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Marcel LaPerriere

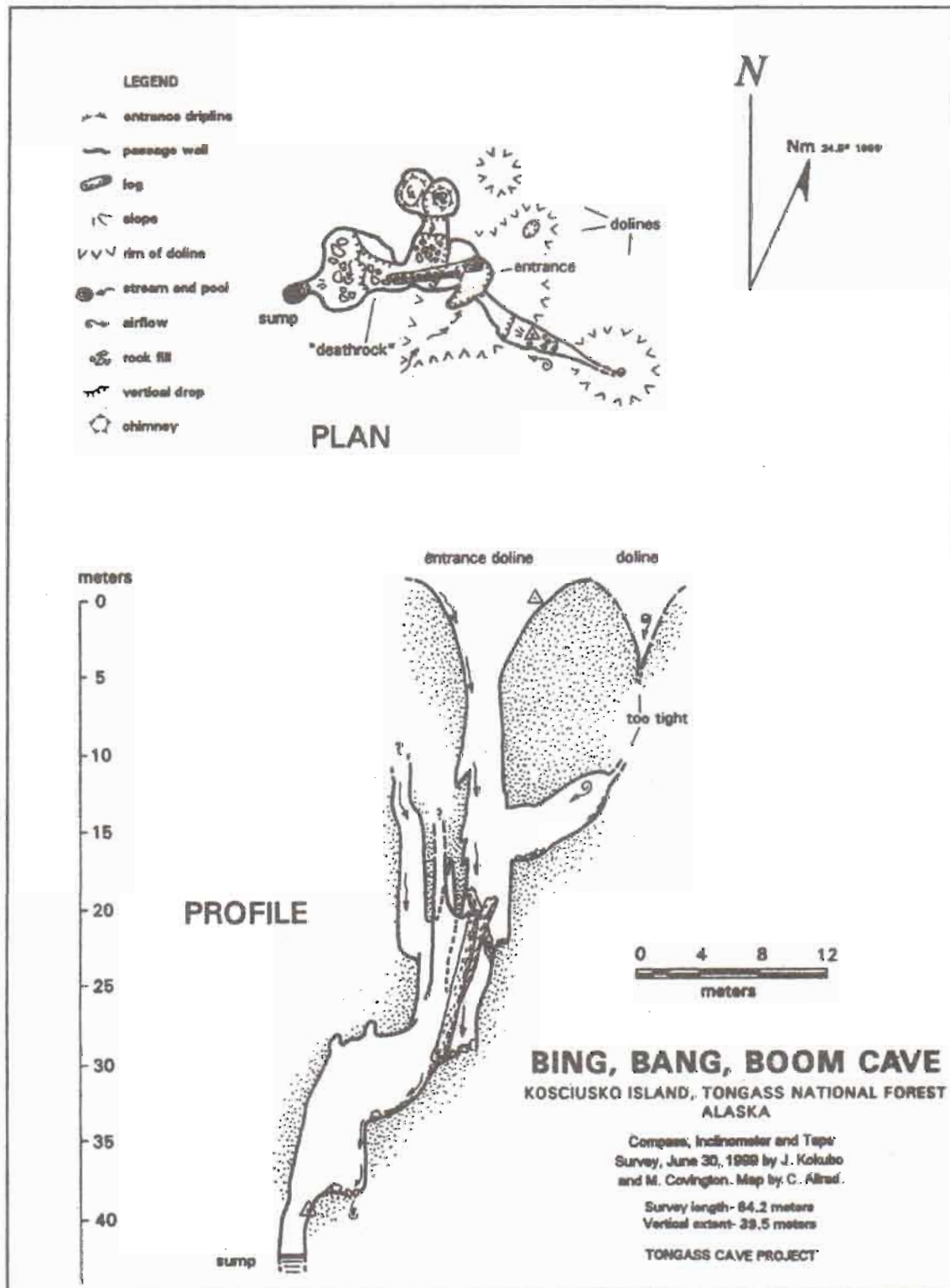
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The Alaskan Caver



The Alaskan Caver

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Marcel LaPerriere - Editor

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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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President's Corner**Some Interesting and Possibly Useful Cave-Related URL's**

NSS Sections www.caves.org/section/ccms/
 Section www.caves.org/section/vertical/
www.caves.org/section/sacs/
www.caves.org/section/video/
www.caves.org/section/cds/ncrc.htm
www.caves.org/section/paleo/
www.pipeline.com/~caverbob/
www.caves.org/info/webawards.html
<http://members.aol.com/ohghome/>
www.nnjg.org/
www.caves.org/region/sera/
www.caves.org/grotto/sandiego/
www.darklightimagery.net/gpg/
www.goodearthgraphics.com/showcave.html
<http://cavern.com/>
www.extremescience.com/Lechuigillainfo.htm
www.mammothcave.com/
www.nps.gov/cave/home.htm
www.caves.org.imo
<http://mgmtsys.com>
www.carlsbadnm.com/gmo
www.4bobandbob.com/
www.rei.com
www.petzl.com
www.ccrane.com
www.hdssystems.com
www.lookoutmountain.net
www.glow-bug.com
www.albany.net/~oldbat/index.html
www.caves.org/service/bookstore
www.paleoclones.com
www.goodearthgraphics.com/under-earth/world/world.htm
<http://hum.amu.edu.pl/~sgp/spec/links.html>
www.cavepage.magna.com.au/cave/cavelinkold.html
<http://www.sat.dundee.ac.uk/~arb/speleo/links-world.html>
<http://oldsci.eiu.edu/physics/len/mammoth/mcrp0.html>
www.psc-cavers.org/kouts
www.caves.org/region/swr/swrgypkp.htm
www.caves.org/project/qrrs
<http://php.indiana.edu/~casgriff/Belize/CAVE.html>
www.liv.ac.uk/Geomagnetism/laos/
<http://www.cancaver.ca/bc/viccg/>

Cave Conservation and Management
 Vertical Section
 Survey and Cartography Section
 Photography Section
 National Cave Rescue Commission
 Paleontology Section
 Long and Deep caves (Bob Gulden)
 NSS site for the best grotto website awards
 Ozark Highlands Grotto: Really Cool Graphics!
 Hotsy the HotTub: This Grotto knows how to have fun!
 Southeastern Regional Association
 SanDiego Grotto-Check out the Cave Maps!
 Golden Pond Grotto
 Excellent site, check out Virtual Cave
 National Caves Association
 Lechuguilla Cave maps/pictures
 Mammoth Cave trip planner/some pictures/links
 Carlsbad Caverns National Park
 Inner Mountain Outfitters
 Karst Sports
 Guadalupe Mountain Outfitters
 Bob and Bob- and old standby, Cavers Serving Cavers
 Recreational Equipment Incorporated
 Petzel direct LED Lights
 CC Trek Light flashlights and other products
 Action Light, helmet mounted, multiple LEDs
 Modularized LEDs, upgrades for the Petzl Micro
 more LED lights Books
 Speleobooks-a diversity of texts, books on caves, caving
 Of Course: the NSS Bookstore! Art/Gifts
 Realistic fossil replicas and casts
 CD: Cave jpeg images of caves of the world
 SPELEO Link Page
 Caving
 World-wide Cave-Related links
 Mammoth Cave Restoration Project
 West Virginia Cave Survey
 New Mexico Gypsum Karst Project
 Quintana Roo Speleological Survey
 Western Belize Regional Cave Project
 Laos Cave Project
 Vancouver Island Cave Expl. Group

