

October 1996

Alaskan Caver, Volume 16, No. 5, October 1996

Dalene T. Perrigo

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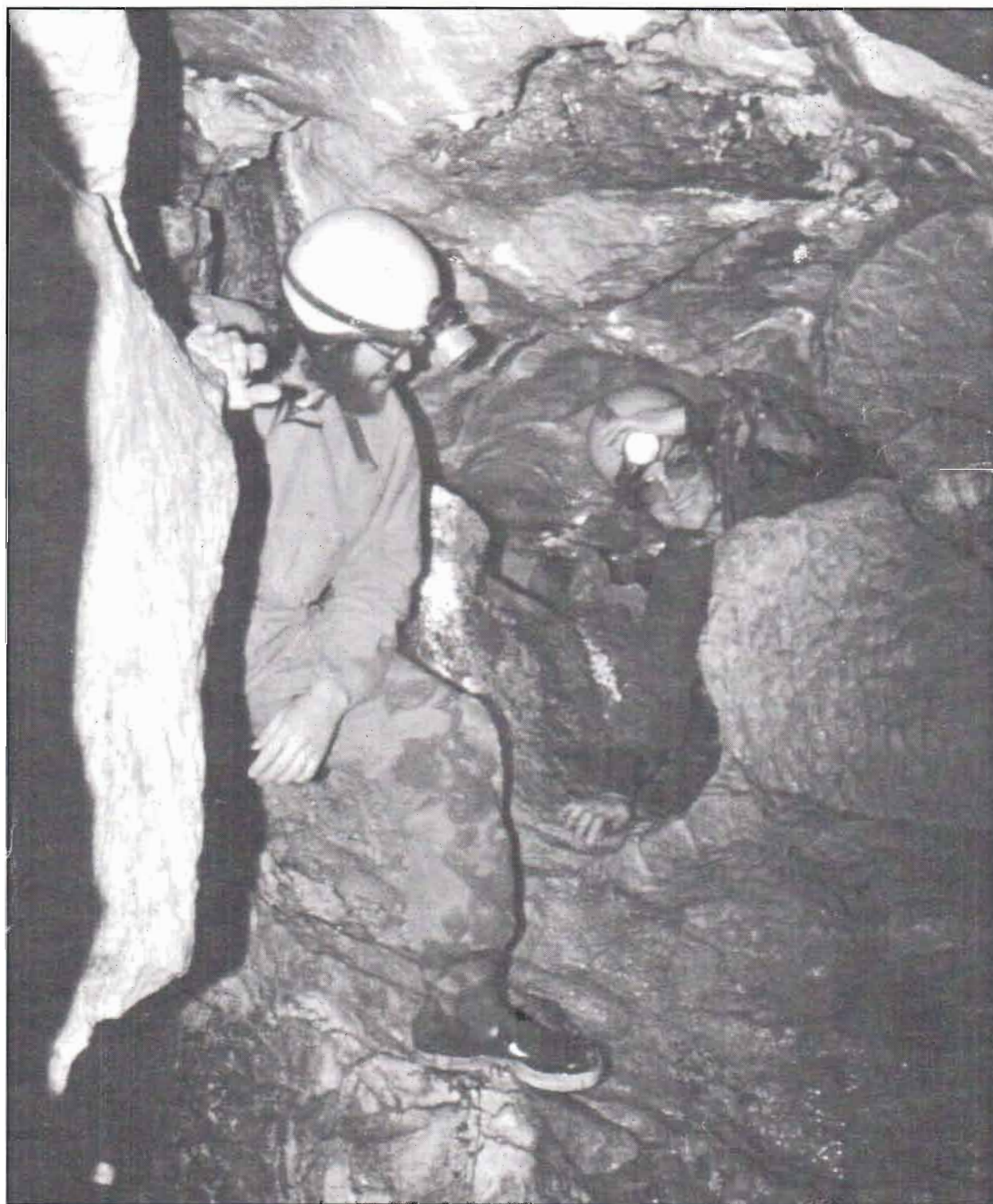
Perrigo, Dalene T., "Alaskan Caver, Volume 16, No. 5, October 1996" (1996). *Alaskan Caver*. 57.
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The Alaskan Caver

Volume 16 Number 5

October 1996



The Alaskan Caver

published by the
Glacier Grotto©

1921 Congress Circle, Apt. B, Anchorage AK 99507

Dalene T. Perrigo - Editor

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Volume 16 Number 5

October 1996

Table of Contents

Discoveries on Prince of Wales Island 1996	1
President's Corner	1
Caving 1997	4
Exchanges	6
Can You Dig It Cave #255	7
Jaunt in the Upper Crust Cave #233	10
Mouse Hole #245	11
Helmets are for Wusses Cave #244	12
Water Watch Cave #246	12
Knight Depository Cave #213	13
Cluster Fungle Cave #253	14
DeKarsts Cave #242	15
White Socks Hollow Cave #223	16
Logger's Whorl Cave #227	16
Rubber Caver episode 4	17
Miscellaneous	18

Cover Photo: Connie LaPerriere (l) and Dave Love explore Roaring Road Cave. Photo credit: Marcel LaPerriere

The ALASKAN CAVER (ISSN 0735-0481) is the periodic publication of the Glacier Grotto of the National Speleological Society (NSS). Back issues are available from the Glacier Grotto Secretary for \$2.50 each.

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- Ketchikan Meetings: 7 p.m. the first Monday of the month at the Alaska Public Health Service Building, 3054 Fifth Ave., Ketchikan.
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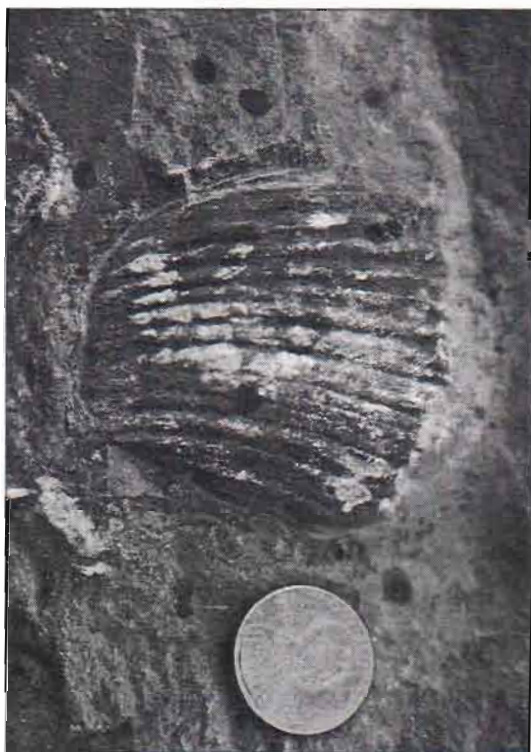
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This fossil is embedded in a rock pit on Prince of Wales Island. The penny was added for scale. Photo: Alan Murray

CALENDAR

May 23-25, 1997.....1997 Annual Workshop of the NSS Cave Diving Section, at Branford School, Suwanee County, FL. Info: NSS-CDC Workshop, PO Box 950, Branford, FL 32008-0950.

June 23-27, 1997....NSS Convention, Sullivan, MO. Contact: Pam Saberton, 3820 Juniata St., St. Louis, MO 63116 (314)772-6956, e-mail: PamS107326@aol.com.

July 18-Aug. 15, 1997.....Ketchicave Expedition. Info: Steve Lewis (907)479-7257. e-mail: ftswl@aurora.alaska.edu

Ketchikan Area Grotto meetings are the first Monday, at 7 pm at Ketchikan Public Health Center 3050 Fifth Ave. 247-1559

Alaska Cave Rescue meets each Tuesday at 7 pm, at 819 Forest Ave., Ketchikan. Frequent rope practice sessions. Marcel 225-4094

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND PALEONTOLOGICAL DISCOVERIES MADE ON PRINCE OF WALES ISLAND 1996

by Terence E. Fifield, archeologist

Introduction:

During paleontological investigations this summer in a cave in a remote area of southern Southeast Alaska, Dr. Timothy Heaton and his team recovered very important evidence of both animal and human use of the cave thousands of years ago.

Dr. Heaton, Professor of Earth Sciences with the University of South Dakota, Vermilion, has worked with the fossil record of the caves of Prince of Wales Island (POW) since 1991, when he and Fred Grady (preparator with the Smithsonian Institute) recovered fossil bear remains from El Capitan Cave. Since 1991 Heaton has returned annually to POW to conduct research in a small suite of caves. He works closely with the National Speleological Society and the Forest Service, integrating his paleontological research into the interdisciplinary karst and cave program.

The cave under investigation in 1996 was discovered in 1993 during survey for significant karst features in a timber sale planning area. Upon discovery, cave surveyors noted bear bones on the surface in one passage of the cave. In 1994, Heaton was taken to the cave and collected two bear bones from eroding surface sediments in two different parts of the cave. Radiocarbon analysis of these bones returned dates of

35,365 and 41,600 years before present. Previous to this, the oldest Quaternary fossils from Southeast Alaska (El Capitan Cave) were only 12,295 years old, more recent than the last glacial maximum. The new dates demonstrated that brown bears have a much longer history in the region than previously thought. Returning to the cave in 1995, Heaton conducted limited test excavations in both passages of the cave. Seal bones from the right passage returned a date of 17,565 years before present, right at the peak of the last glacial period. Vertebrate fossils at the glacial peak bear on a long standing controversy of whether there were ice-free refugia in Southeast Alaska during the Ice Age and whether humans could have first en-

Continued on page 2

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

by Marcel LaPerriere

Unless I run for President again, some time in the distant future, this is the last President's Corner I will be writing. So, I wanted to take this opportunity to thank all of you that supported me in the past, and thanks for all the

Continued on page 2

Continued from Pres. Corner page 1

kind words you gave me. Being a volunteer officer of any organization is never easy, but your encouragement and kind words helped take out the bumps.

