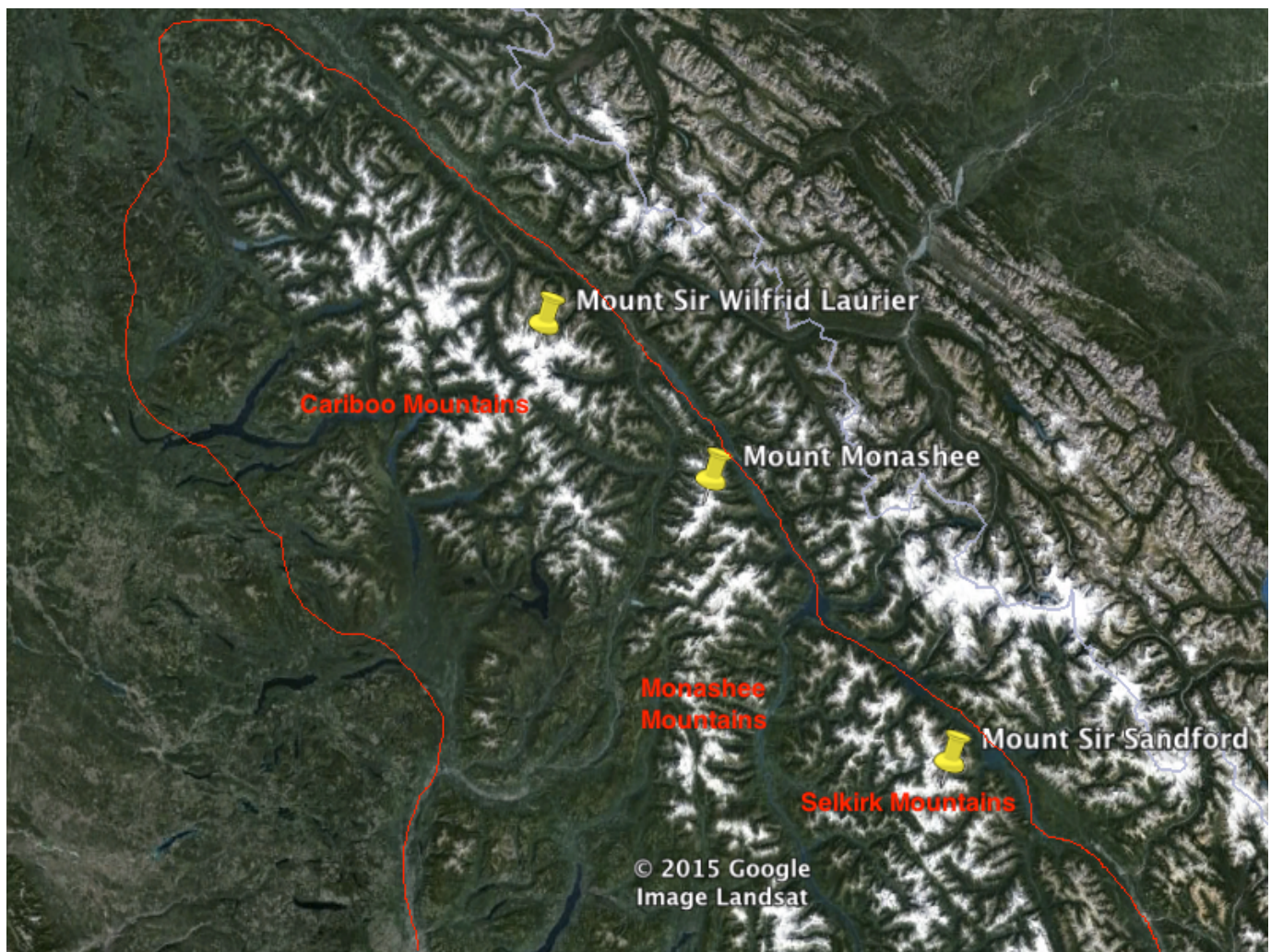


East side of Mount Sir Donald. Photo by Karen Crowe.

The final section of the Selkirks, north of Rogers Pass, is little-known and is unfortunately extensively logged, but it is there that the monarch of the Canadian Interior Ranges rises heads and shoulders above everything else: **Mount Sir Sandford (11,545', P = 8,881')**, a worthy objective for the serious alpinist.



Aerial view of Mount Sir Sandford with the Adamants at left. Photo by Steph Abegg.



The next major range to the west, across the Columbia River, are the Monashees, a quite narrow chain of mountains with precipitous heights. South of Revelstoke lies their Gold Range section, which is popular with locals and heli-skiers; its king, **Mount Odin (9,744', P = 7,900')**; this is the



biggest prominence of any sub 10,000-footer in the entire Rockies), towers a tremendous 8,300 feet above the Columbia. The northern half of the Monashees is much less known and traveled but is higher - topped by **Mount Monashee (10,741', P = 7,887')**.