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CALENDAR

Ketchikan Area Grotto meetings are the first Monday, at 7 pm at Ketchikan Public Health Center 3050 Fifth Ave. 907/247-1559 or marcel@alaskamade.com
OR ajmurray@ktn.net

Southcentral Area meetings or expeditions will be called by Jay Rockwell 277-7150 or Harvey Bow-ers at agate@alaska.net

Muskeg - Cave Relationship Part II

By: Kris Esterson

As you may recall from some time ago, I started the discussion on the apparent contradiction of southeastern Alaskan muskegs producing caves. As we all know finding caves in the Tongass can be as simple as finding a muskeg surrounded by limestone and just walking around it. This is one of the first things a new caver learns on a TCP expedition. The relationship between caves and muskegs is obvious but raises some interesting questions. To refresh your memory, the logic went something like this: Glaciers several thousand feet thick ground across the landscape as recently as 18,000 years ago. These glaciers likely would have removed all but a few muskegs (perhaps a few that were shielded by mountains would have survived).

Current theories of speleogenesis require timescales of 100,000 years and far greater to form cave systems. So how might we form pits and caves around the perimeter of muskegs if the muskegs have only been around for 15,000 years or so? This from USFS Geologist Jim Baichtal: I believe that the cave systems that accept muskeg waters today have formed within the last 13,000-12,000 years after deglaciation. Evidence suggests that between 130,000 and 27,000 years ago (the last interglacial period) that tundra plant species and animals occupied the land and that the climate was cooler and drier overall. This persisted through until our current forest began and muskegs were accumulating...maybe no later than 9500 YBP. With this, our muskeg associated systems developed and joined with existing systems. At least these are my current ideas... Karst systems existed on Prince of Wales Island long before the latest glacial advance. Recent phreatic passages into two pre-Latest Wisconsinian caves (>44,500 B.P.) have dissolved through Tertiary paleokarst breccias (Aley et al., 1993). Older passages have been plugged by debris from past glacial episodes. One small cave has yielded a marmot tooth which has been dated to greater than 44,500 years (Baichtal, 1994b). Most caves predate the most recent glaciation based upon the presence of glacial clays, glacial sediments, wood, Pleistocene vertebrate remains, and possibly even ancient ice. Similar features are being found during field reconnaissance on Kuiu and Chichagof Islands and on the islands seaward of Prince of Wales. Such evidence

clearly suggests that glaciation modified a pre-existing karst landscape, collapsing some passages and systems, gouging into others, and filling some with sediments. The epikarst, which is exceptionally well developed in higher elevations, has been removed in places at lower elevations by the most recent glaciation. Where low-elevation epikarst is present, primarily on the outer coast of islands seaward of Prince of Wales, vegetation has re-established itself and a forested epikarst developed.

Where impermeable compacted glacial till and marine silts are deposited on the karst terrain, and poorly drained lithologies adjacent to karst terrain, peatlands are commonly developed. Many of the glacial deposits overlying karst terrain have filled in and modified collapsed karst features. With the development of the forested epikarst and peatlands, and the entrance of associated acidic waters into underground tributaries, a system of enlarged vadose caves and vertical shafts have developed (Baichtal, 1993a). James F. Baichtal Forest Geologist, Karst and Cave Resource Management Tongass National Forest.

More from Kris: Jim's ideas seem valid. We are left with a few possibilities: 1.) The cave development has multiple cycles. 2.) Significant passage development can occur within 10,000 - 15,000 years. We'll develop these two ideas next time. Anyone with input on this subject should write to Kris at moonprobe@hotmail.com.

Need Photos!

Please send your photos to:
Glacier Grotto
P.O. Box 9062
Ketchikan AK 99901
Or:
marcel@alaskamade.com

If requested we will return all photos.

June 1999, POW, Mission: Drop Bear's Plunge, for the Glory

By: Bruce White

Bear's Plunge is about 150 feet of vertical pit (100 feet of free air) with a raging waterfall spilling over half of the entrance at this time of the year. Dan and Connie were well acquainted with the pit, teasing us over the winter at Grotto meetings to "Drop this one for fun" on our first snow free outing. A Cave-O-Rama was set for June, our Spring Bouncing down a POW freeway (logging road) packed with friends and caving gear, I secretly took bearings starting at the Hollis Ferry Terminal with my handheld Garmin 45 GPS. I'm well known for my navigation skills on water, with a long history of blindly sailing into a harbor with no more than the smell of the garbage dump to guide me. On land, well, my reputation is "Put 3 trees in front of him and he'll get lost." To me the terrain and roads of SE Alaska all look alike. Green trees and muskeg bogs lining muddy, pot-holed, rain soaked roads give me no clues to orientation without a GPS, but Connie can find a cave as well as I can a drifting crab pot in the fog.

Connie indicated the spot after a couple "Hmms, this looks like it, no, it's just up there." To me it was just another pee-stop on the side of the road but she ferrets out a cave by scent, cosmic guidance, woman's intuition, or just plain fool's luck. Needless to say, once again she led us straight to the hole. We tied off the rope known affectionately as "Miss Piggy" maneuvering it to the far side of the pit to avoid the waterfall. I dropped first to see if it was even worth going down. Just recently I was explaining the order in which people descend on rope (careless first, so they can't drop rocks on others) but I took being first as a good sign I was getting a little respect for my anchor and tie-offs. Hmm, maybe they just wanted me to test my anchor before trusting it. Leaning over the lip it looked OK to me, a bit wet but OK. I yelled back up to the top "Its going to be a wet one but OK" then dropped to the floor in a butt-puckering thrill ride. I moved out of the danger zone waiting with camera in hand for the rest.

Even yelling and rope signals couldn't communicate when I was off rope (can't see over the lip, and the waterfall just roared over all sounds).

With no signal from me, Dan had to check it out, dropped over the ledge and disappeared down the hole. Again with no signal from the hole those on top determined Dan and I were having too much fun and it must be OK. Connie followed, then Diane, then Dave. (Mike and Kris opted to stay on top).

When Dave came down, the rope slipped over to the waterfall side of the pit. Now the first person ascending would have to jug up the rope in the middle of the waterfall. Beautiful but very tiring, wet and cold. Again, I took the lead braving the maelstrom. It took multiple handholds to make it out. Fighting the stream was the worst part. I felt like a salmon swimming against the torrential current, fighting my way upstream to spawn. At each drenching rest, I reminded myself that at least there would be beautiful pictures as I parted the flow like a spider hanging from a thread in a drain pipe, a spider's "Moses" parting the sea. The water pounded my helmet, shoulders, and thighs splitting into 2 spray filled arches creating a mist of rainbows. This was no high-powered shower, it was more like swimming vertical. At long last I made it up to the lip and moved the rope over to the right place. I peeked over the lip like a drowned rat in a sewer pipe, Mike and Kris saw me, then offered me a hand feeling a bit embarrassed for not seeing the rope position. Hey, they couldn't see over the edge safely. Hmmm, or maybe they just didn't want to gear up.

