



**SQUAMISH ACCESS
SOCIETY
SOCIETY NO. S-50588**

Annual Report 2023

Executive Summary

- Membership declined from 1571 to 1027. This was primarily due to a significant number (390) of 5 year memberships expiring in June effective 5 years from the start of the current membership database.
- The Hive and Ground Up membership sign ups are providing significant uplift of new members. Their partnership is invaluable to SAS.
- There were no major rockfall events or changes to rockfall closures in BC Parks.
- A WAG bag program was implemented throughout a variety of crags. The initiative garnered local, national and international media attention for SAS.
- 2023 was a robust year of SAS events for the community. Most notably the Golden Scrub Brush Awards took place for the first time since 2019.
- Trail building took place at Murrin Park.
- Fortis commenced pipeline work with access impacts to climbing areas along the Mamquam and Indian FSRs. SAS has been involved with community meetings and direct engagement with Fortis.
- Invasive species were removed from the Smoke Bluffs and route development debris was cleared in the Blind Channel in collaboration with Arc'teryx during the annual Squamish Climbing Academy.
- The SAS rebolting program replaced bolts throughout Squamish. The fixed quickdraws at The Circus and Big Show were replaced.
- The SAS board voted to hire a paid contractor for the 2024 season. Workload for the society exceeds its volunteer resources.
- Social media posts reached a professional and consistent standard thanks to a new social media manager-Leo Iezzi.
- The society is in excellent financial shape.

Board of Directors

Ben Webster was the chair for 2023 and he will be stepping down in 2024 in anticipation of moving out of the region for work later in 2024. He joined the board as an associate in 2020 and was a director from 2021 onward where he focused on issues relating to Cheakamus sport climbing, events, social media and community.

David Jones will be stepping down. He was the director focused on BC Timber Services. David has been a director since 2008 and has been instrumental in maintaining continuity in the direction of SAS as the make up of the board has shifted over the years. He initiated the highly successful Rebolting and Anchor Replacement Program.

Kieran Brownie will be stepping down from his director role he has held since 2020 and take on an associate position. He has been invaluable with his relationship with the Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw but will continue to advise the board as an associate.

Andrea Smith was a valuable director focussed on Squamish Nation and Route development issues in 2023. She has opted to step down from being a director to an associate role.

Ivan Melisek joined the board as treasurer and brought a wealth of professional knowledge replacing Travis McClinchey as treasurer.

2023 Director Roles: Chair: Ben Webster Vice-Chair: Brian Moorhead.
 Treasurer: Ivan Melisek. Secretary: Alex Ryan Tucker

Directors at Large: Emilisa Firdich David Jones
 Peter Winter
 Kieran Brownie

New Directors: John Howe, Dan Soli, Andrea Smith.

Associate Directors: Cody Abercrombie, Paul McSorley, Leonardo Iezzi, Amy Bender

Associates: Brian Owen, George Hanzal

Membership

- In 2023, SAS saw memberships drop from 1571 to 1027. We have continued with the annual membership at \$10 a year.
- A significant number of 5 year memberships expired in 2023. Current membership numbers are now a more accurate reflection of actively engaged members. A review of the expired 5 year memberships identified numerous currently active climbers in the community and as such ensuring expired memberships renew will need to be a major priority to maintain and also increase memberships.
- The Hive and Ground Up climbing gyms have SAS membership sign ups for their gym members. This has provided roughly 1/3 of new members at SAS and we are grateful for their partnership.
- In person membership sign ups took place in the spring at Ground Up, the Vancouver Hive, pub and trivia nights in Squamish and the Hive annual party. During the summer they took place at climber coffee days and the Arcteryx Academy.
- SAS has identified its membership database platform fails to forecast expiring memberships easily or give statistical data on sign ups, etc. Early exploration of alternative platforms has taken place.

Advocacy

Key Land Manager Relationships

Squamish Nation

- SAS attended working group meetings for the Shannon Basin Management Plan at Totem Hall. SAS also submitted written comments on the draft guidelines advocating for continued climbing access alongside environmentally and culturally responsible practices.
- SAS approved funding for a youth climbing program for Nation youth. It is in final stages of implementation for an early 2024 launch.