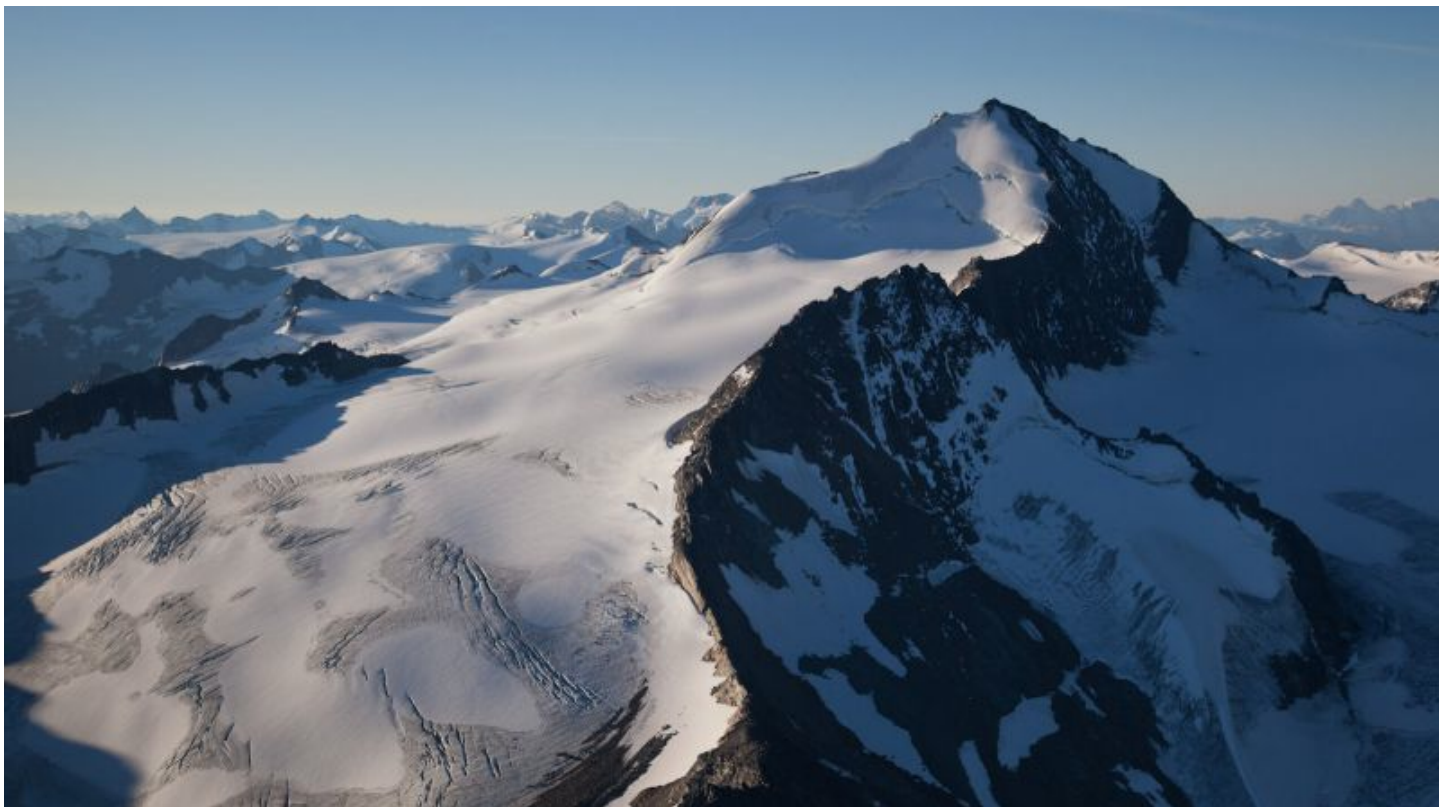
Frigg Towers and Mount Odin. Photo by Herb Hyder.

Last of all, across the Thompson River, are the Cariboo Mountains, the least-frequented of the four main sub-ranges. A great amount of them is thankfully protected by several provincial parks, especially the long lakes along their west end, a canoeist's realm. In a large icefield west of Valemount, **Mount Sir Wilfrid Laurier (11,535', P = 8,950')** presides over the Premier Range; almost nobody climbs in any other area of the Cariboos, even though there



are many other worthy (but tough) peaks. The Cariboos, and the Interior Ranges, gradually diminish to the northwest and are no more by the time Prince George is reached.

A rare photo of Mount Sir Wilfrid Laurier. Photo by Eric Coulthard (www.summitsearch.org).



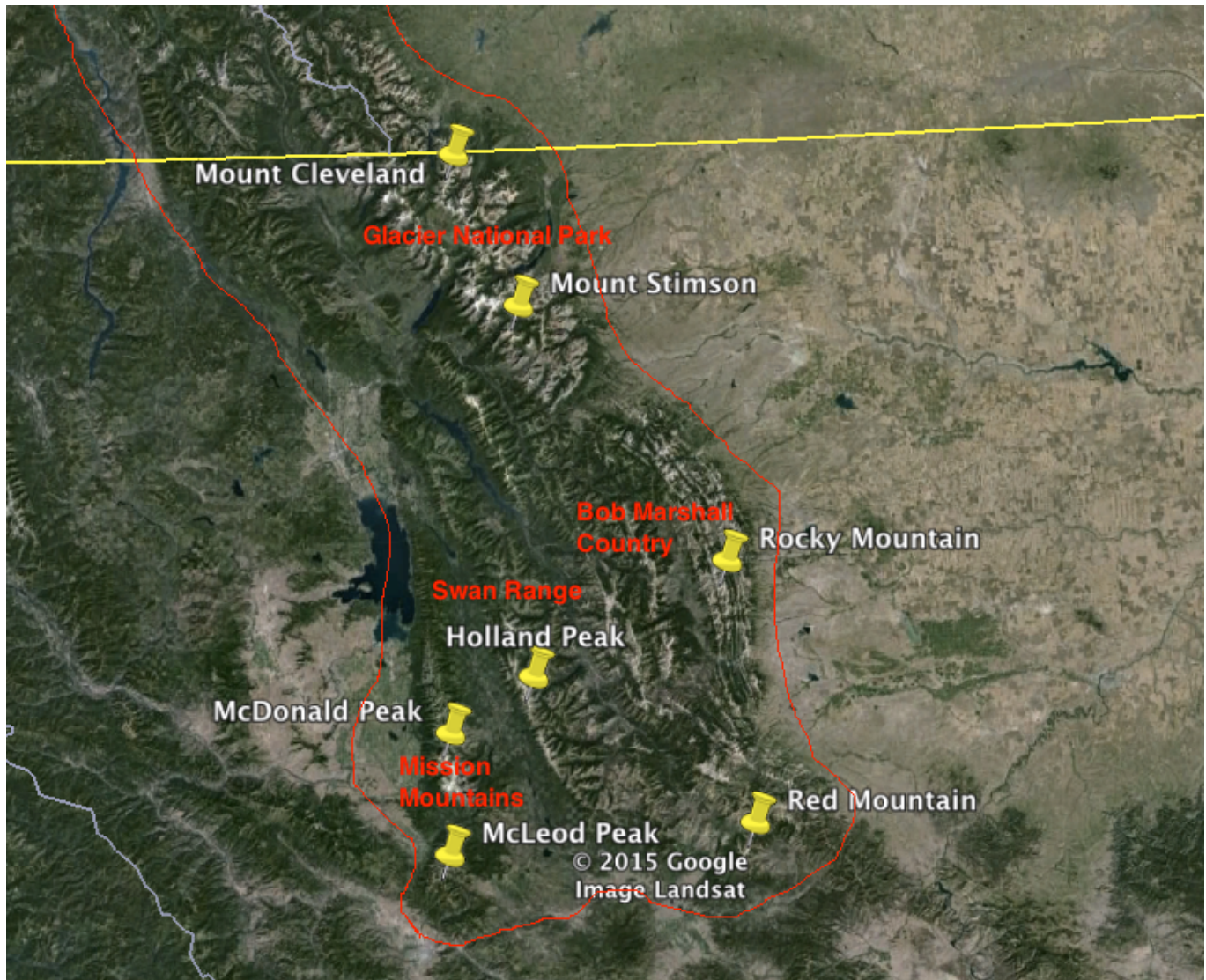
One of hundreds of remote Cariboo peaks, Mount Quanstrom. Photo by John Scurlock.

