

Thursday Tour, 4th February 2010

By Derek Wills

Rendezvous: 10:15 a.m. at Municipal Filtration Plant Car Park Ste-Adèle

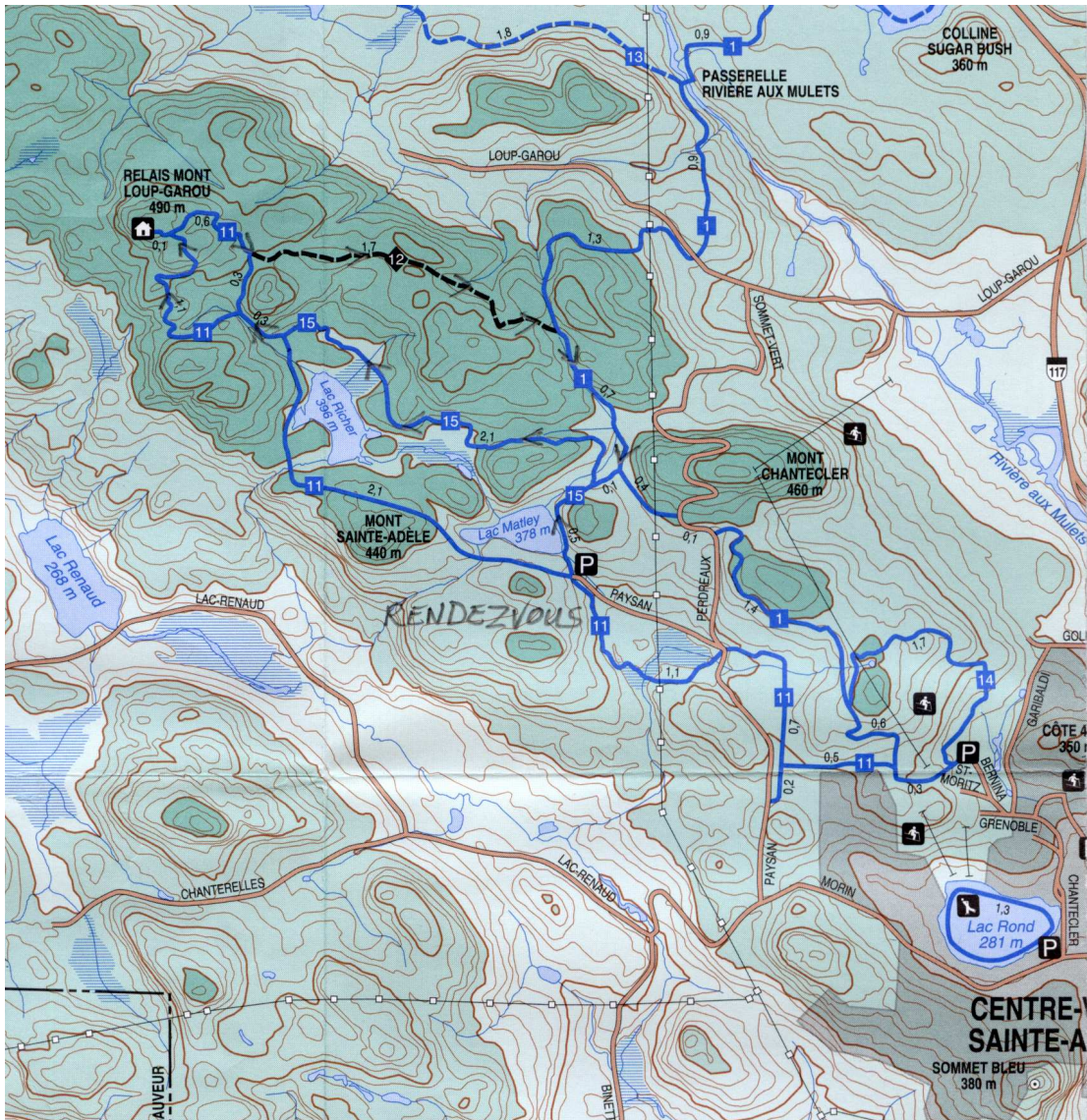
Trails skied: Grande-Jaune (No.15), Loup-Garou (No. 11), Alexis (No.12)

Round trip skied ~ 13 km On-trail duration ~ 3 hours

Conditions: -12 °C, sunny and clear, pr epped trail with fresh snow cover

Trail Map info: Carte des sentiers de Sainte-Adèle

Keen to rise to the top were 17 keeners: Gordon & Sorel Cohen, Chris Lyle, Murray Moss & Judy Lazarus, Ismo & Eeva-Liisa Makkonen, Paul Lord, Celia Lang, Howard Bussey, Linda Collier, Erik Vikander, Audrey Speck, Sheila Mason, Dick Pickering, Tim Baker, & Derek Wills.



For the x-c ski community, the municipality of Ste-Adèle is really quite generous inasmuch there are no trail use fees, and some half dozen free parking lots are conveniently located for sorties off onto the ski trail network.

Although there are no warm-up facilities, the main trails are all nicely track set.

Our rendezvous point doubles as the access parking for the municipal Filtration Plant; although not so sure it is that comforting being so close to a stock pile of chlorine!

From here, the ascent to the top of Loup-Garou is an easy 4 km



Here at the Filtration Plant car park, the usual chaos of arriving, parking, extracting gear, discussions about which skis to deploy, which wax, where's my lunch, who's got a trail map....it's cold, let's get going etc. etc. !!



Nice to have some sun at last, what's this, a sign for down hill?...but I thought we were going up to a summit?



Here the troops dutifully wait at a “T” junction for the leader’s guidance as to which way to go; he mistakenly sends them off to the left, but a second opinion from Audrey strongly suggests that we should go to the right....and indeed she is correct!

All to say that tour leaders should not be mistaken for certain religious leaders whose word is considered infallible!!

Always get a second opinion!

And so we reach the summit of Loup-Garou at 490 m elevation.

The so-called Relais has sadly suffered from the destructive abuses of the visiting public.

Disappointed that the tour leader had not got the interior wood stove going to permit a warm lunch stop, a chilled half of the group head off back down, leaving the other half to enjoy a Montreal skyline lunch!!



Montreal Skyline at 60 km



The Loup-Garou summit must be quite unique in offering a view of Montreal at 60 km distant, being un-obscured by either hills or trees.



For lunch atop Loup-Garou, we were joined by an avian community of chickadees, tucking into a generously donated feast aloft, but still opportunistic for any fallen crumbs from dinners below !!

For a more interesting return down from the summit of Loup-Garou, the dining group took the ALEXIS "Très difficile" designated trail, which turned out to be "Très bon" with fresh powder covering and no evidence of any other skiers? Seems the non-dining group had missed the turn-off and returned by the same trail as we had ascended.





As “make-up mileage”, we sort of re-grouped and skied around a loop comprising the No. 11 and the No. 15 trails. Then, with at least 13 km under our belts, we retreated to the sinful cafe bistro La Chocolaterie Marie Claude in Ste-Adèle to indulge hot chocolates etc.

For the proprietors, a welcome Viking invasion as we occupied every seat available!!!





And so another Thursday ski tour is concluded, and euphoric chocolate chemicals kick in!!!