BC Parks

- There are still limited closures affecting the Chief. SAS has discussed with Parks how they are going to go about lifting these and how they will respond to future rockfalls. This conversation is ongoing. Parks notes there are significant hazards in the debris field from the 2021 rockfall.
- Through funding from the Parks enhancement fund, SAS implemented a WAG bag program throughout Squamish. Parks funded WAG bag dispensers were installed at Top Shelf, The Apron approach and The Farm bouldering. Outside of BC Parks- dispensers were installed at The Monastery, Area 44 and Mr Habrich. These were funded by Squamish Rock Guides, Valhalla Squamish Trail Fund and Climb On Equipment. The program received significant media attention-notably The Squamish Chief, CBC news, As It Happens on CBC Radio, local radio stations in Vancouver and even The Guardian in the UK ran a feature.
- As with previous years, SAS disseminated information on falcon nesting site identification to the climbing community. There were no closures this year.
- SAS advocated for a variety of projects that would benefit climbers including increased camping space at the Chief Campground and bike racks.

District of Squamish / Smoke Bluffs Park

- SAS continues to participate in the Smoke Bluffs Park Staff Advisory Committee
- There were no significant developments with the FMCBC committee regarding the potential sale of their Smoke Bluff lands. SAS is actively involved in the committee.
- SAS contributed to a front country trail inventory for the District conducted by Cascade Environmental. This will ensure awareness of trails used by climbers in the future at the District level.
- DoS once again convened the Squamish Visitor Management Roundtable (SVMR). This is a bi-weekly multi-agency session to proactively identify and address issues resulting from the increased visitor numbers in the Squamish region. Attendees included the DoS, FLNRO, BC Parks, RCMP, Bylaw Enforcement, Conservation Officers, Squamish Nation, SAS, SORCA, and others. Issues addressed included bear awareness, bathrooms and camping. SAS had

poor attendance at these meetings and having a director or paid contractor attend is a priority for 2024.

- Construction commenced for the Eagle Mountain-Woodfibre gas pipeline. Primary climbing impacts will be due to increased road traffic along the Mamquam FSR due to a work staging site near the north end of Valleycliffe. SAS attended community meetings held by Fortis for their proposed work camp with access via Powerhouse Spring Road. This work camp is yet to be approved by the district. Road improvements to the Mamquam FSR in late 2023 for the project resulted in improvements to parking pullout quality and doubling of parking capacity along the road adjacent to climbing areas. 2024 will see improvements to the base of the area adjacent to the Slhanay trail including installing toilets. The Indian FSR will be closed in 2024 where pipeline construction is occurring. SAS has been lobbying to mitigate this through a parking plan and foot access for Mt Habrich and the Fluffy Kitten Wall.
- The Squamish Canyon Project commenced construction late in the season. This will have impacts on parking for Fern Hill and the Powerhouse Springs Road in the 2024 season.

Ministry of Environment-Sea to Sky Natural Resource District (Formerly FLNRO)

- FLNRO was reorganized as a government ministry. SAS correspondence for crown lands, particularly Cheakamus, continues with the same office now operating under the Ministry of Environment.
- We are still awaiting expansion of the Chek rec site, government workload precludes advancing this item at this time.
- The road to Electric Avenue was grated and a new gate was installed and locked.
- SLRD provided \$10 000 to build a sun shelter at Electric Ave. A design is complete and a contractor has been sourced with construction pending land approvals from BC Hydro and Ministry of Environment.
- As mentioned under BC Parks, WAG bag dispensers were installed at Area 44, The Monastery and Mt Habrich.

BC Timber Sales

- Minimal logging impacts took place in 2023. As such past issues with logging trucks on the Conroy FSR were not a concern.

Infrastructure

Bolt & Anchor Replacement

- Rebolting work was focused on: Browning Bluffs (returning this area as a high quality sport climbing crag), Area 44, The Chief, Foundation Wall, Murrin Park.
- Fixed quickdraws were replaced at the Circus and Big Show.
- Thank you as always to Squamish Rock Guides for the many hours of volunteer work in addition to the paid rebolting.