B. Great Rockies

The “Great Rockies” are the very epitome of the Rocky Mountains, and the most orderly section of them all - an unbroken band of sedimentary peaks strung out for hundreds of miles in a generally northwestern direction. They are in fact so long that I will split them up into three sub-sections.

The Great Rockies, unfortunately, are not suited for “clean climbing” rock-wise; they are generally crumbly as a whole. But they are second to none in sheer beauty. Those who live in Calgary and Edmonton (and in Montana) are greatly privileged to have such an extensive range in their backyard, and this makes the Great Rockies the most-visited area in the Northern Rockies, although this visitation is still selective and mostly constrained to the areas around the highways. Those who are interested in the tallest peaks in the Great Rockies - the 11,000-footers - need to get Bill Corbett’s book on them. These icy and rugged summits truly offer a lifetime’s worth of exploration in their own right.

1. Southern Great Rockies/Glacier Country (Rogers Pass to Crowsnest Pass)



Walking north from Rogers Pass along the windy, exposed Continental Divide towards Caribou Peak, after a few miles you know something is different here from the country further south. A distinctively wild character manifests itself, and the peaks are noticeably more barren and rugged. Welcome to Bob Marshall Country, bracketing the south end of the Great Rockies. The Bob's highest point, at its south end, is **Red Mountain (9,411', P = 3,801')**, huge but not particularly rugged; it is rather one of these "foretastes of things to come" going north and is a good vantage point for that new country. Along the Bob's eastern end is the geological marvel of the Rocky Mountain Front (**Rocky Mountain, 9,392', P = 3,252'**), part of the great Lewis Overthrust - parallel ridges ripped and contorted into serrated ramparts. The famous Chinese Wall marks the center of the Bob, and at the Bob's west end is the impressive fence of the Swan Range (**Holland Peak, 9,356', P = 4,016'**), blocking all views into this special place.



The Rocky Mountain Front from the summit of Mount Wright. Photo by Bob Sihler.

Overlooking the southern beginnings of the Rocky Mountain Trench, in which Missoula is located, and the wide open Flathead Valley, are the Rattlesnake Mountains (**McLeod Peak, 8,620', P = 3,760'**) and the majestic Mission Mountains.



Looking north along the Swan Range from the summit of Crescent Mountain. Photo by Dan Saxton.



Halloween evening shines upon the Mission Mountains. Photo by Dan Saxton.