Diane, and Connie came out, each in time (happy and dry I might add). On the other hand I was soaked to the bone because I neglected to wear the dry suit under my cave suit, again. The misery was worth it just to add a grain of truth to a story I was fabricating to beat Jim's near drowning in Scallop. "OK" I thought to myself, how about "Whaaa Whosh!", Bear's Plunge nearly drowned us all. Whole trees uprooted in the flood came crashing down in a muddy torrent as I clawed my way up the overstrained rope, twanging a high G note each time a watermelon sized cobblestone plucked at the frayed rope, when suddenly"

30 minutes went by but still no Dave. I was shivering and soaked so a little exercise was in order. I rigged a second rope figuring I'd drop down to the edge and see what was happening. Making slow progress, Dave was busy

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Tongass Cave Project
PO Box WWP
Ketchikan, AK 99950
October 1, 2000

Letter

David Schmid, District Ranger
Thorne Bay Ranger District
U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service
PO Box 1901
Thorne Bay, AK 99919

Dear Ranger Schmid:

The Tongass Cave Project assessed representative karst units on the Kosciusko Island Timber Sale from July 24 through July 30, 2000 using systematic and intensive overland survey methods. Funding for this assessment came from the Southeast Alaska Conservation Council. Both the Forest Service and Dames and Moore were very supportive of our efforts. We are writing to provide you with our initial impressions and to request more information in order to continue our studies of this project.

The Tongass Cave Project is an organization dedicated to the study and protection of Southeast Alaska's karst and caves. We have worked closely with the Forest Service, including the Thorne Bay Ranger District over past years in these efforts, collaborating annually on projects to discover, explore, study, and map the caves and karst of the Tongass National Forest. This collaboration along with a Forest Service sponsored Blue Ribbon Panel Report assessing the Tongass karst as "world-class," has been instrumental in getting karst and caves placed among the most important resources considered when implementing timber sales and other projects on the Forest. We hope to continue our collaborative efforts to protect this important resource. We also realize that the Kosciusko Timber Project EIS is currently a work in progress, that much of the data is still being assimilated.

While we commend the Forest Service and their contractor, Dames and Moore, for removing some of the most high vulnerability units and areas from the Kosciusko Sale, our surveys show that karst is still not being adequately protected in the remaining units. We discovered many "high vulnerability features" within these units that had not been inventoried by the contractor and, more importantly, found extremely high densities of features that, although not individually meeting the requirements of a "high vulnerability feature" do define a broad area of karst that is "highly vulnerable." We discovered several units where dense areas of grikes and sinks, few of which took streams, but all of which took rainfall, covered the upper slopes. Numerous resurgences, presumably from these inputs, lined the lower ends of the unit, or areas just outside the proposed boundaries. Such areas meet the definition of high vulnerability karst, but are not easily assessed by feature size in the field.

It appears to us that at least some of the field personnel were fairly well trained in feature identification, but that there is still a major problem with recognizing the system beneath, based on density of features and lack of surface waters. In one instance we observed some previous field crew's footprints within two feet of a cave entrance that had not been looked into or tagged. It appeared that some subcontractors may have been better educated than others. Landings often placed in some of the most highly developed karst, sometimes atop features that had been flagged. Unit cards that we were provided with suggestions that many of these features are not being given any protection.

Where buffers were proposed, they were often quite small and focused around individual features rather than the system they are designed to protect. The Tongass Cave Project has consistently recommended a minimum buffer of two tree lengths around important karst areas. Recent proposals by the Fish and Wildlife Service for karst reserves suggest a standard of three tree lengths. The trees in the units we examined on Kosciusko Island were frequently 200 feet or more in height, yet, except where buffers eliminated entire ends of units, the buffers rarely were over 100 feet. We noted extensive windthrow along the periphery of the proposed units wherever adjacent harvest had occurred. This windthrow often extended more than 500 feet into the old-growth, suggesting that even our proposed buffer of two tree lengths is inadequate to provide a windfirm boundary to protect highly vulnerable karst on Kosciusko Island.

We found little evidence to support the major differences in management of "high" and "moderate" vulnerability karstlands on Kosciusko Island. Rather, we found strong evidence to suggest that the vulnerability system as currently implemented, is not meeting its goal of adequately protecting the remaining karstlands in the Tongass. Current implementation appears to be focused on features, with consequent neglect of the truly important systematic aspects of karst. We are convinced that approaching the vulnerability of extensive karstlands such as occur on Kosciusko Island on a feature by feature, or even unit by unit basis will not provide adequate understanding of the underlying systems. The Ozark Underground Lab hydrology study suggests that broad and extensive systems exist on Kosciusko Island, but much more work is needed to delineate watersheds and the associations that proposed timber harvest units play on the hydrology. It is our opinion that further hydrology work would confirm that most of the island is a high vulnerability karst system. It is this system approach rather than mapping individual features that truly defines high vulnerable karst.

In order to complete our studies we request a complete set of current unit cards, and karst feature cards. We also need maps showing fish streams, timber types, past harvest, geology and karst features, and current units in the pool in order to adequately assess our work. We have features located by GPS and need to have maps of adequately large scale and with a UTM grid overlaid, especially at the unit level. We request this information for both Kosciusko Island and Tuxekan Island.

Our initial impression is that the Kosciusko Island Timber Sale, if implemented as it stands, will violate the Tongass Land Management Plan Karst Standards and Guidelines and consequently, the Federal Cave Resources Protection Act. We look forward to working with the Thorne Bay Ranger District to eliminate these problems.

Thanks very much for your assistance in providing these materials. We look forward to providing you with a complete report and collaborating to eliminate the problems still existing in the Kosciusko Island Timber Sale.

Very sincerely,

Pete Smith
Steve Lewis
Kevin Allred,
Directors, Tongass Cave Project

cc. Katya Kirsch, SEACC

KOSCIUSKO 2000 CAVING EXPEDITION,

JULY 24-30, 2000 by Kevin Allred

Kosciusko Island is one of the larger Islands of the Alexander Archipelago, and is located just west of northern Prince of Wales Island. Most of Kosciusko is Heceta limestone and marble. Some of the most well drained and intense karst in Alaska has been reported here. It is also one of the ten most threatened karst areas in the world. We anticipate that in time, someone will find some caves with extremely important archaeologic, paleological, biological, and mineralogic treasures which is already occurring in more intensely explored carbonates on the Tongass. The past two summers, TCP (Tongass Cave Project) has hosted caving expeditions on Kosciusko Island. These were supported by an on-going cost-share agreement with the U.S. Forest Service. With cuts in their budget, the Forest Service reduced support of the caving program this year. As the USFS was planning a 22 million board foot timber harvest concentrated on much of the remaining karst, Pete Smith offered to lead a TCP expedition to check up on field work which had been done evaluating undamaged karst resources in preparation for the timber sale. Our plan was to carefully comb proposed logging units which had already been field checked for karst "vulnerability" rating, caves, and "significant" karst features. In essence, the Forest Service tends to manage the three items just mentioned individually rather than as part of a composite ecosystem, the way we think they should be. We are chagrined to see continued emphasis on relatively small, wind-fall-prone buffers around "significant" features including cave entrances. "High vulnerability" karst continues to be under-rated in order to get the cut out. But we decided to try to follow their inadequate "standards and guidelines" to hopefully protect as much as possible of the fast dwindling undisturbed karst resource.