Any nonprofit organization is only as good as the people that volunteer their time to keep it going. Since the caves of Alaska are so important to future generations, I hope other volunteers will give a few hours per month to keep the Glacier Grotto going.

By this time any long time reader of the Alaskan Caver knows I can get up on my soap box, so here I go again. I'm trying to think of a tactful, nice way, of telling those of you that waste endless hours watching TV to get off your butts, and volunteer some of that time to a worthwhile cause. Most Americans spend how many hours per week being zombies by watching the tube? Imagine what a different world it could be if a few hours of TV was sacrificed each

month for a worthy cause. Some of the big buzz words today are "Family Values". If we really want to strive for good family values, and a better community, we all need to get involved. Please give a small bit of your time to make this a better planet for future generations.

Again thank all of you that have given that time. Most especially all the volunteers that spend endless hours helping preserve nature's beauty for our children.

Continued from page 1

tered North America by this coastal route. These discoveries make the cave one of the most significant paleontological sites on the Northwest Coast. On the basis of these finds, Heaton planned two weeks of systematic excavation in 1996.

In late June 1996, Heaton established a small camp a half mile walk from the cave entrance. Excavations proceeded between June 24 and July 4 with the participation of Fred Grady, members of the National Speleological Society, and three local volunteers. A wide variety of animal remains were recovered during the excavation (bear, fox, marmot, otter, seal, vole, etc.). During the first week a stone spear point was discovered. It was thought likely that the point had fallen from a wounded animal that died in the cave. The following week, on the last day of the planned excavation (July 4), a small concentration of human bones was found further down the same passage that had contained the spear point. Near the remains were two bone artifacts. Once the mud covered bones were removed from the cave and identified as human, excavations were terminated. Heaton contacted the Forest Service Archaeologist (Fifield) later that day. Fifield visited the site the following day (July 5) to assess the situation for the Forest Service.

Description of Cultural Material

• A complete human mandible, in two pieces. All but five teeth are in place. Two disarticulated teeth were found separately.

• One human thoracic vertebra.

• A human pelvis fragment, which shows evidence of chewing (teeth marks, bear or wolf by the size and shape).

• A split long bone (not human) tool; looks like a pressure flaking tool; shows striations and evidence of abrasion.

• A notched piece of bone; a tool of unknown function (found deeper in the cave than the human remains).

• A gray chert spear point (biface) (8.0X3.2X0.6 cm) with a snapped base.

Significance and Potential

This cave has yielded brown bear remains 35,365 years old and black bear remains 41,600 years old, as well as seal bones from the late Wisconsin glacial maximum, 17,565 years ago. These dates are unique and add an entirely new dimension to our understanding of the paleoecology of the late Pleistocene on the Northwest Coast. They establish the existence of ice-free refugia along the coast of Southeast Alaska in the late Pleistocene and set the stage for the possibility of a coastal migration by humans into North America.

The 1996 discoveries of human bones and artifacts moves us tantalizingly closer to confirming the presence of late Pleistocene humans on POW. On first impression the chert spear point appears stylistically similar to point types of the American Paleo Arctic tradition (as much as 10,000 years old). The human-skeletal material was found in a context that would appear to be very old and could conceivably be contemporaneous with the spear point. The "pressure flaker" found in direct association with the human remains is most likely the same age as the bones. However, the point, the human remains, and the other bone tool are not in direct association and may represent more than one event. That is, they may have entered the cave at different points in time and by different means.

An important question to answer in determining the treatment of the cultural material and any future investigations in the cave is, how did these artifacts and human remains come to be where they were discovered? It is tempting to view this as a burial situation in which a human body was interred with important personal ef-

fects (grave goods). In fact, the tight localization of the human bones; all within one square foot, supports this interpretation. However, the tooth marks on the pelvis fragment suggest alternative possibilities. A hunter may have been mauled by an animal, sought refuge in a cave, and subsequently died. Or a human body may have been dragged into the cave by a predator.

These questions and many others may be answered by some nondestructive analysis of the human bones and bone artifacts and by further investigations in the cave. Should these cultural remains prove to be as old as they appear they would vastly expand our understanding of the human prehistory of Southeast Alaska. It seems likely the artifacts and possibly the bones will date to 8,000 to 10,000 years before present. It is tantalizing, if highly unlikely, to consider the possibility of a significantly older date.

Consultation

When human remains are found while doing scientific or other project work, federal agencies are required to halt work and consult with tribal governments about treatment of the site and the remains.

In this case the Forest Service began consultation with the Klawock Cooperative Association, the Craig Community Association, the Organized Village of Kake, and the Hydaburg Community Association. In council meetings the Tribal representatives of Klawock and Craig expressed concerns that the remains had been disturbed. There was some discomfort with allowing analysis of the bones and future research in the cave. And there was concern that increasing public interest in the caves of Southeast Alaska may pose a threat to sacred sites of the Tlingit and Haida people.

However, after much discussion, both councils decided that information that might be gained from the research and analysis was important to the people they represent. The potential to gain knowledge in traditional and modern scientific realms was overwhelming. Both councils adopted resolutions allowing the bones to be dated and analyzed and to allow future research in the cave. Conditions were attached to the resolutions protecting the sanctity of the site and assuring protection for this and other sites.

Disposition and Analysis

After consultation with Tribal Governments, the human remains and artifacts were sent to Dr. James Dixon, Curator for Archaeology at the Denver Museum of Natural History. Long committed to the study of early man in the western hemisphere, Dr. Dixon and the museum arranged the analysis and study of these remains. The plan is to conduct radiocarbon dating of the human bones



Carlene Allred represents a scene with pen and ink.

and the bone artifacts. A physical anthropological analysis of the human bones will be done. All specimens will be casted so other scientists can study the copies. The bones will be treated for preservation, and they will be stored in a climate-controlled environment to stabilize their condition..

A cursory first look at these specimens has given us a little information. Looking at the jaw and teeth, the physical anthropologist can tell us this is a fully modern human. Looking at eruption of the molars and tooth wear as well as condition of the vertebra we can surmise that this is an adult male in his early to mid twenties.

Much of the significance of this find will hinge on the antiquity of the human bones as determined by radiocarbon analysis.

Archaeologists are being cautious in their estimates at this point. Cave stratigraphy is a tricky thing and it is easy to make errors of association. The style of the stone point is typical of spear points in use from 7,000 to 120,000 years ago in different parts of North America. But, the human bones were not found immediately with the point. A brown bear bone dated to approximately 35,000 years ago was found three feet from the human bones. But, they appear to be from different soil layers and may therefore be different ages. And there is the possibility that the human bones were put in the cave more recently than we suspect and that the soupiness of the sediments has masked the evidence. We won't know until the dates come in; expected sometime in the late fall.

Of course, what makes this a particularly exciting find is that it MAY be evidence of people in Southeast Alaska at the end of the Pleistocene. If this were the case much of the thinking about how people first entered the western hemisphere would have to be revised. But, it is too early to say for sure. We can only wait for the dates and the analytic results and go on from there in the best interests of everyone concerned.

CAVING 1997

Box 83715
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October 10, 1996
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(907)479-7257

Dear Cavers,

Here's the plan for 1997. Since I have heard no complaints, the expedition will run from July 18 through August 15. The tentative plan is to spend the whole month on Heceta again. There is always the possibility of change, but I think its safe to say that Heceta is where we will focus our activities. Like last year, we'll spend a little time refreshing our vertical and mapping skills and then get right into the caving. Therefore, all participants should be reasonably comfortable and experienced with cold tight passage and 70 meter (200+foot) drops. We will have a lot of returnees this year which means that there may be room for a few well-equipped and mentally-prepared novices. Its also possible that we'll have a full house of Alaska experienced cavers so get those applications in early and practice up on sketching skills. In order for me to accomplish the bat research I must do this summer, we will absolutely have one or two camp managers who will assist with cooking, camp chores, and keeping on top of the mapping process. We'll do the rough plots in the field again – that seems to be a really good way to reduce the errors that have plagued previous cartographers.

For those of you new to SE Alaskan caving, the Ketchicave Expedition discovered 55 new caves on Heceta Island last summer and continued work in five known caves. Approximately 4300 meters (14,100 feet) of new cave was surveyed and a similar amount of surface survey tied most entrances together. Descriptions of earlier expeditions can be found in back issues of the NSS News and the Glacier Grotto's newsletter, *The Alaskan Caver*. Southeast Alaskan summers tend to be cool and can be very wet. The terrain is steep and rugged, with plenty of brush in the understory of forested areas. Heceta Island has been heavily logged, so we will be hiking through clear-cut at times. Camp is on a logging road and was chosen more for practical reasons than aesthetic ones. However, the area is spectacularly scenic if one can look beyond the numerous clear-cuts. There are still some nice forested areas near camp, and we hope to have adequate transportation this season enabling us to reach the coast on days off. I'll be setting up some bat study sites in the canopy of forested areas on days off – let me know if assisting in that sounds intriguing. (It won't be considered in your qualifications for the caving expedition, but it would be useful for me to know).

There will probably be no helicopter support again this year since most of the caves are relatively easily accessible. I think that it will be best to focus on going leads in Arabica, Icy Fate, Bad Light, and Sinuous System to the relative exclusion of the alpine caves this year. If its a warm summer it will be worth dropping those alpine caves that were blocked with ice last summer. We'll work more or less like we did last year on Heceta, using boonie barns for cooking and gear storage and personal tents for sleeping. Tents should be waterproof and able to handle some wind (hopefully, not quite the wind that we had last summer but....). Food will be provided by the Forest Service – again we'll avoid canned and bottled beverages and go relatively light on items such as meat that requires refrigeration. Meals will again be a group affair. With camp managers, camp life may be a little less flexible, but probably more functional too. For safety reasons we'll try to confine caving to the hours between 8am and 6pm except for occasional pre-planned pushes. Let's avoid those 11pm returns and remember that rest days are not only OK, but highly recommended. Breakfast will be between 7am and 8am and dinner from 7pm to 8pm– that's so we don't drive the camp managers crazy. Starvation (or dish washing duty for the next week) will be the rule for those who can't fit the schedule or make prior arrangements. And, dinners and hot breakfasts will be a one-item type menu since someone else will be cooking them. Showers or saunas will be relatively infrequent since water must be hauled – hopefully we can get more containers and a better system for next summer but I wouldn't count on a major improvement.