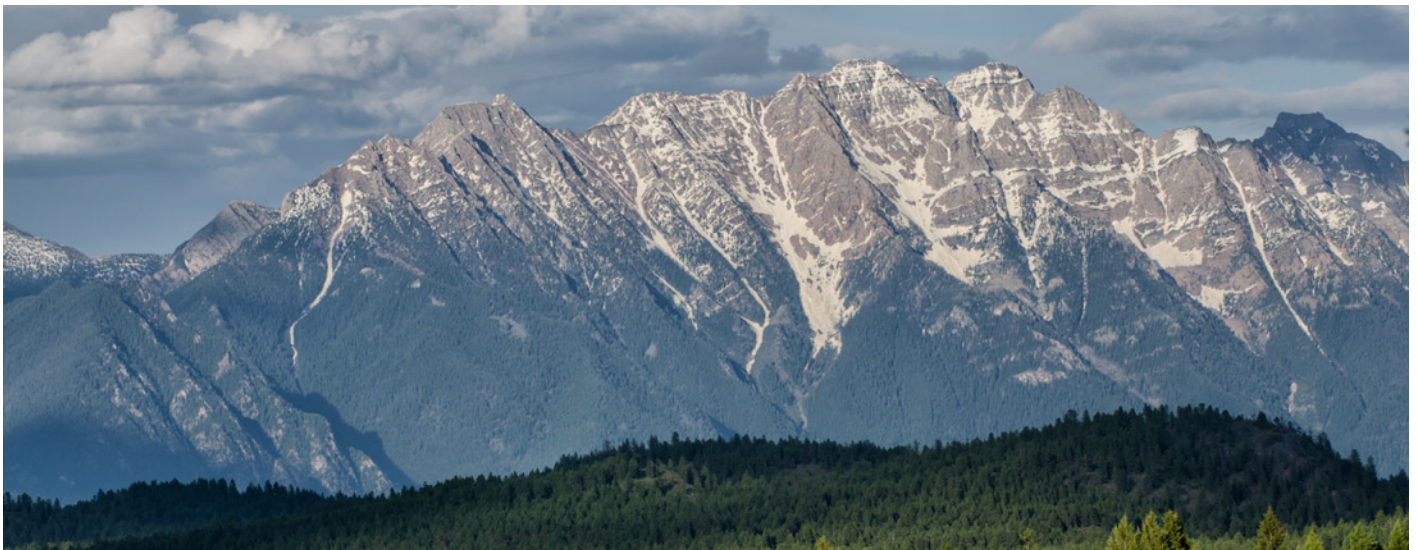
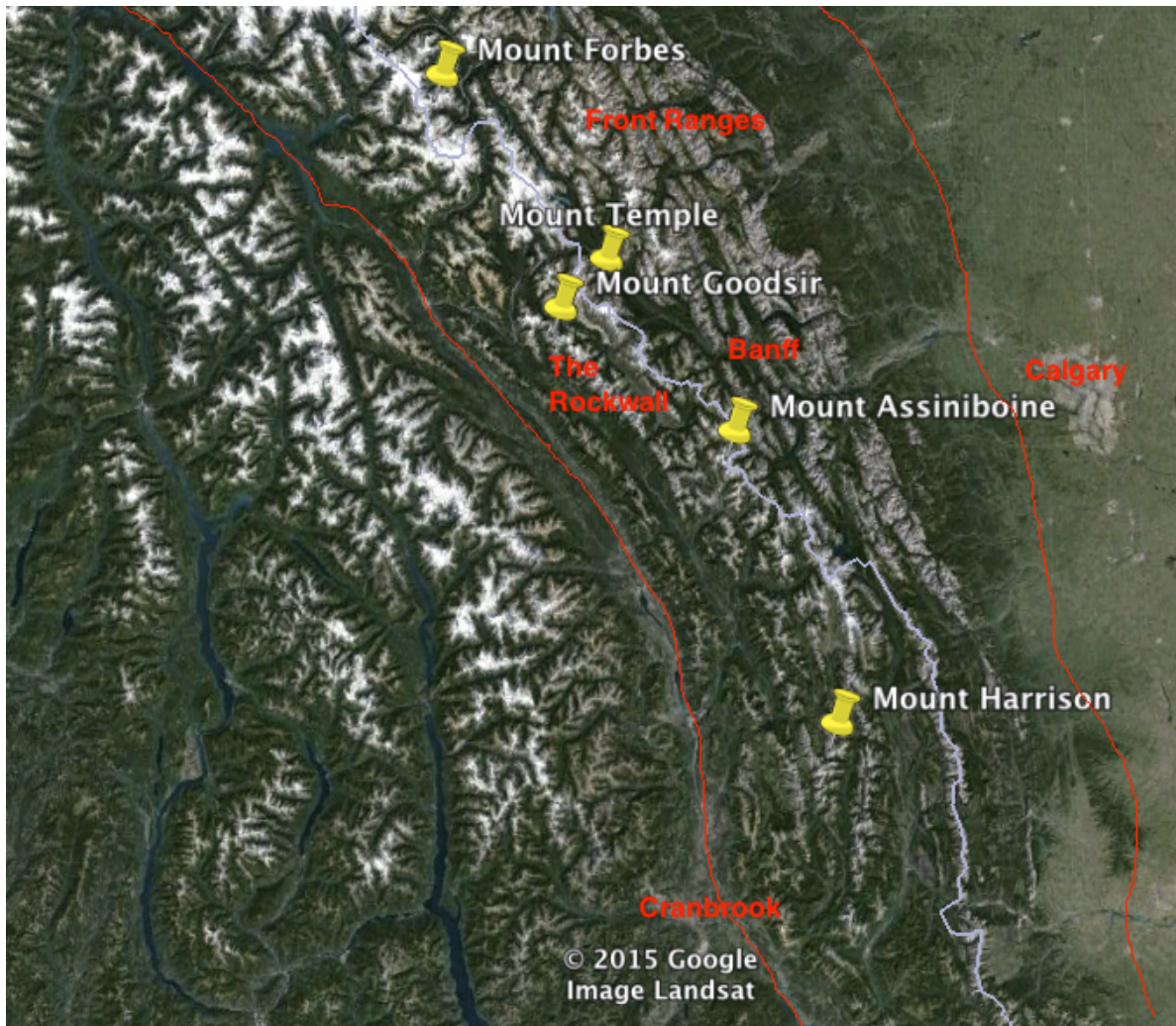
The Missions are perhaps the most underrated spectacular range in the entire USA, a fact dearly loved by the locals. Not large in extent, they make up for it in sheer vertical, thrusting upwards 7,000 vertical feet to glaciated **McDonald Peak (9,820', P = 5,642')**. The Missions are well-represented here, but have no single guidebook representing them: <http://www.summitpost.org/mission-range-mt/171043>.