The Forest Service contracted with Dames and Moore (an environmental consultant firm) for a rumored price of five million dollars to prepare a preliminary plan of the timber sale. Representatives, Forest Service geologist Jim Baichtal, and Dames and Moore geologist Rick Langendoen assured us they are doing an outstanding job on the karst and cave protection, and are exceeding Forest Service karst and cave standards and guidelines for

protection from the effects of timber harvest. Where have I heard this before? Later, I recalled what Benjamin Franklin once said: "The more he spoke of his honor, the faster we hid the silver".

The Southeast Alaska Conservation Council (SEAAC) provided a small grant to do this TCP watchdog expedition. This covered some of our travel expenses, food, and 1,200 dollars to transport one of Pete's big trucks by landing craft over there from Naukati and back. Our family (consisting of me, Carlene, Soren, Flint, and Forrest) showed up a week early to work on our house shell in Whale Pass and do a bit of caving. Carlene and I joined the end of POWIE 2000 Expedition two days and helped Pete and his crew in resurveying for a map of Zina Cave. Present were several Brits and former Brits. I am amazed at how much there is to Zina Cave. It starts as a 40 foot deep entrance shaft. Below are some neat drops and lots of outstanding meandering canyon passage with fossils embedded in the water-polished walls. We did not finish it this year. Hopefully a full-time participant will give a more detailed account of this expedition.

Back to the Kosciusko expedition... Participation was somewhat disappointing. Apparently, many cavers were not interested in thrashing about in the woods rather than just caving. The only ones who showed were Terri Brown of Virginia, Steve Lewis, Pete Smith, Val White (Smith), Jed Smith, Kina Smith, the Allred's, and Smith's two dogs (who didn't have any choice). When we got to Naukati on July 24th in Smith's giant homemade camper, I wondered about the rashness of floating on a rickety old landing craft which looked like something that should be in a scrap yard, rather than operating in the choppy waters of Alaska. We were without life jackets, and had no idea if there was any life rafts aboard. However, in three hours we cruised safely into east Edna Bay, and were shortly parked on a logging road next to some kind of derelict trailer. We studied maps kindly supplied by Rick Langendoen showing the potential logging units. Knowing we would be able to thoroughly comb only some of the many units, we quickly chose a few to start with and drove to that area. Some logging roads are already in the process of collapsing into sinks they are built over. After securing a convenient camping area in a borrow pit (road quarry), we

combed the first unit. When I got my first views of the vast clearcuts on the intense karst topography, I was appalled at the disregard of the forest ecosystem here. For example, we saw very few deer during our six days on the Island. Apparently, since the new second growth has started closing in and killing the undergrowth deer feed on, the deer population is plummeting. We learned that some locals now are forced to secure their deer meat by traveling to Prince of Wales Island.

Some challenges we had to deal with were the nearly constant rains during our work, and difficulties with GPS receivers. Steve's did not work at all, and Pete sometimes had a hard time getting a fix with his below the wet forest canopy....some of these trees are monsters. Having only one functional GPS, we were forced to use one team of eleven strung out nearly 1000 feet in order to sweep the terrain. Normally, our preference is to use smaller more manageable teams in such sweeps in the hunt for caves and karst features. But undaunted, we overcame all obstacles and started racking up units. We followed the Forest Service plan of locating "significant" karst features which they define as 1. sinkholes and grikes deeper than eight feet, 2. insurgences or resurgences, and 3. cave entrances. Pete was kept busy racing up and down the linegetting locations with his GPS. When we found lots of "significant" features, we just circled the whole area on our maps. We photographed the larger features for before and after pictures if they are deforested. Radios were sometimes used to communicate across the sweeps.

We disagree with the way the Forest Service considers an individual sinkhole significant simply because they are a foot or two deeper than hundreds of others around. Together, a densely perforated landscape of smaller sinks will receive a sum of impact that may equal or even exceed that of a "significant" major sinkhole insurgence. Technically, every closed depression could be defined as an insurgence, having water flowing down into it. And these can seldom be studied from underneath in the karst system to observe the increased runoff common in deforestation.

In our sweeps, one cave entrance I came across had not been identified on Dames and Moore maps, yet within two feet of it was a thread from a

hip chain. Clearly, the contracted field crew was not experienced or doing their job. It soon became apparent that the U.S. Forest Service spent five million of our tax payer dollars for a very shabby job (but I sometimes wonder if that's what they want!). We discovered about four times as many "significant" karst features, caves, and significantly more "high vulnerability" karst which would be unlawful to harvest timber on. The caves we entered often continued beyond our superficial explorations.

A few times we were visited by local resident, Steve Warren (once with his children) at our campsite. Steve filled us in on the feelings of the struggling residents of Kosciusko Island pertaining to the planned timber sale. The majority want a much reduced sale, because of impacts to wildlife, the forest resource, and their community water supplies. In addition, during the last logging operations in the area, apparently only one local was able to secure temporary employment. Continued disregard for the local work force was revealed on the Dames and Moore project. Pete and I spoke with one of their employees still on the Island. This stocky young man wore a logger-style striped shirt, and looked fresh out of High School from somewhere down in the lower 48. Out of over 30 people working in the field on Kosciusko, he knew of only a few Alaskans hired, and stated that there weren't enough Alaskans trained in timber and road layout to be up to the job.

At one point in our sweeps, Forrest (10) ran ahead of the group, thinking we were going straight to the truck, which was another direction. Discovering him missing, we frantically searched for him. Steve and Pete rushed onwards as the rest of us waited in one spot so no one else would be separated. Pete and Steve finally caught up with him at least a mile away after Forrest had stopped after coming upon a bear cub at a logging road. Thanks Pete and Steve. It may have been serious in time with hypothermia. Another near disaster was when Pete lost his GPS. After we all scoured a steep hillside, Pete luckily found it. During this searching, Steve discovered a cave (Gipus Cave) which was a bonus.

On the last day, we did a bit of caving in an area covered by last year's TCP expedition. The vertical cave I entered

Continued on page 10

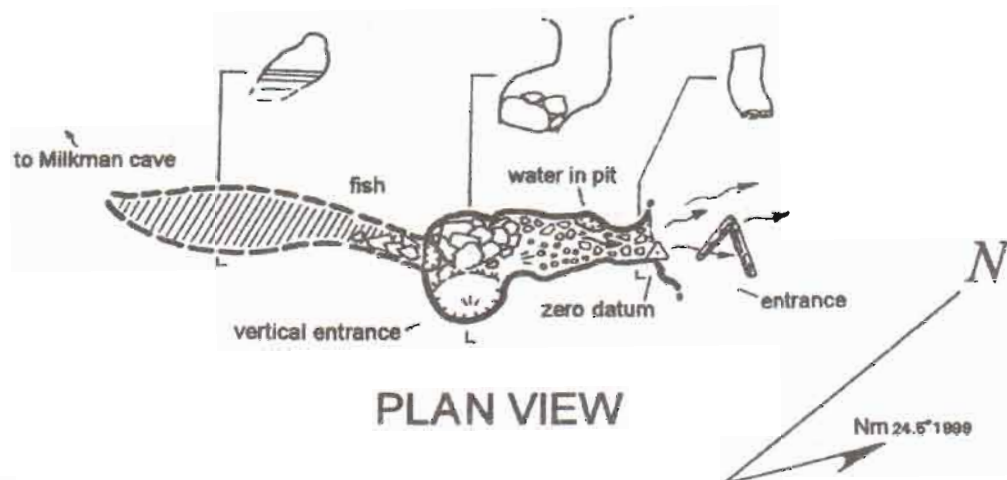
EX-STREAM-LY FISHY CAVE

KOSCIUSKO ISLAND, TONGASS NATIONAL FOREST
ALASKA

Compass, Inclinometer and Tape Survey, June 16,
1999 by B. Brewer and D. Raab. Map by C. Allred.