We will have a maximum of 16 people on the expedition. This means that I should have all applications in hand by March 1 here in Fairbanks. That doesn't mean just postmarked on that date either. Summer ferry schedules have not been published but I will send out ferry information to applicants next spring. Or, you can call 1-800-6742-0066 for schedules from Ketchikan to Hollis and from anywhere else to Ketchikan. We'll meet people at whatever ferry arrives in Hollis early on July 18 or late the day before. We'll also provide transportation to Heceta and then back to the ferry terminal at the end of the expedition.

As always, good clothing for cold and wet conditions will be essential for all participants this year. Drying out can

be difficult or impossible for days at a time, so clothing must be warm when wet, and easy to dry when the chance arrives. Rain gear and boots should be tough enough to take the abuse of caves and bushwhacking on a daily basis. Caving coveralls are a must. Batteries and carbide will again be supplied by the Forest Service and/or TCP. I'm working on getting coarse carbide this year. Please try to use a primary light source that uses either D-cells or carbide so that we can continue reducing battery consumption. Required gear this year includes caving coveralls, two or more layers of insulating clothing such as pile, polypropylene, or similar material, and a balaclava or other hat for use under the caving helmet. You'll also need high quality vertical gear, heavy duty rain gear including pants or bibs, and good caving boots (One option is Xtra tuff Rubber boots, available in Ketchikan if you give yourself time to shop) standard caving gear including a cave pack, helmet with 3-point suspension, and multiple light sources. Remember, D-cells or carbide for main light – we won't have any way to recharge batteries and we intend to limit AA cell use to back up lights this year. A wetsuit, or drysuits for those who may be interested. Participants should also bring backpacking gear including a large backpack (preferably internal frame to avoid the brush snagging it), a good synthetic sleeping bag and sleeping pad, a tent, and personal effects.

So, please return the application and release form as soon as possible and enjoy your winter!

Happy Caving!

Steve Lewis

Complete and return with application included with The Caver

Hawaii Speleological Survey

of the
National Speleological Society

WILLIAM R. HALLIDAY
Chairman

P.O. Box 1526
Hilo, HI 96721

Address until 5 January and after 5 March 1997:
6530 Cornwall Court
Nashville, TN 37025

Dear Dalene,

I enjoyed your article on the visiting Russians in the current AK Caver. You may have read in the Oregon Grotto's Speleograph that in September I was caving in Kamchatka. Can you send me the address of the Russian Speleological Association? I would like to contact them, and I think that my host in Pewtropavlovsk probably would like to contact them also.

Are any Glacier Grotto people coming to Hawaii this coming year? If so, we'd like to put them to work cave mapping. We have lifetimes of work to be done there.

Aloha,

(signed) Bill
WRH

P.S. I recently read the USGS report on the Lost Jim lava flow and its humongous lava tube. Are any of the grotto interested in flying there? I'd be interested in going along.

Dear Bill, Thank you for writing. Here is the address of Alexander Osintzev, president of the Russian Speleological Society: 22-A Rjabikou Blvd. Apt. 100, Irkutsk 664043 Russia. Phone - 73952287547. Editor

Dear Glacier Grotto members,
Please send Bill a note at the address noted at the top of Bill's letter.
Thank you. The Editor

NEWSBRIEFS

Grotan 2-96 p. 8. After a more than 20 years long struggle the Swedish Nuclear Fuel and Waste Management CO (SKB) has finally had to accept that Sweden suffered from heavy earthquakes immediately after the deglaciation of the Weichselian glaciation. This historic event happened during the international SKI Workshop on Glaciation and Hydrology in Stockholm, April 1996. This means that a large number of Swedish boulder caves will finally be recognized as formed by seismotectonic events (something we Swedish cavers have known for many years!). Together with a large number of liquefactions in silt and sand, the caves may now be used e.g. in calculations of the areal distribution of these earthquakes.

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Birmingham Grotto Newsletter June 1996, p.56. by Clay Holland. The University of Alabama has announced plans to resume archaeological excavations in Dust Cave (ALD 1410) near Florence, Alabama. Relatively insignificant by caver standards, this 208-foot cavern has proven to be a treasure trove of archaeological information. Although Late Pleistocene animal bones have been found in the cave, the University's primary interest is in the Paleo and Archaic Indian era deposits. Only durable artifacts such as stone projectile points, pottery and some bone tools are able to survive the damp conditions found in open sites and most caves and shelters. In contrast, the extremely dry floor of Dust Cave has preserved organic remains of Indian habitation from as much as 14,000 years ago. Small plant parts, seeds, pollen, wood and bone collected from the dry strata speak volumes about the prehistoric forest environment and even the diet, subsistence strategies and economy of some of Alabama's earliest human inhabitants

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The CIG NEWSLETTER 40(9) September 1996, p. 131. Indiana State Museum's Ron Richard is interested in having the CIG help revamp the cave area for 1997. A sketch is being put together by Bill Greenwald that will be sent in immediately.

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NITTANY GROTTA NEWS 43920 September 1996, p.19. The internet web page for the Nittany Grotto has been pulled down until it can be revised to an acceptable status. The new student activity server will be its home. This will allow a team of grotto members to actively develop it. Furthermore, through this student activity server the Grotto will be able to initiate a listserv. A

listserv is essentially an automated e-mail distribution. Each subscriber will have his name on the list and will consequently receive all mail sent to the listserv address.

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THE SPELEOGRAPH 32(9) September 1996, pp. 94-95. The Forest Service is toying with the idea of charging people who use public lands for recreation. However, the fees would not disappear into the federal treasury, but would instead be used to improve the recreational facilities themselves. According to Agriculture Under Secretary Jim Lyons surveys indicate the public is willing to invest in their public lands. Moreover, the proposed fees would enable the agency to keep up with the growing demand for recreation on public lands. The pilot program would begin with charging-fees at 50 sites managed by the Forest Service around the country. The (Medford, OR) Mail Tribune 2/22/96

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NSS NEWS 54(10) October 1996, p.275. Before Oregon Coast Highway 101 was constructed, the ocean beaches were the only practical travel route along the coast. Wagon traffic south along Cannon Beach was interrupted by a small rocky headland, later known as Hug Point. In the early 1900s, a primitive road was blasted out of the basalt and sandstone on the point. Even so, passage was possible only at low tide because at high tide the beaches at each end of the road were covered with several feet of water. The road, which "hugged" the point, inspired the name Hug Point. There are several sea caves eroded in the sandstone and basalt a from Hug Point to Austin Point about 1,500 feet to the south.

On April 20, 1996, the United States Post Office issued a 32 cents #10 postal stationary envelope with an imprinted stamp (see the July News for a photo). The stamp depicts a cave 600 feet south of Hug Point and nearby Fall Creek Falls. ... This imprinted stamp envelope is the first issue by the United States Post Office where a cave is clearly depicted.

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For the caver browsing the www, here are three sites.

- Speleo Link Page (<http://hum.amu.edu.pl/~sgp/spec/links.html>). This list is categorized by continent.
- The Cave Page (<http://rschp2.anu.edu:8080/cave/cave.html>). A hot linked index of caving web sites, this may be the most comprehensive list in existence.
- The alt. caving (<http://www.cs.utk.edu/~doolin/cave/alt.caving.faq.html>)

CAN YOU DIG IT CAVE

Dall Island, AK • Preliminary Report #255

Tongass Cave Project • National Speleological Society

by Eron Gissberg and Steve Lewis

July 22, 1996

DESCRIPTION:

Can You Dig It Cave was so named for the excavation efforts which preceded its initial exploration. On July 20, 1995, Caver Steve Lewis discovered a tiny opening that was blowing a steady and strong stream of air while he was sitting down for a break during an overland survey for new cave entrances. The small entrance was located because of strong air flow blowing vegetation on a calm morning. After removing a plug of moss and organic detritus a small depress-like entrance was exposed.

After three hours of digging, the entrance was enlarged enough for several agile and stubborn cavers to enter. The cave consists of several vadose canyons filled with breakdown and wildly erratic floors which are connected via two small phreatic tubes. Throughout the upper regions of the cave there is a strong air flow and wind erratic moonmilk formations lining the walls. Further exploration was cut short by the eminent arrival of float planes on the last day of the Dall Island segment of the expedition.

The initial 12 meters of passage consists of a constricted crawl-way through small breakdown rubble with the crux located at Squeezus Cristo just 13 meters (42.65 feet) from the entrance. This is a parallel slab 2 meters (6.56 feet) in length, running at a 45 degree angle to the floor with an 8 inch crawl space to facilitate the entrance moves. The problem is compounded by the presence of large soda straws and well formed bands of cave bacon immediately adjacent. The Squeezus Cristo can be either fun or quite frustrating because of the large, visible, decorated passage ahead.

The passage opens up to walking height just past the squeeze and then turns up the hill through a sandy tube filled with nice decorations (soda straws, flowstone and stalactites) and a meandering .5 meter (1.6 feet) wide rift plugged with breakdown 2 meters (6.56 feet) below.

A two second drop was noted beneath the breakdown, which is quite possibly a direct connection with Cata-tonic Canyon.

The cave develops an upward trend at the entrance to Moonmilk Miliary which continues throughout the remainder of the passage in that direction. It was also in this region of the cave that the strong airflow was noted. From this point forward the walls and floors are covered in a thick layer of wind erratic moonmilk which remains consistent until the beginning of Mud Dauber Muck. Walking passage continues well past the last survey station and eventually terminates in a narrow fissure canyon with several possible leads, two of which are heading toward the surface and one or more which head down toward a possible connection with Enigma Cave.