One of America's most special places straddles one side of the international border: Glacier National Park. It is the place where the writer of this newsletter first saw the Rocky Mountains, which permanently imprinted themselves upon his heart for the rest of his life. There is no better location to go to for extolling the wonders of Glacier but the work of the late Vernon Garner "Saintgrizzly," so let him speak here: <http://www.summitpost.org/glacier-national-park-mt/170953>. In Glacier, the biggest peaks are **Mount Stimson (10,142', P = 4,402')** and **Mount Cleveland (10,466', P = 5,246')**. The wider range that Glacier's peaks are comprised of continues north into Canada, as far as the area of Crowsnest Pass.

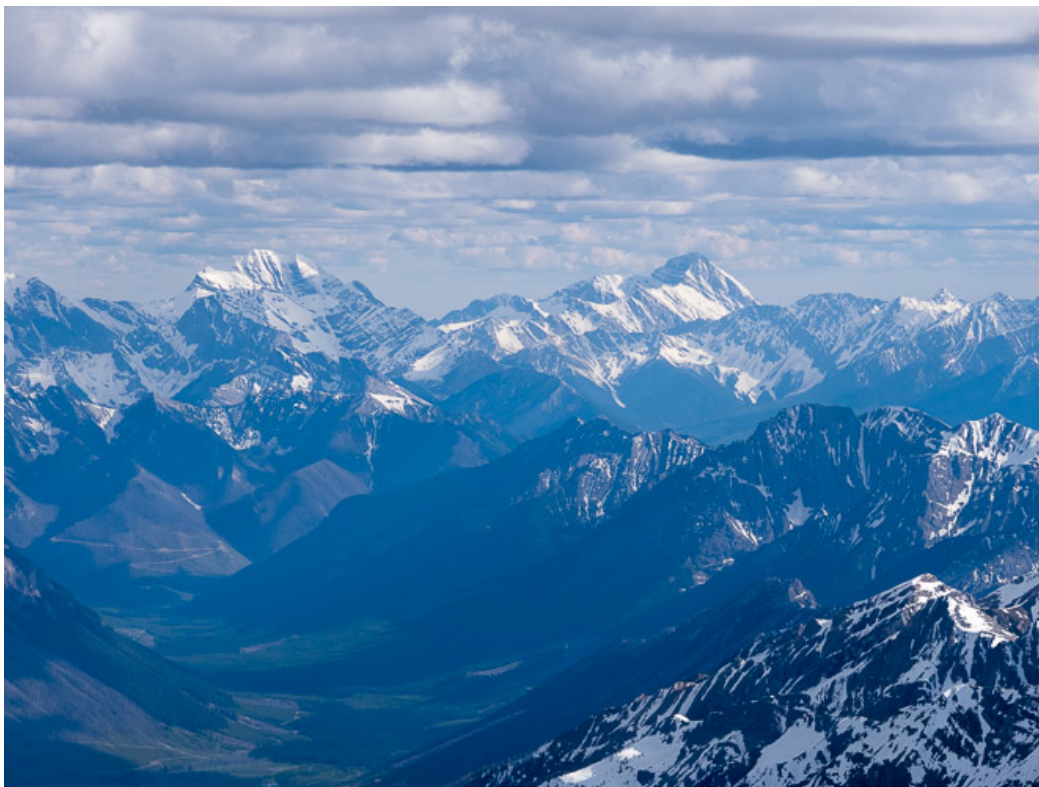
2. Central Great Rockies (Crowsnest Pass to Jasper)

Between Crowsnest Pass and the Canadian Rockies National Parks is a somewhat obscure area of the Great Rockies (sometimes referred to as "The Kootenay Rockies"), but it

nevertheless has some tantalizing summits, which are not too far from Cranbrook. Chief among these is **Mount Harrison (11,023', P = 5,833')**, the southernmost 11er in Canada, which was not climbed until the 1960's precisely because nobody knew it existed until then.



The amazing rampart of the Steeples, near Cranbrook, BC. From riverscrossing.ca.



Mount Harrison at left, Mount Mike at right, from Mount Joffre. This is a section of the Canadian Rockies unknown to many. Photo by Vern Dewit (<http://www.explor8ion.com> - a beautiful site!).

Now we enter into the part of the Canadian Rockies that everyone knows - beginning at Kananaskis. There are so many worthy and impressive peaks in the National Parks area that I can't enumerate them all - such as Mounts Joffre, King George, Sir Douglas, Hector, Victoria, Chephren, the Twins, etc. Anchoring the south end of this famed area is **Mount Assiniboine (11,863', P = 6,844')** - second only to Robson in dominance and grandeur.

Assiniboine, the Matterhorn of the Canadian Rockies. Photo by Noel Rogers.



Around the headwaters of the Kootenay River loom one of the most well-known backpacking destinations in Canada: **the Rockwall**. Gigantic faces two thousand feet high shine in the bright morning daylight, and then cast menacing shadows in the evening over the hikers rambling up and down along the base of the ramparts. This wall culminates in striking **Mount Goodsir (11,703', P = 6,191')**, comprised of two huge soaring towers looming a vertical mile above the basin below.



The South Tower of Mount Goodsir from the Rockwall area. From waputik.freehostia.com.

Perhaps the most famous mountain location of all Canada is the Lake Louise-Moraine Lake area, presided over by **Mount Temple (11,614', P = 5,052')**, well-known as the “easiest” 11,000-footer in the Canadian Rockies, a mere scramble. The Trans-Canada Highway crosses over the Continental Divide just to the north, via Kicking Horse Pass.

Beyond this area, the icefields along the Divide grow in extent and the climbing generally becomes more alpine. The Wapta Icefield is quite popular with ski mountaineering. The great white pyramid of **Mount Forbes (11,867', P = 5,344')**, the highest peak in Banff National Park, is the outstanding feature of this section - a long approach with mixed climbing from the Icefields Parkway.



