

Turnbull Family Adventure Winners

Turner Lake Epic Adventure

by the 1st Neck Point Scout Troop

Not considering that we would actually receive a grant from the Turnbull Family for our proposed canoe trip, we had planned the Kettle Valley Bicycling Trip (July 3–7, 2010) as our year-end camp. Upon learning that we had actually been approved for both the bicycling trip and the Turner Lake Canoe Trip, we pushed our canoeing plans to the end of the summer. This gave us time to organize transportation, gear and participants, as well as one day of canoeing on Nanaimo Lakes before we left. We were already very strong canoeists because last year's trip was to canoe to Desolation Sound. A setback was the Chilcotin forest fires (Bull Canyon complex and Heckman Pass); those monstrous fires had blocked off the road in some places, and so until just before we left, we did not even know if we would be going or not.

Environmental Projects

We contacted the BC Parks Bella Coola Area Supervisor looking for a project to do while in the park. Since we could not build anything permanent to leave in the park (like bird or bat houses), we decided to make a list of all the animals that we saw or heard and then submit the list to BC Parks. This kept everyone alert watching for any kind of wildlife to add to our list.

Another project was to identify invasive plants. Needing help, we spoke to a coordinator with the Cariboo Chilcotin Coast Invasive Plant

Committee. She supplied us with key chains containing pictures and descriptions of possible invasive plants in the park. It was a relief that we did not find any weeds while on the lakes or in the campgrounds, but there were weeds along the Tote Road (running from the trailhead to the highway). When we found an area with invasive plants, we pulled up a couple plants, took pictures, wrote down a GPS reading, identified it, and then put all of that data on a record sheet. Finally, we sent our information to be forwarded to the BC Parks Bella Coola Area Supervisor. For more about our adventure in our own words, read on:

Turner Lake Chain
Tweedsmuir South Provincial Park
August 26 - 31, 2010

Day 1 – Daniel: We set off on the 6:20 a.m. ferry, excited and maybe a little tired. All of us were anticipating the long car ride ahead of us as we sailed into the darkness. Once off the ferry, we drove for 10 hours until we reached the planes. Most of us fit into the Beaver, while Eric, Addison and Scouter Will climbed into the Cessna. Our 20 minute ride was stunning. We saw lakes, trees, mountains, and Hunlen Falls! Once landed, we set up camp and got a fire going. Our dinner was instant mashed potatoes and Alfredo Fettuccine, yum.

Day 2 – Linden: Today we got up at about 7 a.m. As we started to paddle up Turner Lake, we noticed how warm the lake water felt. It seemed to be a day of paddling for a little while, then portaging, then paddling and portaging until reaching our camp on Junker Lake. We were all pooped.

Day 3 – Colm: It was 3 degrees when we got up today. We soon were on our way to explore the area. At the second portage, we took three of the canoes and paddles to Kidney Lake. Before setting off to paddle all of 600 meters to the trailhead, we stopped, ate lunch, and then canoed across the east side of the lake with three people in each canoe. The hike was fairly short, and brought us up to Sunshine Lake where the bugs were really bad. After a quick look around, some of us decided to run all the way back down the trail, and go. It didn't take long before we were back to our camp on Junker Lake, starting a fire and cooking dinner. We sat around the campfire, told stories, and sang songs before going to bed for a good night's sleep.

Day 4 – Addison: Today, we got up, packed, had breakfast, got in the canoes and paddled off. Soon we were at the portage at the end of the lake, but this time we ran the rapids; it was really fun. We paddled down the river, through the lake and then shot down some more white water. This time we cut off 200 meters from the 700 we were supposed to do on that portage. After that long portage, we were just a small lake away from another set of rapids that we went through, but only 500 meters down the river, we found the other 500 meter portage. Once again, we had to pack the canoes and gear for a gruelling walk. As soon as we got out of the river, we were on Turner Lake, and after two more hours of paddling, we were at the campsite. Very quickly, we set up our tents and had dinner, tired but ready for the long hike tomorrow.

Day 5 – Akshay: Today we did not have to rush for a change. Scouter Will had hiked out about four hours ahead of us to retrieve the truck. For the first four kilometers we hiked uphill, and then it was downhill the rest of the way. Soon we got to the river, and the spider bridge. This bridge was covered in webs (you couldn't even put your hands on the railings). Once across the bridge, we were only about an hour from the truck. Since the campground was closed due to a grizzly bear in the area, Scouter Eric fetched his car. Once he was back, we all drove to Heckman Pass viewpoint to camp for the night.

Day 6 – Andrew: After an early rising at 6:30 a.m. we quickly packed up the tents and left in the cars. At 10:30 a.m. we stopped beside a small lake and had brunch. The rest of the day was spent driving until 9:00 p.m. when we caught the ferry to home. At about 11:30 p.m. we got off and now have these memories of a wonderful camp. X

— We are the 1st Neck Point Scouts, and attending the trip was: Colm, Daniel, Andrew, Linden, Eric, Akshay, Addison, Scouter Eric, and Scouter Will.



Photo: 1st Neck Point Scouts