Note:

The unmarked trail on the map above going east from Highway 16 (Shoe Tree) to Grassy Bay is no longer recommended.

Trail Maintenance:

The Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts looks after major trail maintenance but the trail is considered to be "user maintained".

Interpretive Sites:

There are a number of interpretive signs along the trail. Each sign provides information on the most common plants, ferns and tree species found in the Coastal Western Hemlock Biogeoclimatic Zone.

Picnic Areas:

There are 2 picnic areas located on the trail along the shoreline, past the lookout.

Butze Rapids Interpretive Trail

Enjoy your visit but remember if future generations are to enjoy their visits, you must leave the trail undamaged. Flowers, trees, plants and even rocks are part of the area natural resources.

Motor vehicles and bicycles, including motorcycles, ATV's and similar vehicles, are not allowed on the trail.

Photo: Bob Cuthbert

Please report all forest fires.
Phone: 1 800 663-5555.

For more information on recreation opportunities visit our web site at: ***www.tca.gov.bc.ca/publicrec/***

BRITISH COLUMBIA
The Best Place on Earth

Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts

Recreation Sites and Trails Branch

Butze Rapids Interpretive Trail

Visitors Map and Guide

Photo: Bob Cuthbert

BRITISH COLUMBIA
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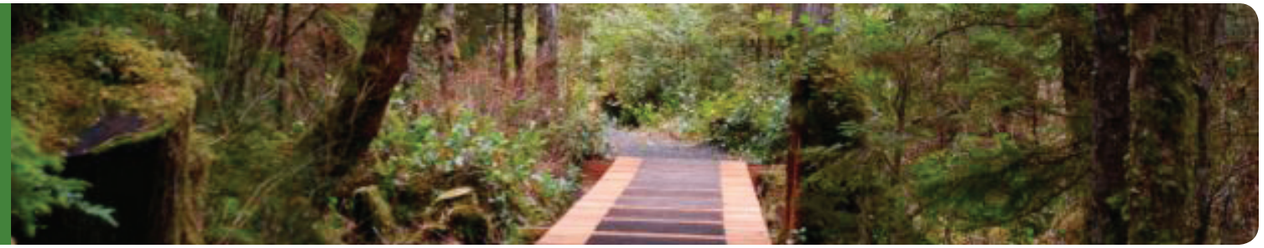
Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts

Butze Rapids Interpretive Trail



Difficulty: Easy

Hiking length: 5.4 kilometres

Time: 1.5 hours (Return to parking lot)

Access

A very popular and easy hiking trail located ten minutes (5 km) by car from Prince Rupert or take the Port Edward bus and get off at the Butze stop provided by the Prince Rupert Transit System. To get to the parking lot from Prince Rupert, take the first left after the Industrial Park turn off on Highway 16.

You can view Butze Rapids from the parking lot (also the location of the "Welcome to Prince Rupert" sign) or take an easy 1.9 km (30 minutes) hike to the viewing platform.

History

The rapids were named after Mr. A. Butze who was a purchasing agent for the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway in 1907.

The trail was first constructed in 1992 as a joint community forest project between the City of Prince Rupert and the Ministry of Forests. The trail offers an easy hike looping through a rain forest ecosystem to a viewpoint above the reversing tidal rapids and past many interpretive stops. Deer, wolves, bears and bald eagles and other local wildlife may be seen in the area. Evidence of past First Nations use can be seen by the many bark stripped cedar trees along the trail.

The name "Kaien", comes from Sm'algyax for "foaming waters" (caused by the reversing rapids in Fern Passage). The area is part of the traditional area of the Tsimshian First Nations and is the Tribal Territory of the Gitwilgyoot's Tribe (People of the Kelp). There are many culturally modified trees (CMTs) in the area, which are protected under the Heritage Conservation Act.