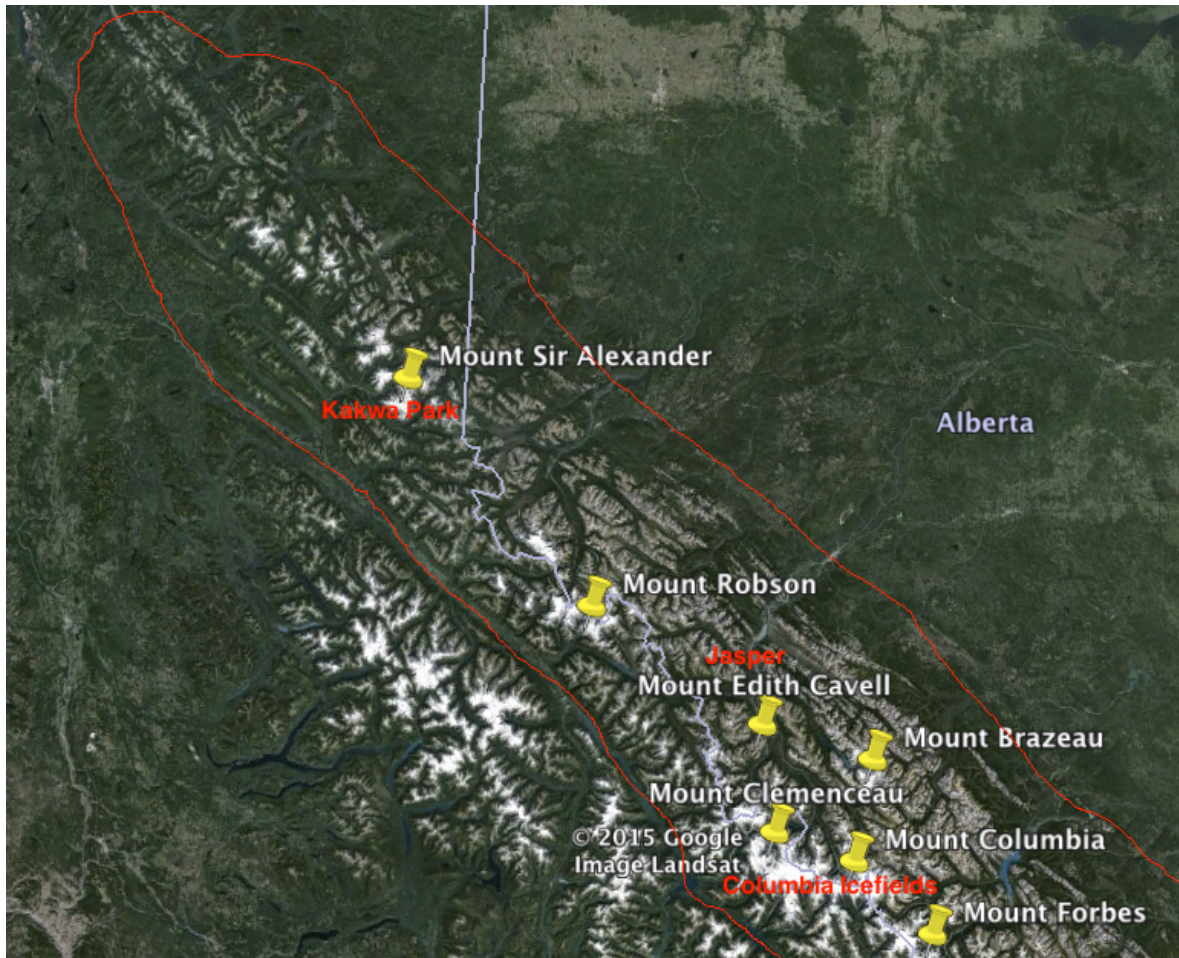
Mount Forbes from the north. From www.icefall.ca.

All this while, a series of high barren ridges, stuck in the rain shadow of the main range east of the Trans-Canada Highway and the Icefields Parkway, has been paralleling these mountains. They are generally called the “Front Range” and are the best places to backpack and simply explore without absolutely requiring

special gear (except for the highest summits). The loftiest peak in this chain hundreds of miles long is **Mount Brazeau (11,385', P = 4,734')**, located some distance southeast of the picturesque Maligne Lake.



A typical scene in the Front Range. Photo by Matthew Hobbs (www.on-top.ca).



Now we come to the Columbia Icefields - the very snowcapped top of the Rockies. It is the highest area of the Northern Rockies by average elevation and has all of the 12,000-foot peaks save one. There is something for every type of alpinist here - long ski traverses, test piece rock climbs, and challenging mixed ascents, most notably **Mount Alberta (11,873', P = 2,687')**, the most difficult of them all.

Mount Alberta. Photo by Vern Dewit.



Fortunately, **Mount Columbia (12,273', P = 7,818')**, the royal king of the Icefields and the highest peak in Alberta, is a rather straightforward snow climb - *in good weather; also beware of crevasses!* On the other end of the Icefields is **Mount Clemenceau (12,021', P = 4,918')**, more remote and typically accessed by helicopter.



Mount Columbia.
Photo by Vern
Dewit.

South of Jasper town are a couple more amazingly beautiful climbing areas, such as the Tonquin Valley Ramparts and **Mount Edith Cavell (11,033', P = 6,585')**, its

forbidding north face hanging grimly over the many tourists who congregate below Angel Glacier. From here on, the mountains begin to slowly drop off in height.



The Tonquin Valley Ramparts. Photo by Stefan Cruysberghs.

3. Northern Great Rockies (Jasper to Pine Pass)



The mighty Robson. Photo by Eric Coulthard.