There are currently 117.37 meters of survey. This cave resembles nearby Enigma Cave and there is good potential for a connection. However, the tight and fragile nature of the moonmilk and other formations makes Can You Dig It Cave a poor alternative entrance.

MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS:

Can You Dig It Cave is in a highly pristine state. It does not appear to be part of a large hydrologic system however, the numerous pools and active drips are important to the further development of its resources. The general public should not be directed to this cave for several reasons, the most prominent of which is the extreme constriction of the entrance. Short of pneumatic tools and/or explosive devices there is no possibility for a rescue under any circumstances (read Floyd Collins). A second consideration is the abundance of highly formed decorations, some of which are unique (wind erratic moonmilk) to Can You Dig It Cave. This is a very sensitive, very dangerous cave and anyone entering it should be well aware of the inherent risks involved.

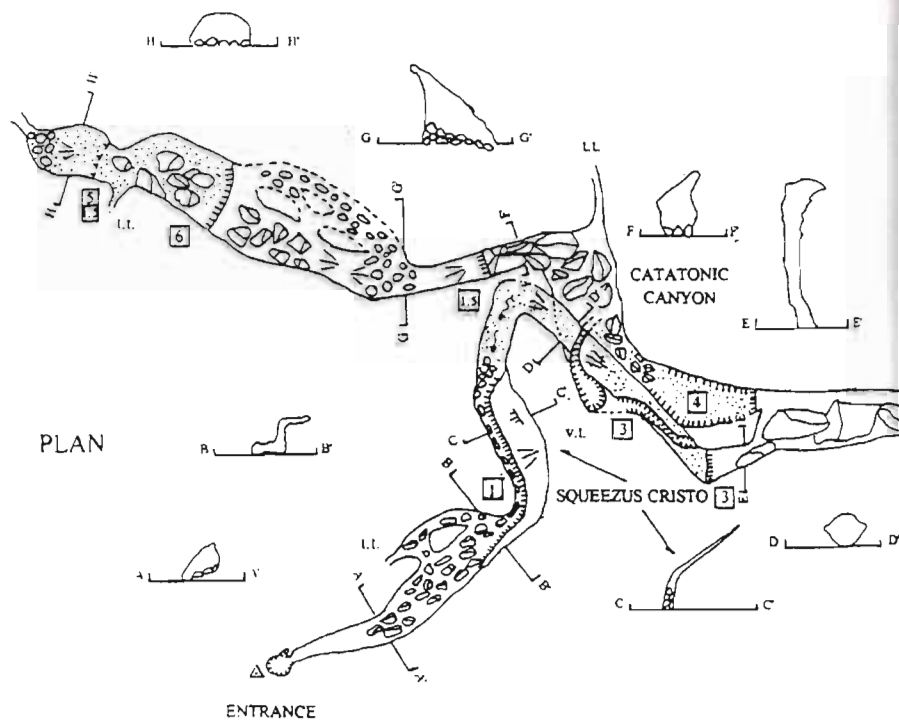
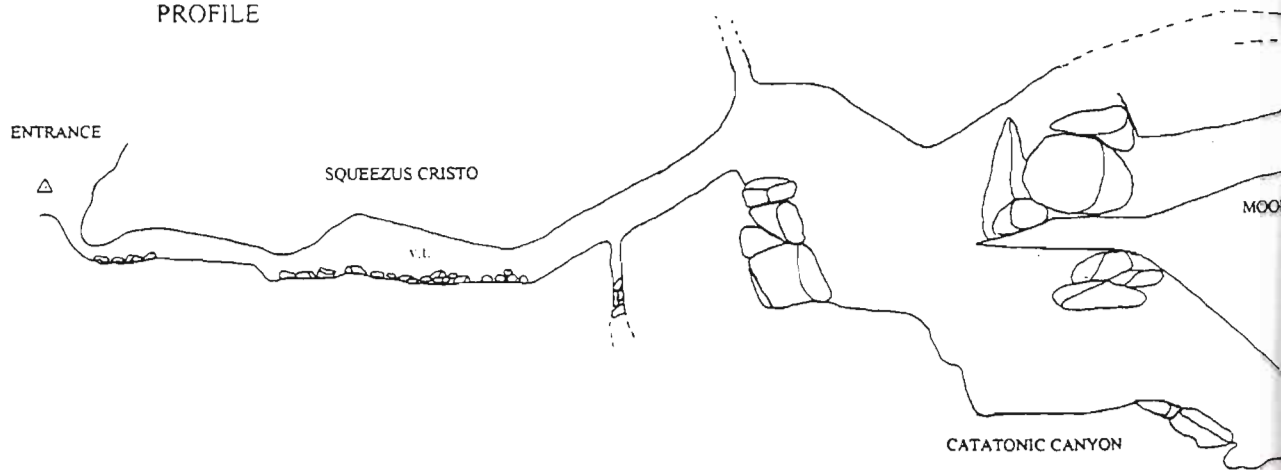
DUES

It is that time again. Please send your dues as soon as

possible - \$15 for individuals and \$20 for a family membership. The Caver is included with a membership.

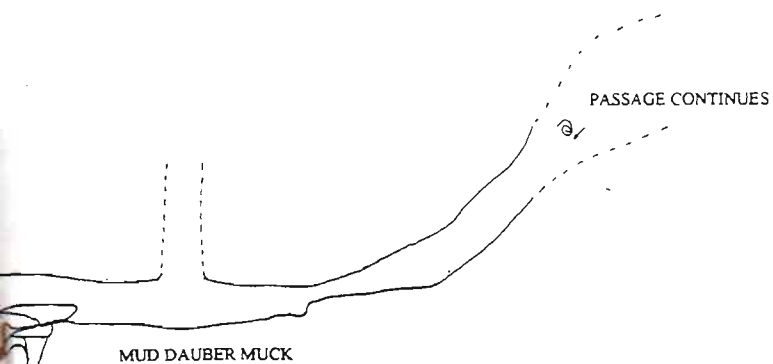
Send to Gary Sonnenberg - address on inside front page

PROFILE



PLAN

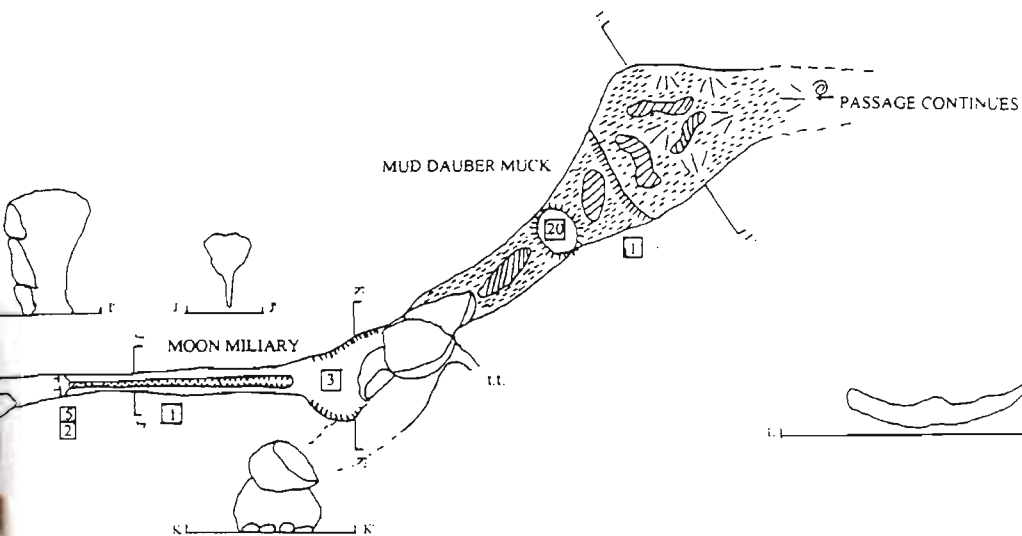
0 10 20
DISTANCE IN FEET



CAN YOU DIG IT?

TONGASS NATIONAL FOREST
DALL ISLAND, ALASKA
SURVEYED LENGTH, 117.37 METERS
TOTAL DEPTH, 18.1 METERS
COMPASS, INCLINOMETER AND TAPE SURVEY 22, 23 JULY 1995
BY R. KNUTTS, D. MONTEITH, SKIPPI, E. GISBURG, S. LEWIS, C. LAPERRIERE
TONGASS CAVE PROJECT, NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY
MAP BY R. KNUTTS

NORTH

KEY

	ZERO DATUM		MOON MILK
	VERTEBRATE REMAINS		COBBLES
	SAND FILL		SILT OR MUD
	SLOPE		HELECTITES
	BREAKDOWN		CHANGE IN CEILING HEIGHT
	AIR FLOW		UNSURVEYED PASSAGE
	LEDGE		UNDERLIENG PASSAGE
	GLAUO		SODA STRAWS