Crag Improvement and Trail Building

- A volunteer trail day was held to improve the trail to Pensioners Wall.
- Trail improvements were made to trails at the north end of the Murrin Park parking lot.
- SAS decided to create signage for the multiple trail entrances for climbers along the Mamquam FSR-particularly the numerous bouldering areas. Road work for the Fortis BC pipeline project delayed implementation of this project till 2024.

Stewardship & Community

Festival and Event Support

- SAS spoke at the sold out MEC Vancouver event with Tommy Caldwell and Sonnie Trotter.
- SAS spoke and ran a table at the Hive's annual party at the Biltmore.
- SAS had a table at the Mountain Mentors Kick Off event.
- A new program of climber coffee similar to programs in the U.S. was commenced. Days occurred at the Smoke Bluffs, Cheakamus and the Chief Park. These resulted in interactions with visiting climbers regarding local access issues as well as membership sign ups.
- The Arc'teryx Climbing Academy was held in August.
 - A stewardship event with the Sea to Sky Invasive Species Counsel removed significant volume of invasive species from the Smoke Bluffs
 - A clean up of route development debris occurred at the Blind Channel as well.
 - SAS presented the first evening speaking to the importance of SAS membership. THE second evening was a skit about the WAG bag program.
 - SAS had a booth throughout the weekend. We chatted to people, answered questions about access issues, and signed up around 60 new members. Granite Threads a local t shirt business sold t shirts at the event as a fundraiser for SAS.
- SAS spoke to the VOC long hike event at the Mamquam River Campground with an emphasis on the WAG bag program and the importance of membership.
- A SAS community BBQ was held at Squamish Sports Legacy Park. It was a successful gathering of the community.
- Climber socials also took place with a pub night at Howe Sound Brewing and a climbing route bingo at A Frame brewing. Both events recruited new members.
- The Golden Scrub Brush Awards took place at Tricksters hideout. The event had been in hiatus since 2019 due to COVID. Tickets were sold out and a prize raffle raised \$800 for rebolting. Tickets generated roughly \$2000 for the society net expenses. The event included a SAS update, route development awards and a disco dance party. The event received coverage from Gripped Magazine.

Community

- Climb On continues to be a valued partner in the Squamish climbing community. They supported us this year by donating \$2 to SAS from every sale of their Climb On branded chalk. They have also donated prizes for the Golden Scrub Brush Awards and helped share important messages through their social media and posters in their store. They fundraised for SAS during a Girls Gone Hueco film night and a build your own Petzl quick draw fundraiser.
- Kaya climbing partnered with SAS, fundraising through their digital guidebook sales.
- Zephyr coffee donated all of the coffee for coffee table days.
- Ground Up has supported us by selling memberships and offering day passes as prizes at Golden Scrub Brush Awards. They also offered space for info tables and share our literature.
- The Hive signed up members for SAS and offered their space for a SAS info table.
- Midnight Lightning offered prizes for every SAS social event and the Golden Scrub Brush Awards.
- Valhalla Pure Outfitters offered prizes for The Golden Scrub Brush Awards
- A Frame brewing hosted two social events and offered prizes.
- Edelrid donated prizes for the Golden Scrub Brush Awards.
- Black Diamond donated prizes for the Golden Scrub Brush Awards

Our Valued Allies

- Climb-On
- Arc'teryx
- Valhalla Pure Squamish
- Ground Up Climbing center
- Flashed
- Midnight Lightning
- UBC Varsity Outdoors Club
- FMCBC
- BCMC
- SORCA
- The Hive
- The Squamish Nation
- Climbers Access Society of BC
- Squamish-Lillooet Regional District
- ACC Squamish and Vancouver
- Tourism Squamish
- Escape Route Squamish
- ILSA
- Patagonia
- A Frame Brewing

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- Black Diamond

- Edelrid

Communications

Social Media

- Our social media reach grew this year from approximately 3100 to 3200 for Facebook and from 3732 to 4002 Instagram followers.
- Leo Iezzi joined as an associate and made significant improvements in the professionalism and quality of our posts. He will be staying on in this role in 2024.