Jasper and Yellowhead Pass, the lowest crossing of the Rockies to date going northbound, provide a convenient boundary between the Central and Northern Great Rockies. From here on, the mountains are generally less-known and less glaciated, and many long trails provide excellent backpacking and exploration opportunities along the North Boundary of Jasper and the Willmore Wilderness areas.

But there is one peak that chooses to reside here, taller than anything else.

Just step off the Yellowhead Highway and the railroad, walk by Kinney Lake, marvel at the gigantic Emperor Falls, and then pause at the eponymous Berg Lake before perhaps tackling Snowbird Pass, beyond which mere hikers are forbidden to proceed into the domain of the elite climber - always in front of you is the Grand Monarch of the Rocky Mountains, crowned with frozen gargoyles ice guardians, turning back 85-90% of attempts, the stupendous **Mount Robson (12,989', P = 9,281')**! Everything around it is nearly at least 2,000 feet lower.



Mount Sir Alexander. Photo by John Scurlock.

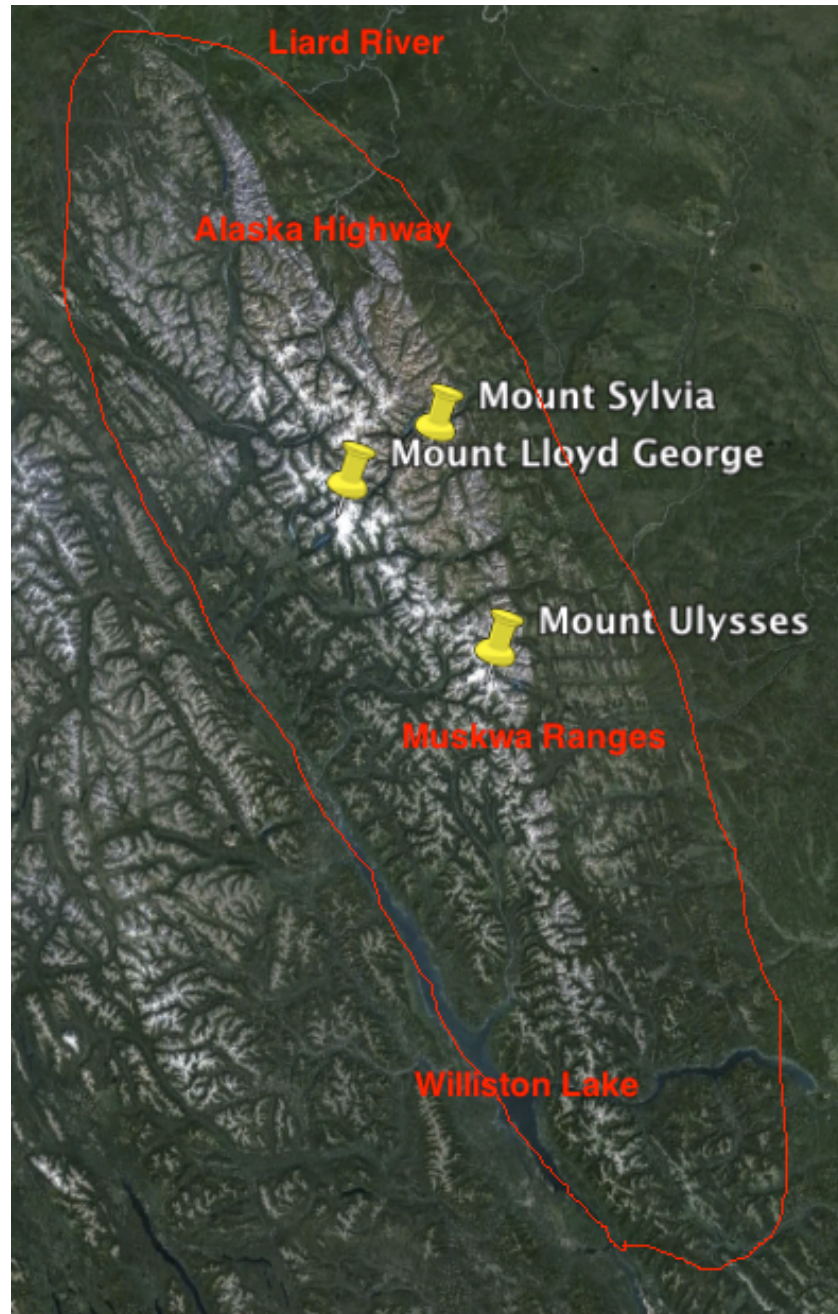
Some distance to the northwest beyond Robson, in the area of Kakwa Provincial Park, an underrated gem, is the last significant peak above 10,000 feet in the Rockies, **Mount Sir Alexander (10,745', P = 5,781')**. It too is a serious endeavor requiring advanced climbing skills, as this daring account of a solo ascent of it attests: <http://www.summitpost.org/third-expedition-to-mount-sir-alexander-success-and-epic/570647>.

The Rockies continue to diminish, until by Pine Pass, where Highway 97 crosses the range, they are just touching 6,000 feet and are barely above treeline.

Mount Ida, the northernmost 10,000'er in the Rockies (and also a 5,000' prominence "Ultra"), just north of Sir Alexander. Photo by John Scurlock.



C. Far Northern Rockies



It's not over yet, folks. The Rocky Mountains regain one last burst of energy north of Pine Pass as they cross the Peace River, which is swamped under the tentacles of enormous Williston Lake. For another three hundred miles, the Rockies hold sway over northern British Columbia as the Muskwa Ranges.

Apart from the occasional logging roads, which don't reach far in, there are no roads or trails in this area; it is for the wilderness seekers only. Several provincial parks protect the core of the Far Northern Rockies, such as Northern Rockies Provincial Park, Kwadacha Wilderness



One of the very few pics of Mount Ulysses on the web (in spring). Photo by Jackie Zinger.