2 4 6 8 10
DISTANCE IN METERS

© 1996 R. KNUTTS

JAUNT IN THE UPPER CRUST CAVE

Heceta Island, AK • Preliminary Report #233

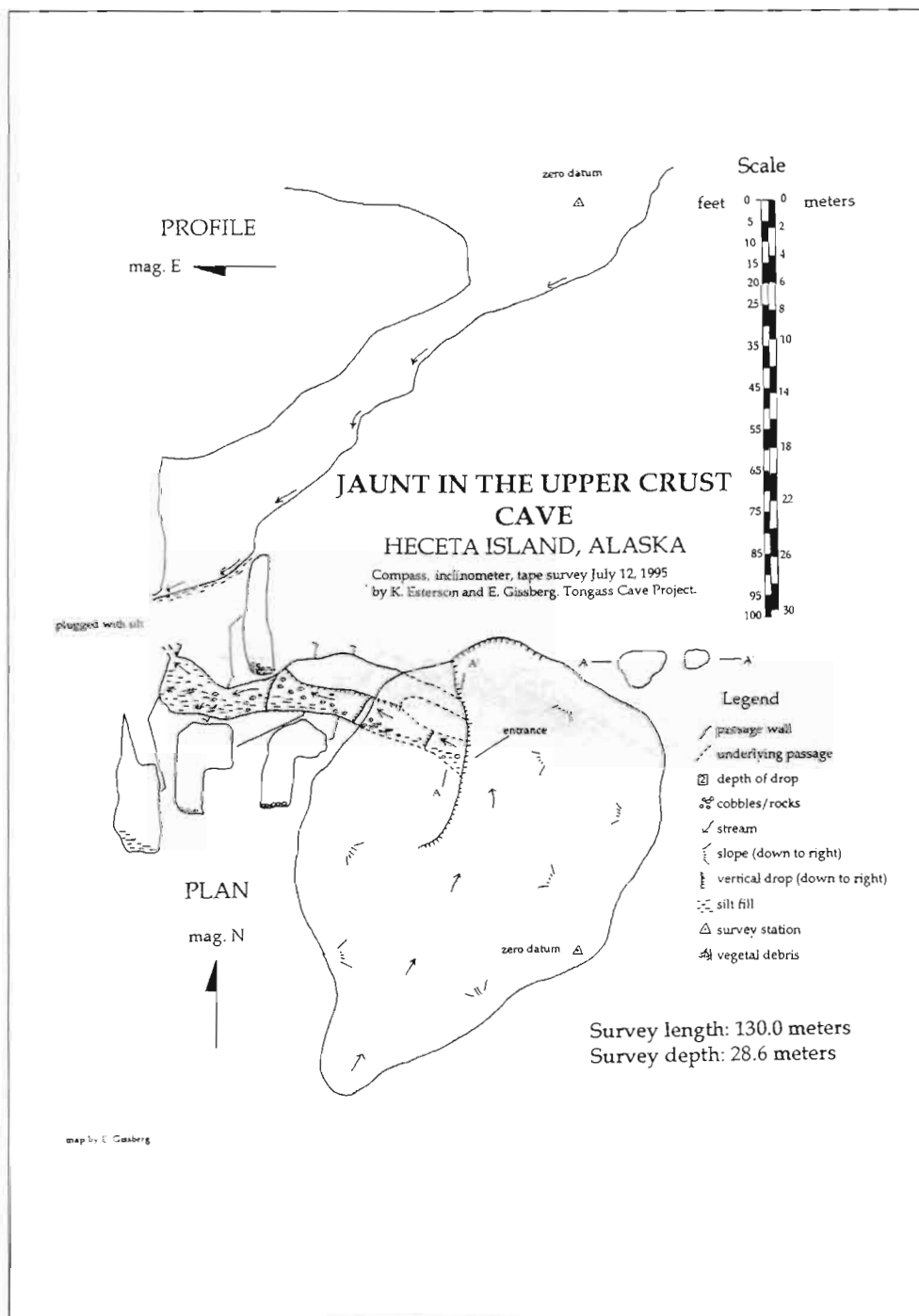
Tongass Cave Project • National Speological Society

by Eron Gissberg
July 22, 1996

DESCRIPTION: Jaunt in the Upper Crust Cave has a dramatic entrance located in a clear-cut at the edge of old growth forest. The cave takes a small stream even during dry spells and is probably a major resurgence point during heavy rains. It is located at the bottom of a deep sink, one of many dolines densely packed in the area. There are two entrances to the main passage which is high and narrow. The large vadose passage follows the 45 degree dip and has several small drops which can be negotiated without the aid of vertical gear. The stream flows through the cave and disappears into passage which is blocked by mud and silt, probably the result of recent timber harvest. There is potential for more passage if a dig were begun.

MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS: The cave is part of a highly developed subsurface hydrology. It is without doubt important to biota and the development of cave resources. The water in the cave may be important to humans using downstream resurgences for fresh drinking water. It is almost certainly a component of the large Arabica Cave system. Although the cave and much of the system is severely impacted visually by recent clear-cut harvest, what is left is still of great value. The cave is an easily accessible fun

scramble for cavers. The remaining forest surrounding Jaunt in the Upper Crust Cave should be protected from further damage to what is left of this significant system. The cave is an example of the impacts that timber harvest can have on karst systems.



MOUSE HOLE

Heceta Island, AK • Preliminary Report #245 Tongass Cave Project • National Speleological Society

by Eron Gissberg
July 22, 1996

DESCRIPTION:

Mouse is a tight pit at the bottom of a sink directly adjacent to a road. It is one of many densely packed dolines in a large clear-cut and is an resurgence during

rains. The cave is located above Arabica Cave and is an resurgence during rains. The sink has slash and some road debris in it, but the interior of the pit is relatively unaffected. The cave is 14.48 meters long and is too tight at the bottom.

There are pools at the bottom of the pit which may contain unique species of cave invertebrates and range extensions of known species because the karst land appears to have had little impact from recent glacial episodes.

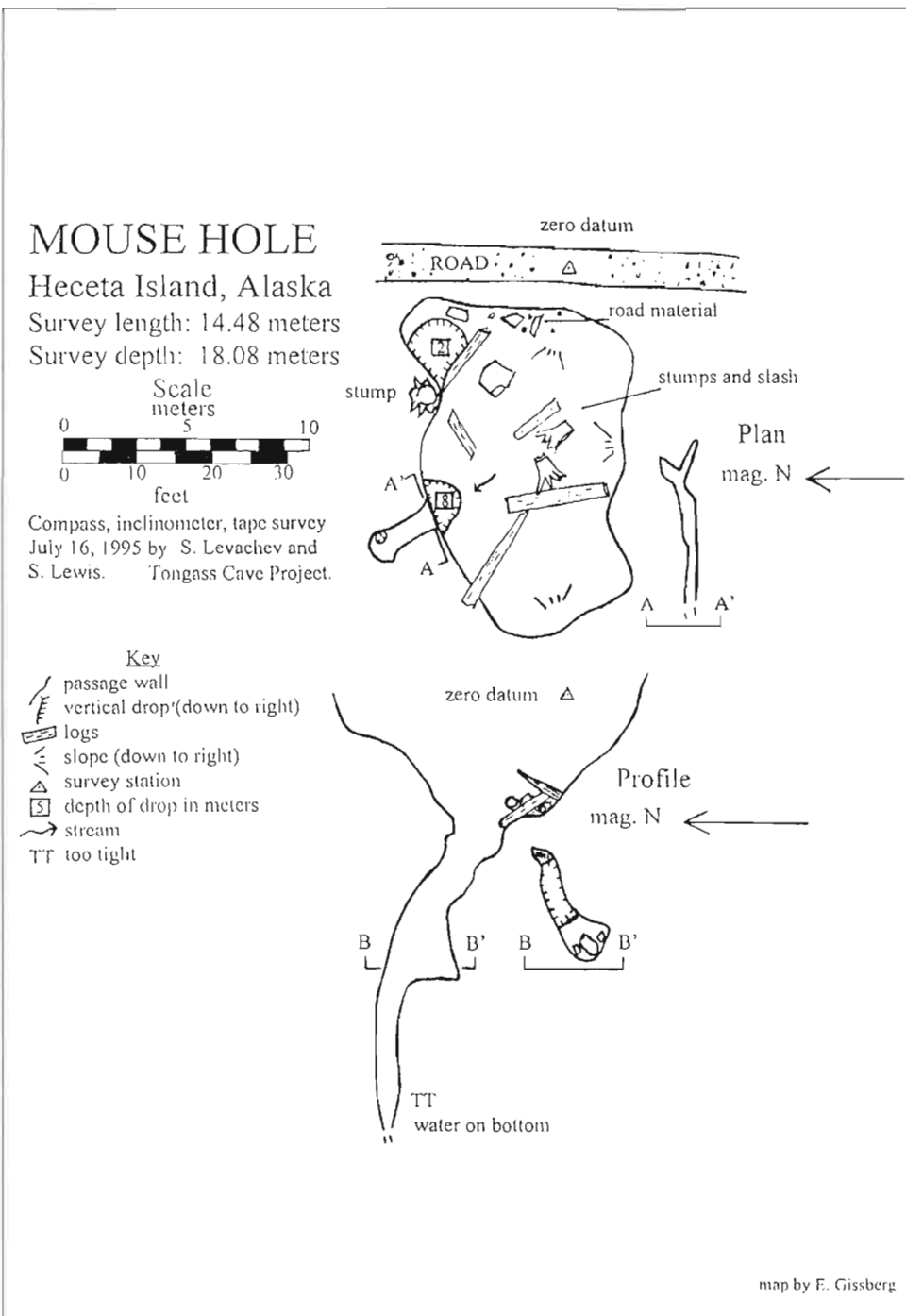
The cave is part of a highly developed subsurface hydrology. It is without doubt important to biota and the development of cave resources. The water in the cave may be important to humans using downstream resurgences for fresh drinking water. It is almost certainly a component of the Arabica Cave system.

MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS:

Mouse Hole Cave is in a pristine state once beyond the clear-cut entrance. The cave is an interesting short drop and easily accessible. Because of its biological and hydrological importance care should be taken to see that no further damage occurs to this cave.

Words of Concern:

"That's everyone, except....."



