

## Canada

### ST. ELIAS RANGE

#### *Kluane National Park and Reserve, summary.*

The weather in this region is generally unforgiving and unpredictable during the climbing season. High winds, thick clouds, and heavy snowfalls are the bane of pilots and climbers alike. In 2007 a steady cycle of low pressure cells, spinning off waves of

cold, humid air, developed over the northern Gulf of Alaska. Most groups found themselves waiting for days for a clear break in the weather to fly the 100km to their base camp. No group was spared the experience of spending three, four, or five days at a time huddled in the tent, taking turns digging out spindrift before the tent walls collapsed.

This year there were a high number of failed attempts. Only one group, three Canadians, stepped onto the main summit of Mt. Logan, via the King Trench route. Several other groups fought their way through blizzards to the plateau and up minor peaks of Logan. All groups reported battling wave after wave of high winds and extremely cold temperatures.

Two climbers from the U.K. climbed Lowell Peak (3,630m), just west of Pinnacle Peak, via its west ridge. This may be a first ascent.

Attempts were also made on the North Ridge of Mt. Kennedy, the south face of Mt. Logan, the East Ridge of Mt. Logan, the Southeast Ridge of Mt. Steele, and unclimbed Mt. Saskatchewan in the Centennial Range. These expeditions all reported poor snow conditions as their main problem.

Despite poor weather and conditions, there were no serious accidents or search and rescues. One group reported a team member falling 10 feet, unroped, into a crevasse on the King Trench route. She was retrieved unscathed but shaken. Another climber was assisted down that route with undiagnosed chest pains. Several climbers, especially those who spent considerable time at high elevations, reported mild cases of frostbite to fingers and toes.

In 2007 there were 115 people in 33 mountaineering groups registered for the Icefield Ranges of Kluane. Eighty-two people were on the King Trench route of Mt. Logan. Only one pair of climbers attempted the East Ridge, and three people attempted a south face route on Mt. Logan. Twenty people participated in ski tours or were involved in glaciological or biological research within the Icefields.

Anyone interested in mountaineering in the Icefield Ranges of Kluane National Park and Reserve must register with the Kluane National Park Warden office. Call 1-867-634-7279 to speak to a warden, or check out our website at [www.pc.gc.ca/pn-np/yt/kluane/](http://www.pc.gc.ca/pn-np/yt/kluane/).

ANDREW LAWRENCE, *Park Warden, Kluane National Park and Reserve*



*Lowell Peak, West Ridge.* Dave Hesleden and I visited the St. Elias Range planning to climb a route on either Pinnacle Peak (3,714m) or Lowell Peak (3,630m). We flew onto the Lowell Glacier from Kluane Lake on May 1 and made a camp at ca 2,000m, where we could easily access both