Survey length- 16.5 meters
Vertical extent- 10 meters

TONGASS CAVE PROJECT

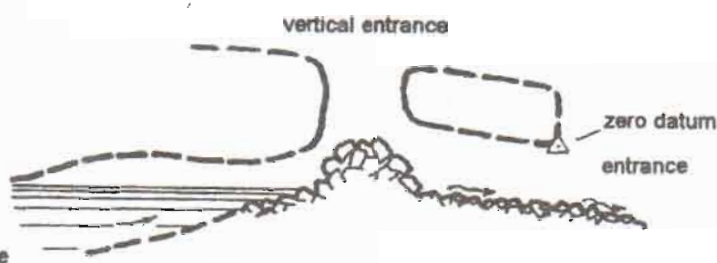


PLAN VIEW

LEGEND

- entrance dripline
- passage wall
- unsurveyed passage
- slope
- rocks and breakdown
- vertical drop
- stream, plan view
- stream, profile
- logs

to Milkman cave



PROFILE

See Back Cover
For Milkman Cave

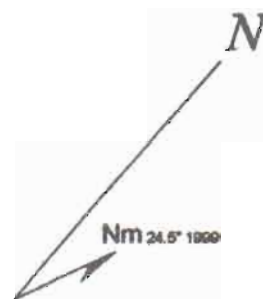
FREEZE FRAME CAVE

KOSCIUSKO ISLAND, ALASKA

Compass, Inclinometer and Tape Survey, June 18, 1999 by D. Montelth, B. White and B. Brewer. Map by C. Altred.

Tongass Cave Project, NSS

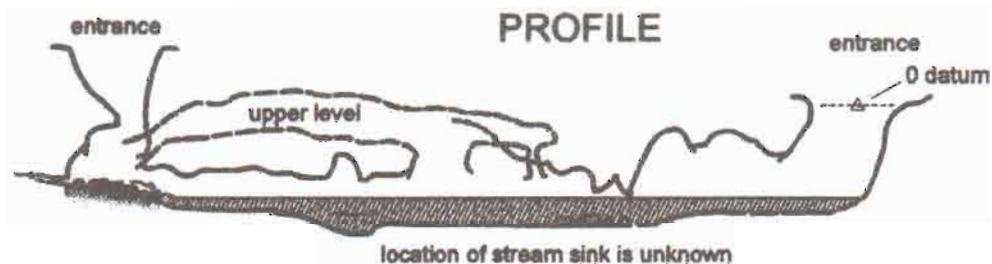
Survey Length- 51.4 meters
Cave Depth- 6.8 meters



PLAN

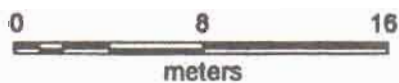


PROFILE



LEGEND

- | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------|
| entrance dripline | stream |
| passage wall | rock fill |
| underlying passage wall | slope (splays down) |
| unmapped passage wall | vertical drop |



Continued from page 7 Kosciusko

with Steve, Jed, and Terri, went down three drops, and we ran out of rope at a fourth. A buck skeleton lay on the rocky floor of the first drop. We found some survey flagging in there, but don't have any idea which cave it is, since the TCP reports of 1999 have not yet appeared.

After the expedition, we met with Rick and Jim in Thorne Bay, and expressed our dissatisfaction in the quality of their work. In spite of some units dropped because of karst concerns, many other highly karsted areas are still on the chopping block. We showed them one representative unit we did, and are withholding the identity of the remainder units to see if they end up with accurate and agreeing data. To say the least, some people appear to be in an uncomfortable position. I'm curious how many more taxpayer dollars will be spent to properly reevaluate all the proposed units. This should definitely should be done if the plan continues. The definitions of karst "vulnerability" ratings in Forest Service guidelines must be modified to address system management in a much stronger way. Pete managed to get hold of one such draft revision recently. But as usual, it was woefully inadequate. Tiny, blowdown prone, buffers around discrete features are still the norm (see my karst damage report in this issue). My own belief is that any karst, regardless of how extreme it is, should be off limits to timber harvest or road building.

We intend to continue to be actively involved with the Kosciusko timber sale and invite any folks interested in helping to contact a TCP director. There is also a need for some cavers to watchdog the Tuxekan Island timber sale which also has a bunch of karst. All the TCP directors believe that with some work we can help the Forest Service to take better care of our karst landscapes.

KARST DAMAGE ASSESSMENT

JUNE 11, 2000 by Kevin Allred

On June 11, 2000, Pete Smith and I drove to a couple cave entrances located in buffers left in clearcuts which were cut in the early 1990's. Our purpose was to photo document damage after nearly ten years of being clearcut. We drove in one of Pete's trucks fueled by old vegetable oil.

Captain Soup Cave: Captain Soup Cave received a buffer which extended over the surveyed passages

below. Most of the buffer has blown down, and trees are still in the process of blowing down in the area around the cave. It is a horrible jumble of uprooted trees, and we were a long time trying to find and recognize the cave entrance.

La Cherie Cave: Here in passing, I will mention that later in the summer, Pete and I went with Tim Heaton and assistants to LaCherie Cave (across the road from Captain Soup) to check up on possible Paleontological bones and found extensive windthrow damage in that area also.

Thrush Cave: We wondered if there has been recent blowdown of the failed buffer around Thrush. Jim Baichtal and I had originally flagged the border of the elongated buffer before we realized the extreme susceptibility of these small buffers to windthrow. I remember that a F.S. employee in the "timber shop" complained about our buffer being too big. It turns out it failed miserably from being way too small. The south wind soon uprooted many of the trees in the buffer in spite of it being on the leeward side of the hillside. Pete has reported that at least some of the incredible white moonmilk deposits in the cave became soiled soon after the disturbance of the uprooted trees above. Our vantage point on this photo trip was a landing to the east of the cave. From there we could not see any visible windthrow which has occurred within the last few years. However, the remaining trees, exposed as they are, look awfully vulnerable to future big wind storms.