Newsletter

- We continued with our periodic newsletter. It's been a valuable way to reach people who don't have social media and is a good opportunity to reflect on new news and achievements over the year.

2024 Goals

Advocacy

- Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh Úxwumixw(Squamish Nation)
 - Support climbing opportunities and programs for youth. Through our community connections, SAS will bring in other businesses and organizations to contribute equipment, funds, or volunteer time.
 - Develop a mutually supportive long-term relationship with the Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh Úxwumixw aiming towards a Memorandum of Understanding regarding climber activities on lands belonging to the Squamish Nation.
- Ministry of Environment:
 - Build the funded sun shelter at Electric Ave
 - Trail improvement project to Echo Beach
 - Continue to work with MoE to finalize the expansion of Chek Rec Area when they have the resources to further pursue this item.
- DoS/SBP:
 - Continue to advocate for climbing on the Smoke Bluff Park Advisory Committee.
 - Continue to advocate for long term protection of SBP as a climbing park when/if the FMCBC restart discussions with the DoS regarding the potential transfer/sale of FMCBC lands in the SBP.
- BC Parks
 - Advocate for park infrastructure projects including bike racks, trail markers, new toilets, signage, increased camping and additional trail work.
 - Continuation of peregrine falcon closure data collection and notification.
 - Monitor WAG bag program usage and keep dispensers stocked.
- BC Timber Sales:
 - Continue to correspond with BCTS to review planned logging parcels.
 - Communicate logging activity and road limitations to climbers.

Infrastructure

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- Advocate for the usage of the land formerly used for Rope Runner to be utilized for parking.
 - Identify crags bases that need infrastructure work.
 - Continue with the successful anchor replacement program.

Community/Volunteer Activities

- Find a volunteer event co-ordinator to create more community events.
- Find trail crew co-ordinators with experience and energy to lead volunteer work groups
- Crag Keepers Program: Continue to support groups like the ACC who can rescrub crags without direct SAS supervision. Explore using local guides to carry out rescrubbing under direct supervision
- Festivals: continue to support Arcteryx Academy and other community events.
- Support a planned Black Diamond community event in July 2024.

Membership

- Continue to sign up new members, particularly with recurring memberships
- Offer more opportunities for members to get involved through socials and volunteer opportunities

Communication

- Continue to take advantage of the strong social media presence SAS has built.
- Develop and institute a coherent communication plan for the year including social media posts, website updates, and membership emails.
 - Education: Social media posts in spring to increase awareness regarding bolt and permadraw issues, encourage community to replace missing hangers, and improve safety awareness.
 - Announcements: Proactively inform the public and disseminate new/unforeseen issues (ex. bears at a crag, rockfall hazards.)
 - Sharing our Work: Increase the number of messages about projects and accomplishments to raise the profile of SAS and inform our members.

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- History and Story Telling: Increase our social media engagement with a steady flow of stories of interest and partner with allies and community influencers.

Society Internal

- Advance governance through stronger usage of committees.
- Hire a contractor to meet the workload needs of the society that wasn't being met through volunteerism.
- Grants and corporate donations:
 - Identify new opportunities to apply for grants to fund the contract position.
- Research an alternate member database platform that can give better statistics and reports regarding current memberships and give expiration forecasts. Information on renewal rates and types of memberships would also be beneficial.

Financial Summary

SQUAMISH ACCESS SOCIETY
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2023

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION	As at December 31, 2023
Assets	
Cash	\$ 55,284.47
Total assets	\$ 55,284.47
Liabilities	
Accounts payable	\$ 1,082.10
Total liabilities	\$ 1,082.10
Net assets	\$ 54,202.37

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS	For the year ended December 31, 2023
Revenue	
Individual memberships and donations	\$ 17,407.73
Corporate and organization donations	\$ 14,870.00
Total revenue	\$ 32,277.73
Expenses	
Trail work	\$ 15,837.79
Rebolting	\$ 5,307.35
Events	\$ 1,806.16
Promotion, admin, and other	\$ 2,215.31
Total expenses	\$ 25,166.61
Excess of revenue over expenses	\$ 7,111.12