

Objective: The Mighty Mount Stephen with possible bonus summit the following day.

Date: August 29 & 30, 2020

Difficulty: Climbers scramble – must be comfortable climbing unroped on class 4 terrain.

Fitness Requirement: Very good. This climb entails over 1900m of altitude up and down in a single day.

Group size: Maximum of four people including leader.

Leader: Jake Van Allen

I am looking for 3 participants for a late August scramble up Mount Stephen. Mount Stephen looms large above the town of Field, BC, with nearly 2000m of relief to the highway. The mountain has a storied history as it was the first Rockies peak over 3050m with a confirmed summit. The peak was named for one time President of the CPR who, quite remarkably, reciprocated with the naming by including “Mount” in his title, making him Lord Mount Stephen.

You can expect a long and difficult day on the mountain for this summit, the lower part being a bit of a grind with most of the more difficult climbing coming at the very end, where terrain appears to go up to fourth class. There is some real exposure on this climb so if you are not comfortable with exposure, this is not a climb for you. Retreat from this mountain would be difficult so recognize that it is important not to oversell your abilities in considering this trip. This climb also demands solid mountain fitness as the plan is to do it in one day, elevation demands being 1920m up and 1920m down. I will carry a rope for safety reasons but the plan is for unroped climbing up and down. I note that I am not a guide and this is not a guided trip, so you need to have your own mountain knowledge and be comfortable making your own decisions.

Logistically the plan is this: I will drive out to Field on Friday the 27th and obtain the requisite permits for summiting this peak (specific permission is required as the trail passes through fragile fossil zones). Anyone who wishes to join me early on Friday is welcome to do so but anyone who cannot simply needs to arrive in the Field area (camping location to be determined) Friday evening, prepared to camp and make an alpine start on Saturday morning. We will climb all day Saturday and return to the campsite Saturday night for (hopefully) a celebratory drink and some sleep. Provided the weather is good, and people are keen, we could knock off a bonus peak in the area – perhaps Walcott Peak – before heading back home. This trip is of course weather dependent and if the fickle weather in this area does not cooperate, we can possibly consider another peak closer to the Columbia valley.

If you are interested in this trip, please get in touch with me by e-mail at jake@mackenziepeak.com. In your e-mail please give me a brief summary of your climbing experience and fitness level so that I can make sure we have a good, cohesive group, for this legendary summit.