Move the Road Cave: I was also involved in designing the buffer around this cave entrance. This one was laid out as we were becoming aware of windthrow problems, and in the early days when there was intense pressure to provide as little as possible protection of cave resources. We did succeed in getting the road moved a bit away from the entrance insurgence, but as is typical, the buffer was woefully too small. Many trees were either uprooted or snapped off in the high winds of this hillside. Kim Redmond, of the f.s., had told me that the buffer was failing even as the logging was happening. He asked my opinion that they might as well log it off to minimize the impacts to the cave, and I agreed that it would be better to log it rather

Continued on next page

than have torn up root wads filling the entrance. However, as Pete and I clambered over to the entrance, I could see they had not cut the buffer. It was a real mess, but the most serious damage were the uprooted trees situated upstream of the narrow entrance, and probably outside the boundary of the buffer and clearcut. I was also saddened to see that they had notched and destroyed some of the trees around the perimeter of our failed buffer for use as anchors for high lines. I had a hard time recognizing the general area denuded as it now is. It became apparent where lots of the debris had washed to when I got down into the entrance. I had to climb over a broken tree top and debris pile five feet high. There was no detectable breeze, which the cave previously had. It looks like the end of this once fun sporting cave for a very long time to come. I say again to the Forest Service, I'm tired of seeing the same ongoing tiny buffers around "significant karst features"....***NO MORE LOGGING ON KARST!***

President's Corner Continued from page 1

www.tongass.com

There's Tongass Caves on this site! TCP and the Glacier Grotto are about to be SCOOPED! We need to get our own site!

www.caves.org

www.bcra.org.uk

www.ffspeleo.fr

<http://users.iafrica.com/p/pe/peters/sasa/sasahome.html>

<http://rubens.its.unimelb.edu.au/~pgm/asf/>

www.netlaputa.ne.jp/~ssj/index-e.html

<http://home.coqui.net/sepri/>

<http://rubens.its.unimelb.edu.au/~pgm/uis/index.html>

Website for Tongass Clearing House:

Yep-you got it! The NSS Site

British Cave Research Association

French Federation of Speleology

South African Speleological Federation

Australian Speleological Federation

Speological Society of Japan

Puerto Rican Speleological Society

International Union of Speleology

Note: www.dictionary.com or by using babelfish.altavista.digital.com/cgi-bin/translate one can roughly translate foreign websites, giving one a general idea as to the content, if not the linguistically correct interpretation. These can be useful tools.

Wouldn't your photo look good here!
Please see page 2 for details!

taking 2 jugs then resting, 2 jugs and rest, another 2, rest, then look up to see how far he had left. He saw me and smiled. I thought "Must be OK, just taking his time."

I climbed back up a bit warmer for the effort. At the top we decided to give him 20 more minutes and check again. We all agreed, he's old, slow is OK (secretly I envied his bald head right then). Well, OK for everyone except Dan, still in the pit, trying to keep dry, and warm, and smiling at the bottom. The image of Superman Dr. Dan holed up in a wet crack in the wall did my black heart good, but I didn't feel real good about the rest of the deal. Breaking down after 10 minutes I had to have another look. When I got to the ledge I could see Dave juggling 2, resting long..., look up, now with no smile. He was half way up and a long ways down. I yelled down, "DAVE, ARE YOU OK?" This time he heard me and yelled back, "NO!"

"DO YOU WANT ME TO COME DOWN AND HELP?" Dave looked at me and this time his face showed strands of confidence breaking and unraveling, "YES, IF YOU DON'T MIND."

Man that bothered me. I couldn't see anything wrong from my perspective. I headed back up efficiently this time, not ragged like before. My mind reeled trying to decide if the look on his face was one of simple exhaustion, or was it pain from an heart attack.

I scrambled back to the top seeing Kris, Connie and Diane all had slipped out of their gear. It wasn't a time to laugh any more. I hurriedly put on my helmet, grabbed up some beaners, a rescue pick off strap and some webbing not knowing what I needed.

Big mistake #1. I was tired, wet, and others were in better shape to help.

Big mistake #2, I didn't look critically to see what might be the problem.

Big mistake #3, his skills were not known for a long drop and maybe we should have cautioned him from going down in these conditions.

Big mistake #4, he wasn't familiar with his new gear and hadn't practiced in a while.

The joy ride was over.

You want to know something strange? That water wasn't cold anymore. I dropped down in the stream right next to Dave and saw the problem. had a funky chest harness system that parted under load.

It let the chest ascender swing out from being navel level to even with his mouth and a foot strait out. Not good. The hole in the chest harness webbing now could let his head pass through and him fall out of the chest harness. Worse, the slack in the chest harness made him ball up sideways as he tried to jug up the rope. Being horizontal lifted his legs above his belly, hammock style and that was the killer. It let his too loose seat harness slip until he was hanging from his seat harness loosely around his knees and his chest harness around his neck. Not good.

2 options, swami belt him in with webbing like a spider does a struggling fly, hook on to him and lower us both down to start over after fixing his harness. Option #1 meant paying for ground 2 times, something I didn't think Dave or I was up to which meant we'd be setting up a block and tackle haul system to get us out. Option #2 made more sense about now no matter what it was.

Option 2 : hook on, position with the pick-off strap, weave a cocoon of webbing around us both and swing to the wall across the waterfall where there was a little alcove ledge we could rest and work on his equipment. It was harder than I thought. Sure I could get us to the wall, that wasn't so hard, but then I had to grab a pinch hold and hang on to the rock for dear life sucking Dave in to the wall till he could get a handhold and good footing. I hung on and Dave hauled himself to the ledge. As he moved up into the alcove, the rescue strap started pulling me out away from the hand holds I had, out into space, ripping me from Terra Vertica. All I could do is hang on, try not to break loose and let him pull me away from the wall to give Dave slack, otherwise we'd both go careening back out, into the waterfall and smashing into the opposite wall.

As tired and shaky as we were, Dave made it to a sitting position up in the nook and I hand climbed with my butt being pulled out away till I was next to him to "Better", but still not good. We jury rigged his equipment, got his harness back around his waist and cinched it all together with lots of webbing. I kept thinking a real Alaskan would have used Duck tape. When inspected just before leaving the ledge, we were happy, he couldn't come out no way, no how!

Dave was about burned out, but with a little
Continued on next page

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Dave was about burned out, but with a little
Continued on next page

encouragement, he swung back out and finished the climb. Jug 2 rest, jug 2 He rest. By now the pounding of the waterfall had me doing it too, jug 2 come up/out for air, jug 2 The lip wasn't so easy now but with effort, we made it into the glorious liquid sunshine, and collapsed. Now at long last, Dan could come out without dodging rocks flying down the hole from our thrashing about. Soon Dan poked his head above ground and said with his patented smile, "Was there a problem?" He had stayed clear and didn't see anything. I just smiled and said, "Nothing much, Dave just took the tourist route."

In the end, all was well. The harness was repaired and we all practiced our vertical skills to a fine art.

Me, well I'll remember to wear my dry suit next time. That reminds me of my next rescue on Kos

(Editors note: I have talked to several of the people involved with this incident and like all past events everyone remembers it slightly different. One thing everyone agrees on is that Dave could have been seriously hurt or killed. Everyone is also in agreement that practicing skills before they are needed is the key in preventing incidents like the one you have just read. Dave was using a system he was not familiar with and had only practiced a couple of times. Obviously practicing rescue skills came in handy when Bruce was called to give Dave a hand.

I'd also like to note that grotto members often rig two parallel ropes when dropping this pit. A more experienced caver can then climb side by side with a less experienced caver and can render assistance if required.)

Rope Cutter



The Rope Cutter is a place for cavers to voice their concerns, ideas or

gripes. Please send your entries to PO Box 9062, Retchikan AK 99901 (oops!) Make that Ketchikan. The answers and ideas in no way reflect any view of the Grotto as an entity, and may not even represent a sane viewpoint at all. We reserve the right to ignore, gloss over, edit or just plain plagiarize any entry. (A note from the editor: A Big thanks to Carlene Allred for the new Rope Cutter Logo!)