Butze Rapids

Butze Rapids is a natural feature, which is due to the ebb and flow of the tide around Kaien Island causing the narrow body of water (Fern Passage) to reverse or change direction on the flood and ebb of each tide. This phenomenon of the reversing tidal rapids is most dramatic when there are extreme tide ranges and during peak flows between high and low water. To view this spectacular display of reversing tides, there is a lookout/viewpoint 1800 meters from the Butze Parking Lot or 975 meters from the Butze Rapids/Grassy Bay Trail Junction.

The trail winds through second and old growth forests, in the Coastal Western Hemlock biogeoclimatic zone. Many open muskegs swamps or bogs where "bonsai" type Shore Pine are stunted due to the poor growing conditions.

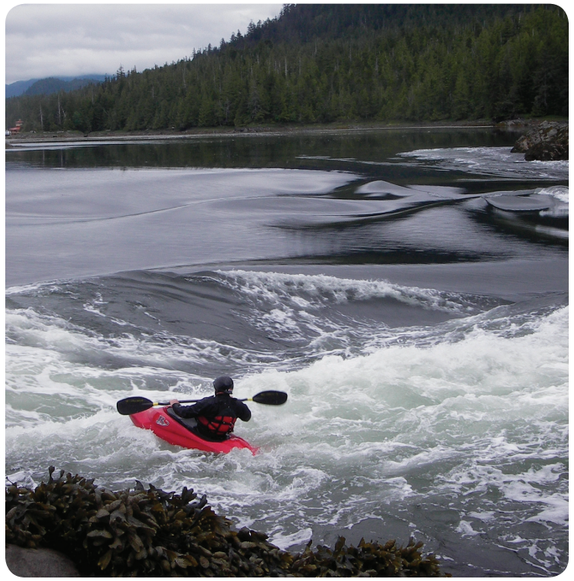


Photo: Clint Hartman

Watersports

Besides hiking, whitewater kayakers enjoy surfing and hole-riding the reversing tidal rapids at Butze Rapids. These rapids are comparable to Skookumchuck Rapids on British Columbia's south coast, but with more variety. Tides of 4.5 - 6.0 metres (15 -19 ft) offer the best action. ***Warning:*** kayaking the rapids can be extremely hazardous.

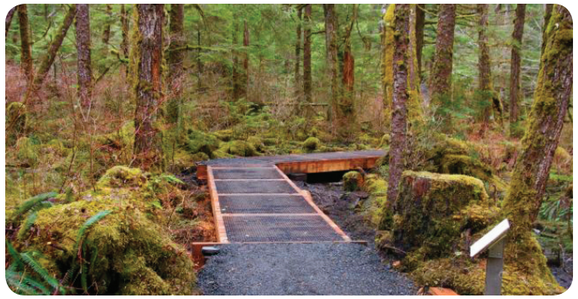
Safety Tips

Wildlife:

All wild animals are potentially dangerous and may be encountered anytime. Bears and wolves are have been known to frequent the area and it is advised not to let pets off their leash or better, leave them at home. While the risk of attack is low, be alert for bear or wolf sign such as scats or tracks and make lots of noises when hiking.

Trail/Rapids:

There are many boardwalks that make up the trail. These can be very slippery when wet. Wear appropriate footwear and watch where you are stepping. Strong tidal rapids along parts of the trail are potentially dangerous, keep children under supervision.



Forest Etiquette

Enjoy your visit and at the same time, preserve the wilderness for future users, be aware of your safety and respect the environment.

Observe the following trail ethics:

- Stay on the established trails when hiking (especially through bogs).
- Do not cut corners on switchbacks.
- Do not pick wildflowers.
- Pack out any litter that you may find.
- Report adverse trail conditions to the local B.C. Forest Service office or the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts.

Funding for trail maintenance provided, in part by:

Triumph Timber

Rapids Trail is managed in co-operation with

FOREST SERVICE · BRITISH COLUMBIA

Ministry of Forests and Range
North Coast Forest District

This brochure is produced with assistance from:

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