Park, and Redfern-Keily Provincial Park.

Good peaks in this area range from 8,000-9,000 feet, not very high anymore but significant in northern latitudes. There are undoubtedly several unclimbed summits left for those seeking after such prizes. The rock continues to be of the same type as in the Great Rockies, largely sedimentary.

The epicenter of the Far Northern Rockies is in the Redfern Lake area, perhaps the only exception to the “trailless” nature of the area; an ATV route leads to cabins on this beautiful long lake. Stately, glaciated peaks bearing Homeric names congregate around the head of this valley; rising above them all, and above everything else in northeastern British Columbia, is the sharp horn of **Mount Ulysses (9,921', P = 7,510')**. It was first climbed in 1962, and has probably seen only a handful of ascents since.

North of the Ulysses area are many peaks named after various WW 1 and 2 figures. Chief among these is **Mount Lloyd George (9,639', P = 3,963')**, in the midst of a significant icefield. Winston Churchill and FDR also get recognition here, and so did Joseph Stalin - until his peak was renamed after a local trapper for obvious reasons, in the 1980's.

Some distance away to the northeast, in the rain shadow, is **Mount Sylvia (9,646', P = 5,115')**, surpassed only by the peaks of the Ulysses group. I know nothing whatsoever about how to get to, or to climb Sylvia, although Lloyd George has seen ascents. A cursory check of satellite and topo maps indicates a possibly straightforward scramble up Sylvia

from the south without special equipment in late summer. It may or may not be unclimbed. Such is the remote nature of the Far Northern Rockies - you'll have to go out and gather your own beta!



Barren landscapes in the Far Northern Rockies (Mount Saint Magnus). Photo by Scott Webster.

The Alaska Highway provides access to the very northernmost tip of the Rocky Mountains as it travels over Summit Lake Pass and alongside Muncho Lake. There are lots of excellent points and peaks alongside the road to amble up to get an idea of the lay of the land.

At the very last, the Terminal/Sentinel Ranges of the Rockies brush up against the great Liard River - and end. To the north there are forests and rolling hills, and in the far distance more mountains arise - but these are not the Rockies. The Mackenzie Mountains take up the baton in extending the North American Cordillera into the Yukon.

What a good run the Rockies had, though! Such a grand diversity of mountains and landscapes, unsurpassed in North America. Some areas have more snow and ice overall, some are more forested, some more arid, and perhaps some are even more spectacular as a whole, but the Rockies have a kaleidoscopic blend of everything. They are a treasure, and always will be respected and cherished by humanity as long as we remain upon this Earth.



Deep in the Far Northern Rockies, looking at Martin Peak. Photo by Scott Webster.

Looking ahead.....

The Rocky Mountaineers will be meeting at 7pm on Tuesday, February 10th, at the Trail Head, 221 E. Front St. Here are the details of the presentation:

GATES OF THE ARCTIC in the Footsteps of Bob Marshall

Steve Seninger and Daphne Herling's memorable trip in Alaska's Brooks Range, August 2014

Led by Bill and Bryn Cunningham, of High Country Adventures, starting from the north slope of the Brooks Range and crossing the Rocky Mountain's northernmost continental divide (Ernie's Pass) we backpacked 70 miles and then paddled 120 miles down the North Fork of the Koyukuk River. Our backpack route followed much of Bob Marshall's 1929 exploratory trip into the Gates of the Arctic area. Our trip was a remarkable way to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the 1964 Wilderness Act and to experience the mountains, tundra, and rivers that Bob Marshall explored and loved in this remote, wild landscape.



Rocky Mountaineers' Meeting Minutes 1/13/2015

I. Call To Order: 6:11, MacKenzie River Pizza

II. Attendees: Paul Jensen, Alden Wright, Steve Niday, Julie Kahl, Dan Saxton, Steve Schombel, Lois Crepeau, Forest Dean, David Kahl, Kathy Burleson

III. Treasurer's Report: \$889.01

A. Paid Lois for treats, Paul for plywood for the cabin

B. Account was static or going up

IV. Discussions:

A. Glacier Classic

1. Apgar
2. Which weekend in Aug. not decided
3. Steve N. will reserve the site
4. Community Dinner Sat.

B. Speakers

1. Feb. Speakers: Daphne Herling and Steve Seninger, Brooks Range
2. March: Alden still working on a bike show
3. April: Forest and Wyoming
4. Old Members?
 - a. Bill Bratt - Member in 1960's, his son Tyler Bratt, has DVD we could show. Talk with Bill about club history?
 - b. Wasn't Jim Aldrich also a founding member?
 - c. Stan Cohen on old time skiing?

C. GMAR on hold, Steve N. will do some transaction on the bank account

D. Memberships

1. Dan sends e-mails
2. Anyone send reminder e-mail to individuals? -No

3. Steve N. will do a general reminder in March or so, before dues come due in April.

4. Suggestion to send larger list by BCC

E. Trips

1. Paul will do cabin trip, Mt. Thresea.

2. Julie, Lee Creek, Pack Creek, Chief Joseph, and Freezeout Lake

V. Adjourn 6:48 PM

THE ROCKY MOUNTAINEERS MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Annual Membership Fee: \$10.00

Note: Membership includes all members of a family or household.

Make checks payable to 'The Rocky Mountaineers' and send to: The Rocky Mountaineers, PO Box 4262, Missoula, MT 59806

Name: _____

Additional Family Members' Names:

Address: _____

Home Phone: _____

Cell Phone (optional): _____

Email: _____

Additional Email (optional):

Joining or maintaining your Rocky Mountaineers membership has never been easier!

PayPal is now available on the Rocky Mountaineers website. Click on the membership link on the main page.