Dear Rope Cutter,

While passing through Ketchikan, Alaska, I took a stroll through the downtown district. Imagine my surprise when the sidewalk led right through a huge cavern! It is rather disappointing that the City also built a road through this impressive cave. It contains many beautiful speleothems which I will discuss later.

Fortunately, I have a PHD in karstology, and instantly recognized the passage as having phreatic origins. I noted the typical arched shape characteristic of a "pressure tube". Soda straws are numerous and sometimes nearly twelve inches long. Bacon rinds and flow stone are also common.

However, two things make this cave unique among the thousands I have personally traversed. Odd cracks or seams run quite evenly up around the surprisingly smooth ceiling. But more strange are the blade-like stalactites (all some six to eight inches long which appear to have been extruded into the cave). Their reddish color indicates a high iron content. I have devised a theory as to their origins and growth mechanisms, but refrain from burdening the simple-minded readers of The

Alaskan Caver. Suffice it to say, this cave deserves protection from the present automobile traffic, and the two entrances should be revegetated. The cave should be thoroughly explored and surveyed. It's blade-like speleothems may be unique to the world and should be studied by scientists. Finally, I propose that a conservation fund be formed for the purpose of purchasing this natural wonder and protecting it's beauty. If you are interested in saving this glorious gem for generations to come, send your tax-free donations to: Save Ketchi Cave Fund, Box 376, Haines, AK 99827 -- Dr. S.

Dear Dr. Science;

I can imagine how excited you must have been to find a cave, and a through trip, in the middle of Ketchikan. It goes to show that we often overlook features in our own backyard.

Did you observe the historic graffiti etched into the opening with the year 1954?

I first want to tell you the story of this "cave", as I know it. It may change some of your initial impressions. Some towns are divided by a set of railroad tracks. Ketchikan was trying to be unique and so it decided to divide itself into old town and new town by the flank of a mountain. All that remains of this history is the name of Newtown Liquor. This is a fitting salute for a town like Ketchikan with it's many establishments for obtaining intoxicating beverages. Perhaps like now, some politician saw the chance to embellish his career with a big project. So a hole was blasted through the flank of the mountain. The hole was then smoothed out with concrete. If this "cave" did have phreatic origins, all traces of the original shape have been modified. So depending on how far you can stretch your caving ethics on use of dynamite in a cave, I don't think anyone would call this a pristine cave.

You do have a point about the formations in this cave. I see a grant for someone (from the government & private donations) to research and document the dissolution rate of concrete. I have my own pet theory about the

Continued on next page

rust streaks, re:bar. Another study could be done on the effects of carbon monoxide and horn honking on the organisms that live in this "cave". I know that many cavers have been distressed about the effects of road building on karst. This cave would allow us a chance to study the effects of road building through a cave. I do believe that the only way you could sell the "closure" of this "cave" to the leaders of Ketchikan would be to show it's opportunities as a tourist attraction. After all the "cave" is already equipped with a concrete walkway with handrails, so no modification would be needed to assure tourist safety and protection of the "cave".

Once again Dr. Science, we must thank you for drawing our attention to a unique feature on this diverse planet of ours. However, I do wish to point out that *The Alaskan Caver* is the premier place for scientific discussions. I resent any dispersions you might cast by calling it's readers "simple-minded". After all, they are readers of my column which shows that their intelligence can not be so easily dismissed.

Your Favorit Concrete Caver, Preda Phreatic

Deer roap cudder,
Wut do u doo about uh cave
lyer? This dude lies jest abot
evree theng!! he don't
membur nutheng raight. he
things hes the heero an onlee
won wo gits wet. he things
hes smrat an karfull but hes
dangjerus and stoopid. sined,
Ahabonook (th u man hoo
suprizes)

Dear Ahabonook,

Unless you are as stupid as this cave liar (which wouldn't suprise me from your letter) you should avoid this caving companion like the Jonah he is.

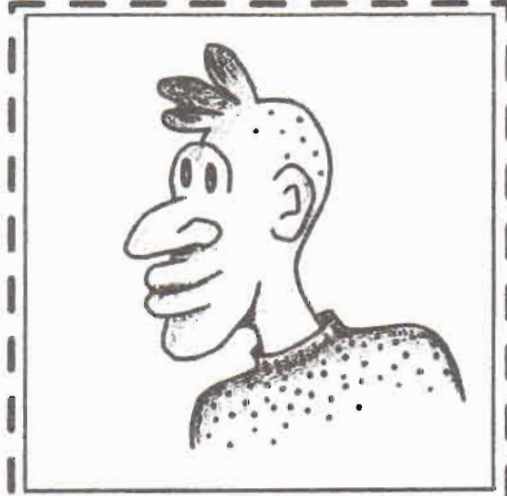
Although many non-cavers may perceive people who cave as incredible prevaricators, this is far from the truth. When you are telling a non-caver

the facts about a caving trip you can watch the disbelief form on their faces. This is because they have never had a greater adventure then the time they locked their car keys inside the car on the way to a job interview. (Yes, I wrote the "J" word, which must be painful to some of you!)

In fact many cavers I know understate the "adventures" they have in a cave. Just follow the directions of one of these cavers sometime. Directions can sound like this: Drop an easy pit, go down the left passage, through a small constriction and then you'll see some formations. This translates to: A horrendous pit with loose rock, two redirectionals, a rebelay, down a passage that has a foot of mud when you are not swimming, through a hole so tight that Cristy Brinkley or even Twiggy would have to exhale to pass to a star spangled disneyland cavern of formations.

Yes, put on your running shoes (if you know how to tie them) and run don't walk away from this dude. This is only is you want to avoid making the NSS book of caving accidents.

Rubber Caver For Sale



That's right, the Rubber Caver is for sale! Carlene and Kevin Allred have put together 36 pages of the Rubber Caver as a fund raising for the Grotto. Get yours now for only \$6.00!!!! Send the bucks along with your address to:
Glacier Grotto / Rubber Caver
P.O. Box 9062
Ketchikan AK 99901

