

CHARGING FOR SEARCH AND RESCUE



CAVEAT!!

“The numbers are BC-specific”

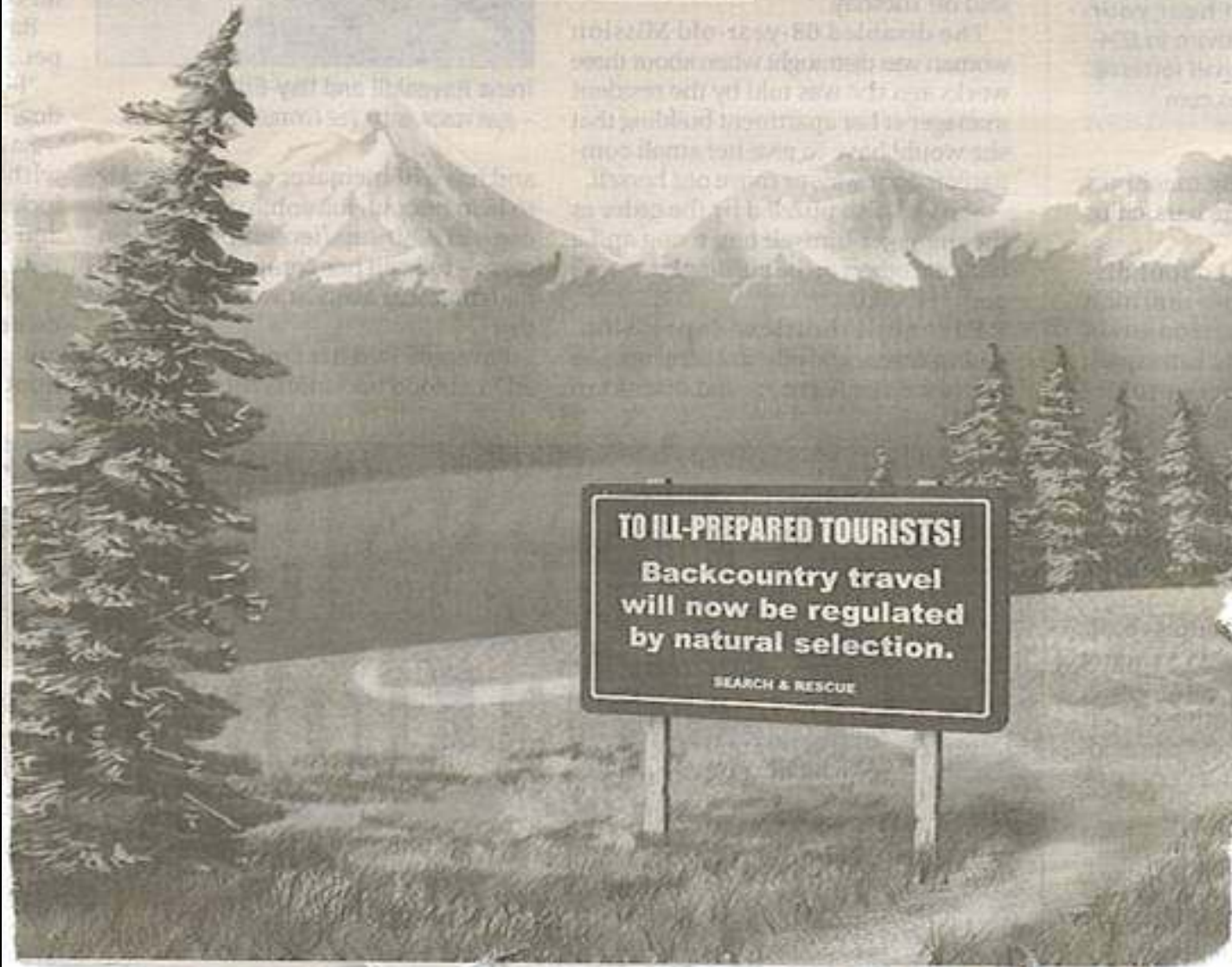
Some context:

1. 83 SAR Units
2. Approx 2500 active/trained SAR Volunteers
3. 1,128 Ground SAR operations in the year ended March 31, 2010
 - Does not include “standby” calls or civil emergency responses



SOMEWHERE IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

LA MONTAGNE
105
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HOW ABOUT SOME FACTS?