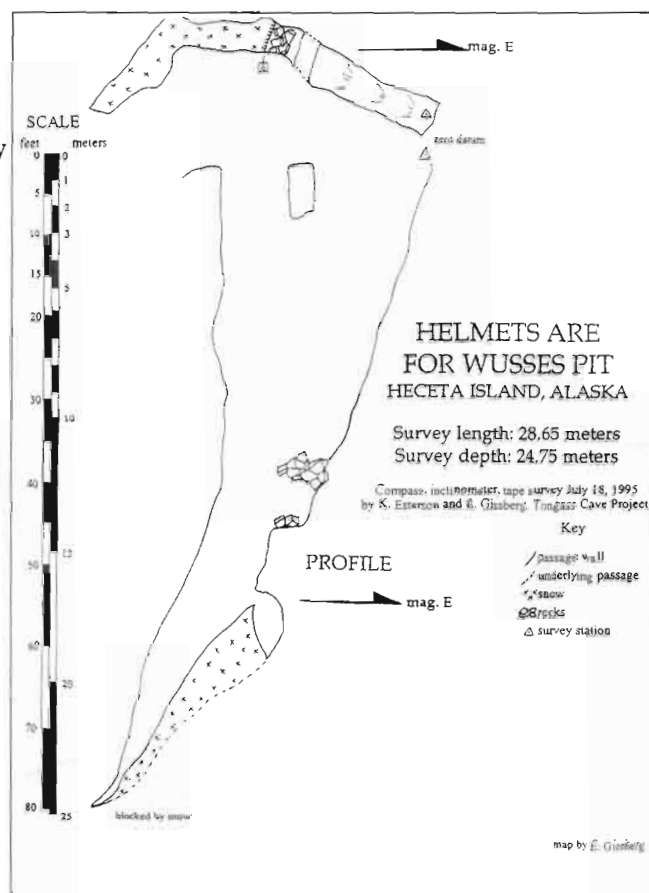
HELMETS ARE FOR WUSSES CAVE

Heceta Island, AK • Preliminary Report #244
Tongass Cave Project • National Speleological Society

by Eron Gissberg
July 22, 1996

DESCRIPTION: Helmets Are For Wusses Cave is a pit. The cave requires a 25-meter rope to enter. The walls of the pit are solid bedrock and lined with moss. Further exploration was halted because the bottom of the cave was filled with snow at the time of survey. The cave currently contains 28.65 meters of surveyed passage and has good potential for more at a time when the snow has melted.

MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS: Helmets Are For Wusses Cave is located in an extremely scenic subalpine forest on a karst system. The cave is part of a highly developed subsurface hydrology which is important to biota and the development of cave resources. The cave is a nice drop for vertical cavers and is in a very pristine state. The cave should be protected from any logging activities to protect the unsurveyed, unexplored passage beyond the snow blockage. This system could contain the deepest cave in the United States, and for that alone, it is of national significance.



WATER WATCH CAVE

Heceta Island, AK • Preliminary Report #246
Tongass Cave Project • National Speleological Society
by Eron Gissberg
July 22, 1996

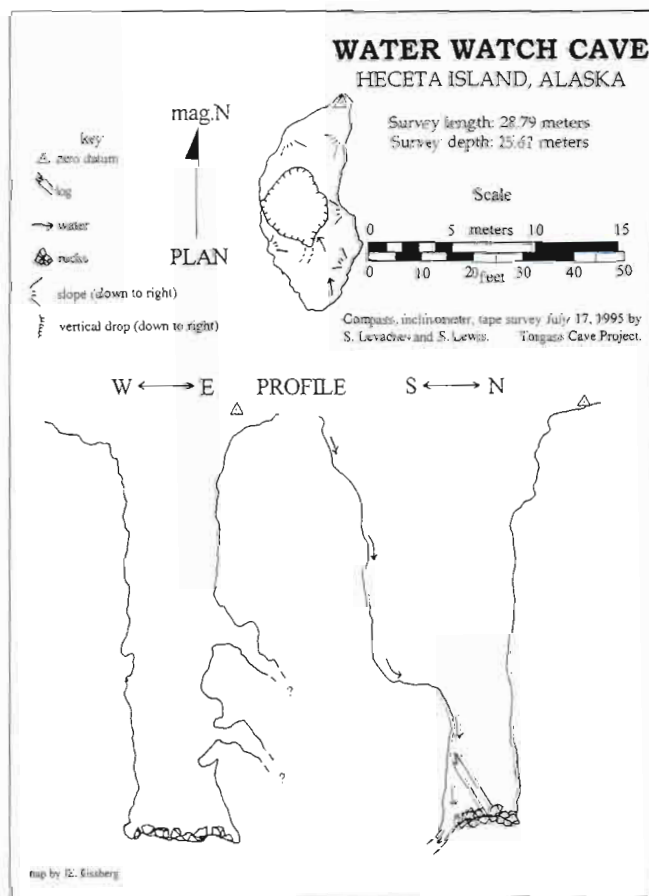
DESCRIPTION:

Water Watch Cave is a 25.6 meter pit. A small stream enters at the surface, and drains into a rock choked tube at the bottom of the pit. It is located above Arabica Cave and is probably a major resurgence point during heavy rains.

It is located in an area of densely packed dolines. Even though the cave is in a recent clear-cut, it has managed to maintain a relatively pristine interior.

MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS:

Water Watch Cave is a clean, fun and safe drop for the beginning vertical caver. The cave has no fragile speleothems. This cave is part of a highly developed hydrologic system and the caves and remaining forest in the area should be protected. It would be fine to share the location of this cave with the public.



KNIGHT DEPOSITORY CAVE

Prince of Wales Island, AK • Preliminary Report #213 Tongass Cave Project • National Speleological Society

by Eron Gissberg
July 22, 1996

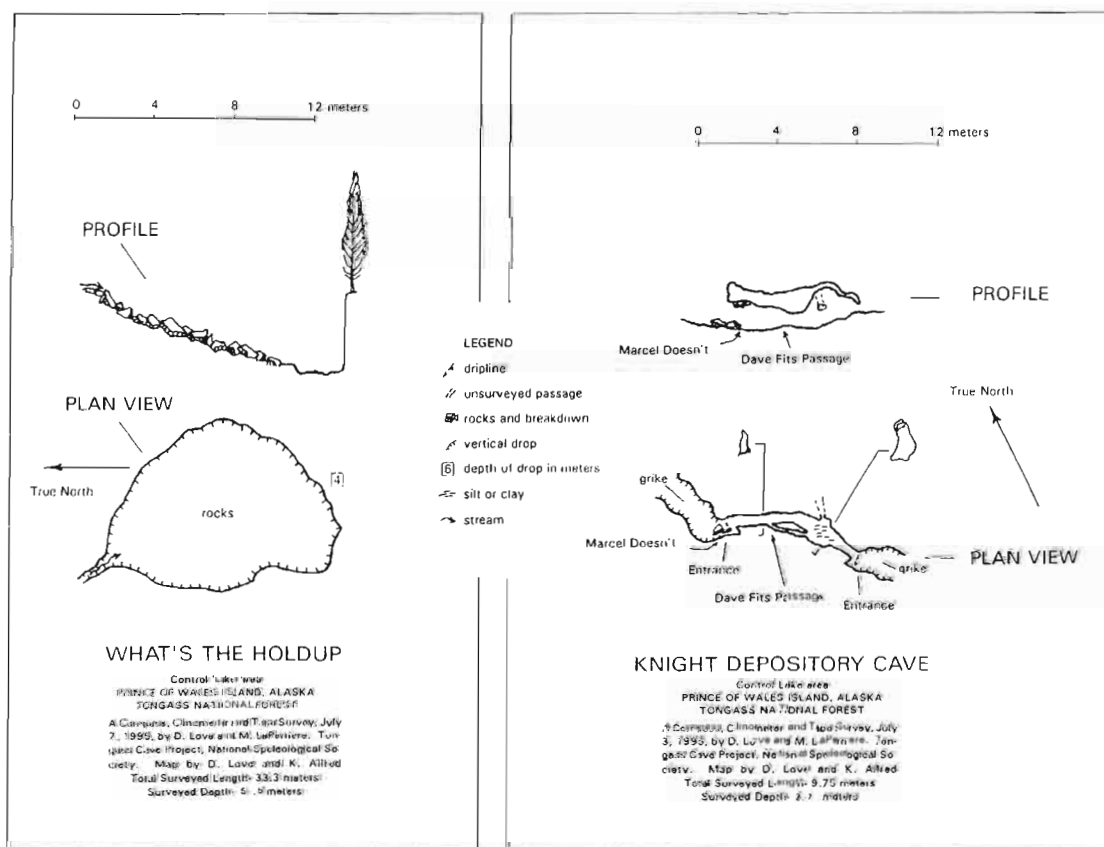
DESCRIPTION:

Knight Depository Cave is located in an area of many karst features and is close to several other significant caves. This 10-meter long cave is situated between two grikes and has two entrances which lead to the grikes outside. The floor of the cave is mud and appears to become hydrologically active during periods of heavy rain. The east entrance is larger than the west entrance and an enjoyable through trip may be had by most cavers.

The speleogenesis of this cave was found to be most interesting and is an excellent example of the unusual possibilities of karst geomorphology.

MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS:

Knight Depository Cave should be protected from any actions which would jeopardize its unique morphology. The cave is in a pristine state and offers opportunities educational and recreational use.



THE 12TH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF SPELEOLOGY 1997

UIS - La Chaux-de-Fonds Switzerland

The 12th International Congress of Speleology, scheduled for August 10-17, 1997, will include two sessions of the Assembly General of the International Union of Speleology. Each member country has one vote on the General Assembly, but others can attend the sessions.

Special events include a conference on Limestone Hydrology and Fissured Aquifers, Symposia and Workshops, as well as the pre- and post-Congress excursions and camps. For details contact: Martina Golden (Michigan) at (810)666-1683.

CLUSTER FUNGLE CAVE

Dall Island, AK • Preliminary Report #253 Tongass Cave Project • National Speleological Society

by Eron Gissberg
July 22, 1996

DESCRIPTION

Cluster Fungle Cave is a 16.2 meter (53.15 feet) fossil phreatic tube. There are three entrances to this cave, one a low crawl and the other two skylights large enough for entry. The cave is probably very old and contains rock which is somewhat rotten. The area around the cave is dense with very large and deep dolines, it is one of the few entrances in the area which can be entered. The cave has a cobble floor and holds no water, but many spiders make this cave their home.