Glacier Grotto 2000 Membership

Alaska State Library, PO Box 110571	Juneau AK 99811-0571
Allred Family PO Box 376	Haines AK 99827
Bowers, William Harvey 4725 Begich Circle	Wasilla AK 99654
Bowles, G c/o FpMendoza AP2146 Jalapa Nueva SegoviaNicaragua	Central America
Branson, Peter PO Box 1259	Wrangell AK 99929
Burger, Raymond PO Box 672349	Chugiak AK 99567
Connor & Flynn 745 5th ST	Douglas AK 99824 cathy.connor@uas.alaska.edu
Covington, Matt 2899 Brookbury Xing	Fayetteville AR 72703 mdcovin@comp.uark.edu
Dixon E James 1560 30th St Campus Box 450	Boulder CO 80309-0450
C/o CU Arctic & Alpine Research	jdixon@spot.cocorodo.edu
Eash, Art PO Box 240801	Anchorage AK 99524-0801 arteash@hotmail.com
Easterson, Kris 1235 Myrtle ST	Sanford FL 32773
Hallinan, Dr Thomas & N 1617 Wolverine Ln	Fairbanks AK 99709-6628
Hicks, Bob 3000 Iliamna Ave	Anchorage AK 995 divelaw@micronet.net
Jaynes, Mike PO Box 1424	Ward Cove AK 99928
Kemp & Olmsted PO BOX 571	Tenakee Springs AK 99841
Ketchikan Pub. Library 629 Dock St	Ketchikan AK 99901
Klinger, Col. David M PO Box 537	Leavenworth WA 98826
Knotts, Rob R PO Box 252	Lambert MT 59423
Lane Family 40 Hidden Brook Ln	Signal Mountain TN 37377
Langendown, Richard 342 Winslow Way W #2	Bainbridge Island Wa 98110
LaPerriere Family PO Box 9062	Ketchikan AK 99901-4062
Lewis, Steve & Myron R. PO Box 167	Tatitlek AK 99677
Love, David General Delivery	Petersburg AK 99833-9999 david_love@adfg.state.ak.us
Maves, Shelton PO Box 117	Craig AK 99921
Monteith, Dan PO Box 23608	Ketchikan AK 99901
Moore, Jim PO Box 770	Haines AK 99827
Moore, Tony PO Box 779	Craig AK 99921
Morgan, Barbara PO Box Edb	Ketchikan AK 99950
Murray Alan J 57 Main ST	Ketchikan AK 99950
Nelson, Robert PO Box 5416	Ketchikan AK 99950
Olson, Wallace & Marie PO Box 210961	Auke Bay AK 99821 wmolson@ptialaska.net
Pairan, Paul (Pete) 6702 Lunar DR	Anchorage AK 99504-4574
Pease, Chuck & Vann, C PO BOX 10130	Prescott AZ 83604-0730 cpease@mwas.com
Perrigo, Dalene & Lyle 1921 Congress Cir Apt B	Anchorage AK 99507
Raab, Diane PO Box 5114	Ketchikan AK 99901-0115
Richard Hall 7040 Gibbs Hill	Anchorage AK 99504 rhall@alaska.net
Rockwell, Dr Julius & E 2944 Emory ST	Anchorage AK 99508-4466
Sandhofer, Paul F PO Box 91333	Anchorage AK 99509
Skippy Address unknown	
Smestad, Randy PO Box 5855	Ketchikan AK 99901-0855
Smith, Dr G Warren 251 Maltby Ave	Slippery Rock PA 16057
Smith, Pete PO Box WWP	Ketchikan AK 99950
Sonnenberg, Gary 1377 Pond Reef Rd	Ketchikan AK 99901
Southeast Alaska C.C. 419 6th Street, Ste 328	Juneau AK 99801
Valentine, David B 11976 N Tongass	Ketchikan AK 99901
Vis, William B 112 Reading Ave	Trenton NJ 08618
Walker, Sharon 932 Carlanna LK Rd B-22	Ketchikan AK 99901
White, Bruce PO Box 7531	Ketchikan AK 99901

Note: If your email address is not listed, Please send it with your renewal for 2001.

Thank You.

Glacier Grotto Application

Please complete appropriate items below and mail with payment to:

Connie LaPerriere, Treasurer

Glacier Grotto

PO Box 9062 Ketchikan AK 99901

Help support cave conservation, join both the Glacier Grotto and the National Speleological Society (NSS). We are happy to accept NSS members, but non NSS members are also welcomed. Do your part to save the caves and protect one of America's most endangered environments. Glacier Grotto dues are \$15.00 per year \$20.00 per family. Add \$8.00 for overseas airmail. The Alaskan Caver is sent one to each household. The membership year begins January 1. If joining late in the year please let us know if you want the current year or next year. Institutional membership is \$20.00 for 6 issues regardless of the date.

Name (s)

Mailing Address

.....

.....

NSS #

Phone Home

Phone Work

E-Mail

Other names (family membership)

.....

.....

Will Glacier Grotto be your primary Grotto and will the Glacier Grotto represent you at the NSS Congress of Grottoes?

If No which Grotto will be?

..... I am (we are) joining the Glacier Grotto enclosed is a \$15.00 check for single membership or a \$20.00 for a family membership.

Meetings are held in Anchorage (907) 376-2294, Fairbanks, (907) 479-7257 and Ketchikan (907) 225-2500 or 225-2983. Telephone for time and location.

Back issues of the Alaskan Caver are available at a cost of \$2.50 each, contact Connie LaPerriere, PO Box 9062 Ketchikan AK 99901

Thank you, and Happy Caving!

See Page 8 For
Ee-Stream-Ly Fishy Cave

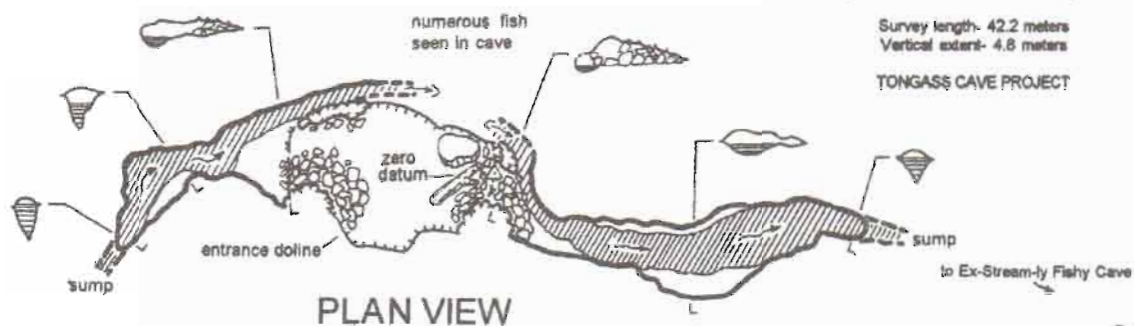
MILKMAN CAVE

KOSCIUSKO ISLAND, TONGASS NATIONAL FOREST
ALASKA

Compass, Inclinator and Tape Survey, June 15,
1999 by Jun Koike and Hide Abe. Map by C. Allred.

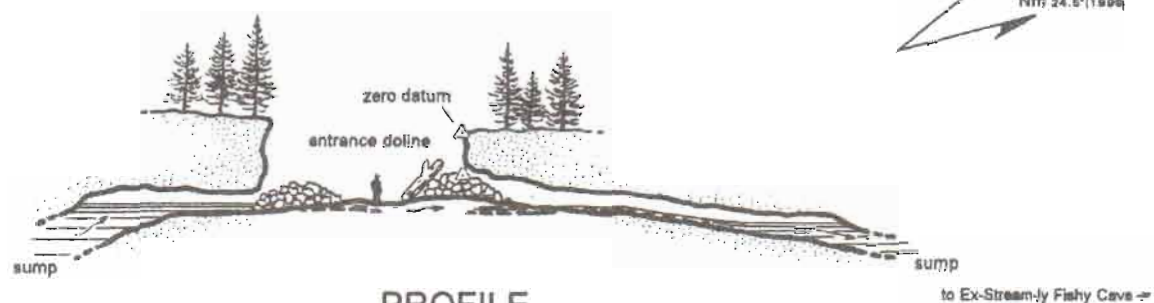
Survey length- 42.2 meters
Vertical extent- 4.8 meters

TONGASS CAVE PROJECT



LEGEND

- entrance dripline
- passage wall
- unsurveyed passage
- rocks and breakdown
- vertical drop
- stream, plan view
- stream, profile



0 5 10 20
meters

©1999 by Carlene Allred

THE ALASKAN CAVER

P.O. Box 9062
Ketchikan, AK 99901

Address Service Requested