1. Some seemingly good ideas are just wrong

Some seemingly good ideas are just ...WRONG!!!



"Okay, Bob! Gol Gol"

HOW ABOUT SOME FACTS?



1. Some seemingly good ideas are just wrong
2. 50% of rescue/recovery are self rescue
3. 82% of public in favour until educated on the issue
4. Idea is nearly unanimously opposed by SAR Units
5. Most SAR infrastructure (training etc) is paid out of the volunteers own pockets
6. Average cost of a SAR operation is apprx \$6,500

MORE FACTS



7. Supporting legislation in only 5 US States, none in Canada
8. A “Charge for SAR” Policy is formally opposed by;
 - a. Mountain Rescue Association
 - b. American Alpine Club
 - c. BC SAR Assn
 - d. Search and Rescue Volunteer Association of Canada
 - e. US National Park Service
 - f. US National SAR Plan (FEMA, National Park Service, US Coast Guard)
 - g. NASAR

EVEN MORE FACTS



9. Public and political perception is shaped by media
10. “Bad” subjects cause less than 5% of operations
11. Recidivism rate is extremely low
12. Contrary to the humanitarian origins of SAR Units
13. Infrastructure costs in BC are approx \$2m/yr
14. People have a right to recreation

People have a right to recreation



**Dear sweet Jesus, Mary, St. Joseph and the
wee donkey, please give me the strength to
suffer these stupid bastards**



The “Five Percenters”



Limits of a “Charge for SAR” Regime



1. Law limits collection to operational costs only
2. Cost of bureaucracy has exceeded actual revenues
3. Collected revenue tends to go to general govt funds
4. Cannot legislate good behaviour

Collection Issues



1. Increased volunteer time to appear in court
2. Some people are judgement-proof
3. Will lose some cases
4. How do you prove blameworthiness?
 1. Quantify it
 2. What if they don't talk

Collection Issues



5. Are you further victimizing a SAR subject
6. Cost recovery in large operations could bankrupt some families
7. Even if win case, still need to initiate collection proceedings
8. Cost effectiveness
9. Countersuits for inadequate response

WHO DO YOU CHARGE?

- Majority of persons are just unlucky
- Difficult to charge someone who did not request SAR
- What about the “I could have got out myself” defence
- What about those who
 - were merely overdue
 - are found dead
 - are never found
 - did find their own way out
 - “Bastard” search
 - were stupid and unlucky
- Family?
- The third party caller?



POLITICAL IMPACTS



1. Increased expectations, increased scrutiny and greater liability
2. Social Contract to provide safety nets
3. Peace Order and Good Government
4. Duty of Govt to protect its citizens
5. Erosion of "Free Public Services" doctrine

POLITICAL IMPACTS



6. Mother on welfare waving a bill on the TV bawling her eyes out
7. Effect on competition for donations
8. Increased willingness to sue SAR Units
9. Drop in volunteer
 - a. Recruitment
 - b. Retention

POLITICAL IMPACTS



10. Contrary to the symbolism and spirit of Canada's outdoor culture
11. It's a "pressure to punish" philosophy disguised as a user pay model.
12. Bad policy to govern by exception
13. Not able to offset the larger infrastructure costs

OPERATIONAL IMPACTS

1. Delay in calling SAR so as to avoid bill
 - a. (24 hours = 50% drop in probability of survival)
 - b. deteriorating conditions equals more risk
2. Subjects hide/run away from searchers in order to avoid being billed
3. Family/friends attempt SAR on their own
 - a. contaminate search site (trample evidence etc)
 - b. become injured/lost themselves



OPERATIONAL IMPACTS

4. Subjects/Witnesses refuse to provide essential information
5. What about Family's fighting to turn us away when we show up?
6. Increased fatalities from unwise attempts to self rescue



CONCLUSION

1. There are no demonstrated improvements to operations or infrastructure
2. System will cause:
 - a. increased mortality rates;
 - b. more complicated operations; and
 - c. increased pressures and risks for volunteers
3. There is no evidence whatsoever that a “Charge for Rescue” system will increase responsible recreation



QUERY

Should govt and industry be responsible for a SAR cost arising from a 14 billion dollar tourist industry that they promote and benefit from?



We all signed up to rescue and
recover both the unlucky...and the
stupid!!



Vernon SAR

“Opposing Natural Selection since 1960”



MASTERCARD



**Don't leave home
without it!!**

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