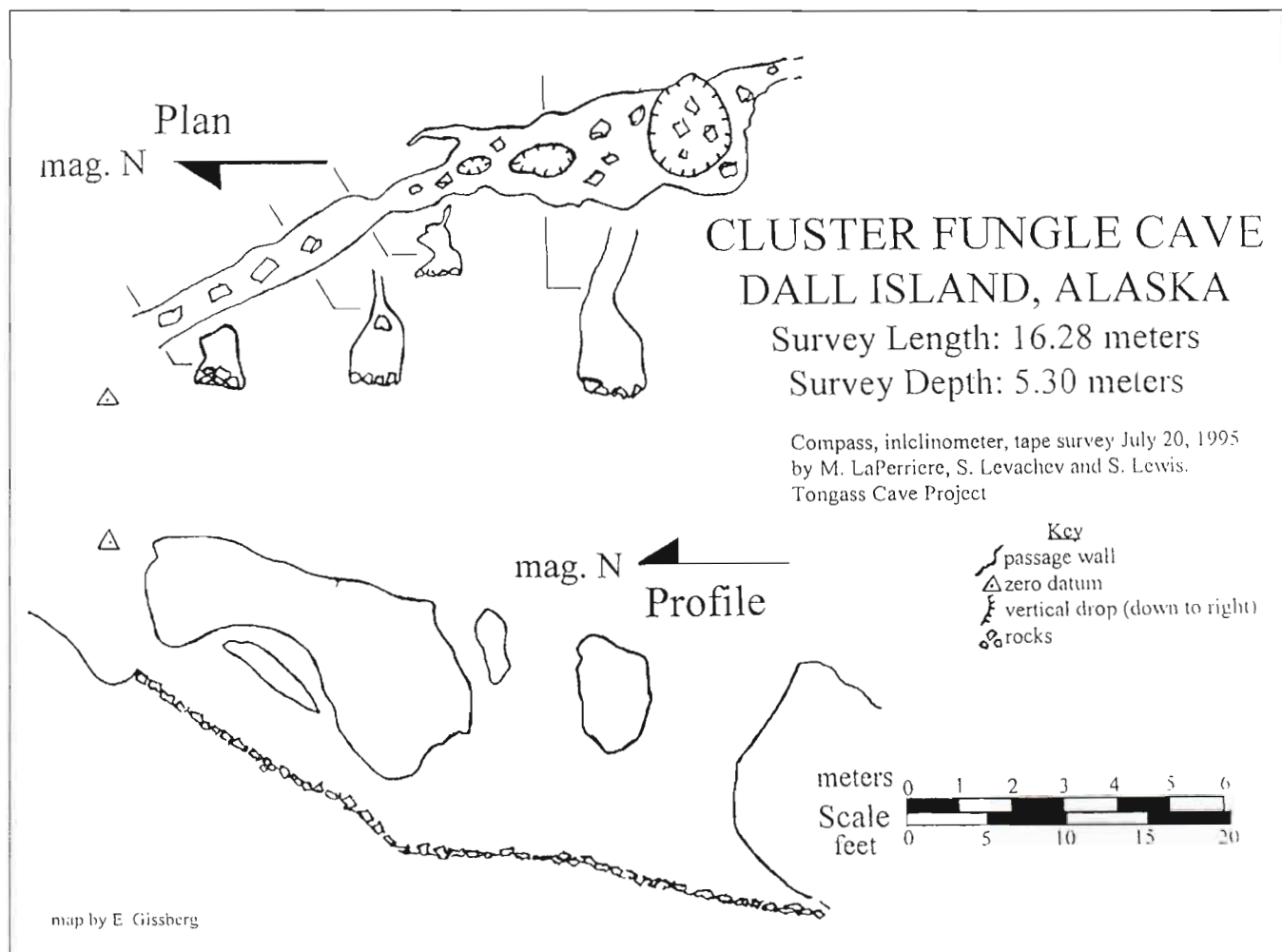
MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Cluster Fungle Cave is in a pristine state located in a

beautiful area. It offers a through trip safe enough for cavers of any ability but care should be taken to avoid causing chunks of the ceiling to fall on those people exploring the cave.

The sediments below the skylights may contain deposits of paleontological interest. This dry, fossil phreatic passage may offer insights into the early development of the karst plateau in which it is located.

There is the potential for many caves to be discovered in this undisturbed area. Cluster Fungle Cave and the surrounding area should be protected from logging activities in order that the currently inaccessible caverns below remain unimpacted.



DeKARSTS CAVE

Heceta Island, Alaska • Preliminary Report #242 Tongass Cave Project • National Speleological Society

by Eron Gissberg
July 22, 1996

DESCRIPTION

DeKarsts was surveyed by "Yukon" Kris Esterson and "Kodiak" Dan Monteith on July 15, 1995. DeKarsts is a small cave containing 13.57 meters

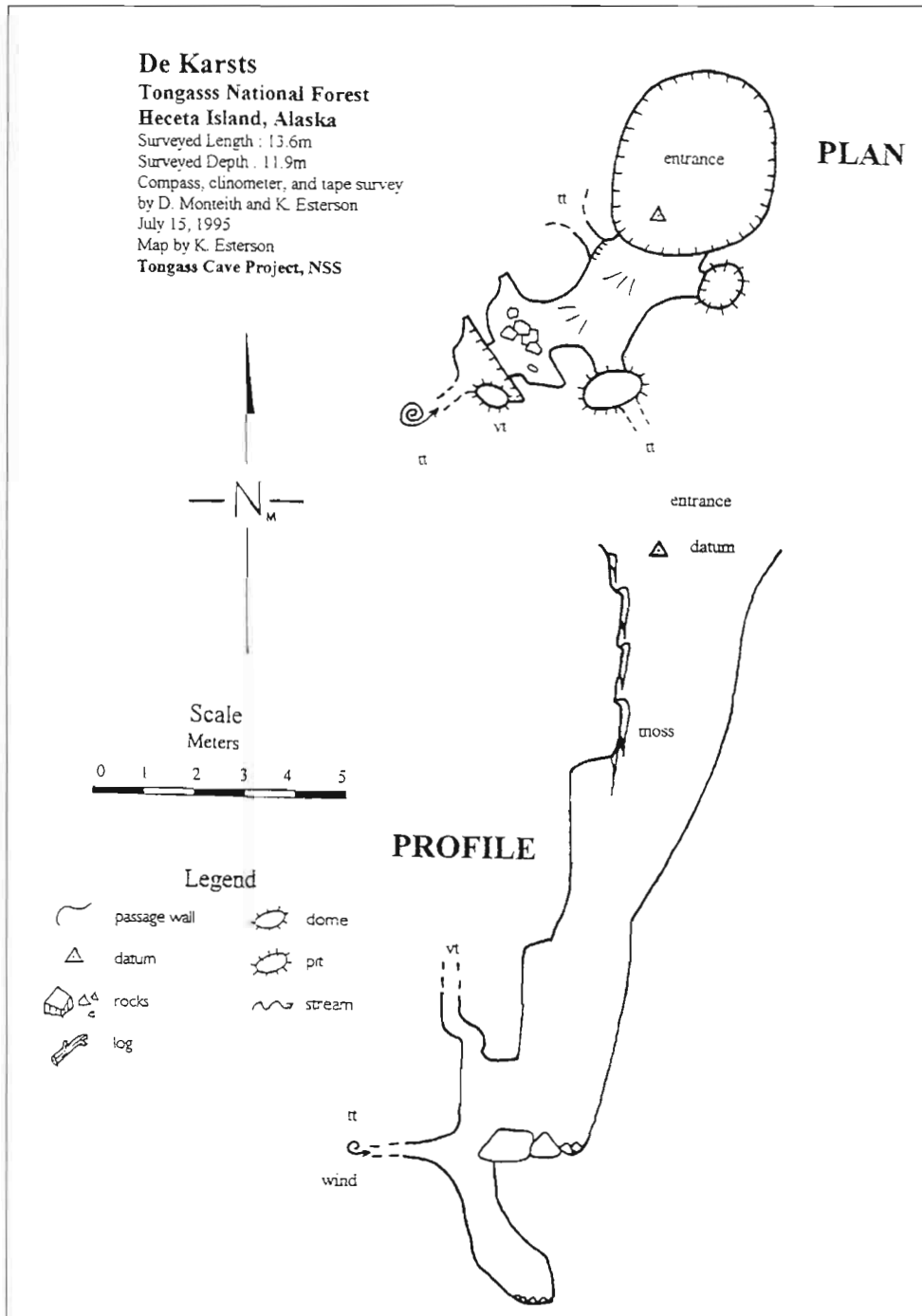
(44.5 feet) of surveyed passage. It lies in an area with many caves and sinks. It is adjacent to the 1425-500 road and shows evidence of damage from construction of the road. Slash and stumps line the surface sink and debris has been washed or dumped into the cave.

The initial drop is 10 meters to a road-debris covered floor. From here a too tight passage leads into a larger room where a shackle is visible, apparently washed in from another passage that was filled or blocked during road construction.

MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

DeKarsts Cave and the associated karst terrain are part of a very scenic karst topography on Heceta Island. The area is still important recreationally and aesthetically, even though it has been severely damaged in places by past road construction and timber harvest. The cave offers opportunities for educational use as an example of the effects of road building and logging over a cave. It is easily accessible once one is on Heceta Island.

In order to prevent further damage to the caves in the area, it is recommended that no further logging or road building should take place around Dekarsts Cave.

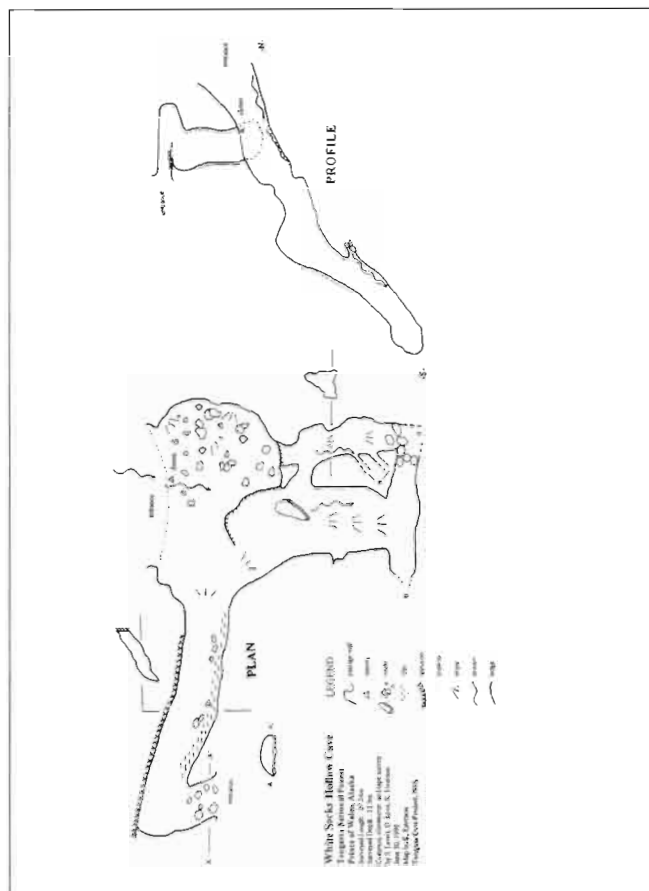


WHITE SOCKS HOLLOW CAVE

Prince of Wales Island, AK • Preliminary Report #223
Tongass Cave Project • National Speleological Society
by Eron Gissberg
July 22, 1996

DESCRIPTION: White Socks Hollow Cave is located in an area of many sinkholes and caves. The cave was named for the abundance of the flying, biting insects encountered in the area. A wide and spacious entrance leads to several small rooms and passages. The cave is developed in blue marble and is an active resurgence. It is undoubtedly hydrologically related to surrounding sinkholes and resurgences downslope. Although no biota were noted during the survey, the cave provides a very suitable habitat for several microorganisms and insects. An inventory of the biological components is warranted.

MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS: White Socks Hollow Cave should be protected along with all nearby caves and sinkholes. The hydrological significance and probable biological aspects of this cave provide opportunities for educational or scientific study. Interesting rooms and passages within this beautiful, blue marble cave and an aesthetic entrance suggest that this relatively safe and easy cave has recreational qualities.

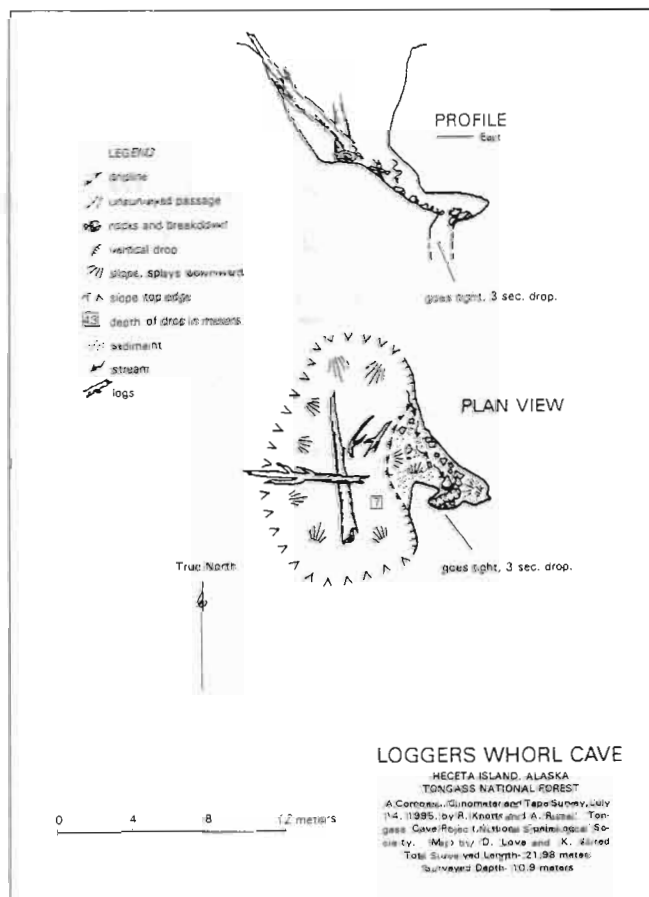


LOGGER'S WHORL CAVE

Heceta Island, AK • Preliminary Report #227
Tongass Cave Project • National Speleological Society
by Eron Gissberg
July 22, 1996

DESCRIPTION: Logger's Whorl Cave is in a recent clear-cut and has suffered damage as a result of the surface timber harvest. The large sink that leads into the cave is full of slash and logs. A small stream enters the caves and flows the entirety of the known passage. The cave is beginning to have this debris and significant amounts of silt and mud washed into the system. The cave consists of relatively easy, downsloping passage. The survey ends at a chamber with a tight 3-second drop continuing an unknown distance.

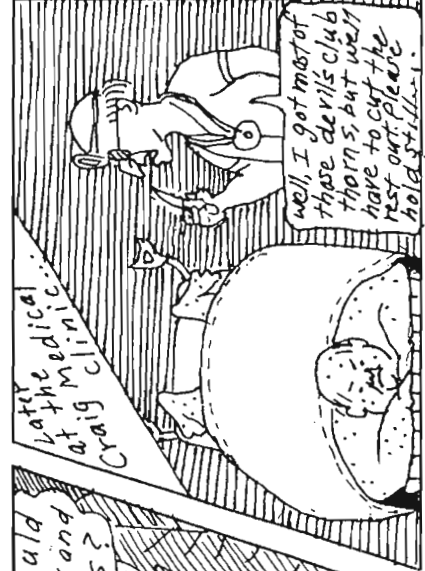
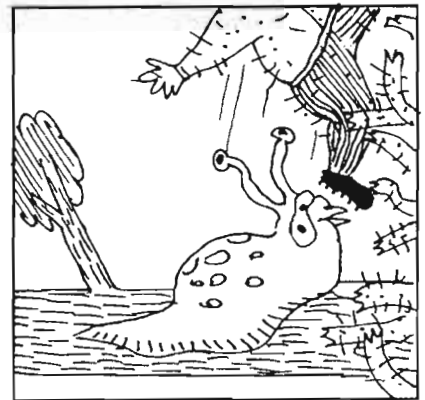
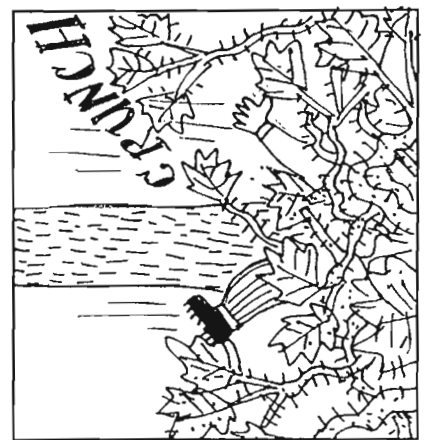
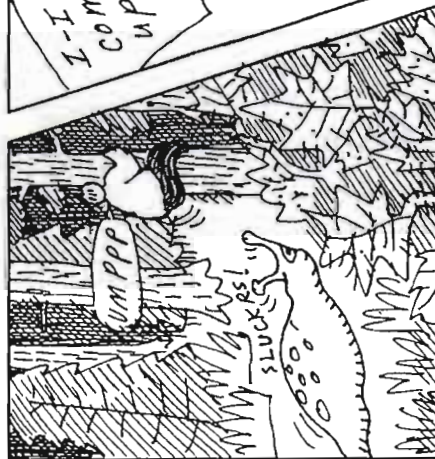
MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS: Logger's Whorl Cave is an important part of a highly developed subsurface hydrological system. It is almost certainly connected to the major Arabica hydrological system. Although the cave and much of the system is severely impacted visually by recent clear-cut harvest, what is left is still of great value. The cave offers opportunities for educational use as an example of the effects of road building and logging over a cave.



The Adventures of

RUBBER CAVER

by K & C ALLRED



To Be Continued...

MISCELLANEOUS

Duties of the Glacier Grotto officers and nominations for 1997 Grotto officers are as follows:

*The **President** shall preside at meeting of the Grotto and appoint such committees as he or she deems appropriate. The President also shall appoint elected officers in the event of incumbent's resignation or incapacitation,*

President - Alan Murray

*The **Vice Presidents** - for Northern Alaska, Southcentral Alaska, and Southeast Alaska - shall govern each Area as a sub-grotto, holding meetings, appointing local committee chairs and conducting local business. Each Vice-President will be the Grotto contact person for the Area designated. All written correspondence with outside organizations should be copied to the President.*

Vice President, Southeast - David Valentine

Vice President, Northern - Steve Lewis

Vice President, Southcentral - Bob Hicks

*The **Secretary** shall have custody of the records of the Grotto and be in charge of receiving and responding to all Grotto correspondence. The Secretary shall also perform those other duties that are generally performed by secretaries of like organizations and that may be assigned by the President or the Executive Council.*

Secretary - Connie LaPerriere

*The **Treasurer** shall collect the dues, send out notices of delinquency of dues, have custody of all funds belonging to the Grotto and shall keep the necessary financial records. The Grotto's financial records shall be audited annually by a member or person qualified other than the incumbent Treasurer.*

Treasurer - Connie LaPerriere

Regional Correspondents Sought

The editor of NSS News wants regional correspondents. The only requirement is that the correspondents have e-mail, but they must also be interested in working with the News to get timely information for the News and Notes and Calendar sections. The correspondents would need to solicit articles from folks doing significant exploration, survey, conservation work, etc.

The designated areas are:

Mid-Appalachian Region

Mississippi Valley-Ozark Region

North Country Region
Northeastern Region
Rocky Mountain Region
Southeaster Region
Southern Plains Region
Southwestern Region
Texas Speleological Association
Virginia Region
Western Region

If interested, please e-main News Editor Dave Bunnell at nssnews@goodearth.com

The Alaskan Caver

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