

The CPR Trail

Arrowsmith CPR Trail

The Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) in 1910 built a tourist chalet at the East end of Cameron Lake. In 1912 the CPR built this historic trail to service guests at their Cameron Lake resort to an overnight hut at 4200 feet on the slopes of Mt. Cokely. From here visitors could do an easy day hike to Cokely or a more challenging day to Arrowsmith's summit. This trail, known as the Old Arrowsmith trail to some and to others as the Cameron Lake trail, is still very popular to this day and is the oldest intact trail on Vancouver Island.

The views from the trail are spectacular. The trail winds steadily uphill from Hwy 4 through Island Timberlands Limited Partnership private forest lands to the Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District's park, site of the old Mount Arrowsmith ski hill, now defunct.

This is a good four hour climb on rough but ready trail to the old ski hill – and network of Mount Cokely trails – with a great lookout about half way. The upper half of the Arrowsmith CPR Trail is a large loop; the entire trail length is about 10 km including the loop and total elevation gain about 1000 metres.

Regional District of Nanaimo websites on the area: <http://www.rdn.bc.ca/cms.asp?wpID=1429>

Regional parks and Trail Guide: <http://parksgo.ca/rdn/arrowsmith-cpr-trail/>

Map Reference: http://www.portaec.net/trail/mt_arrowsmith_cpr_historic_trail.html

A great history can be found here: http://www3.telus.net/Mount_Arrowsmith/history.html

Exceptional book called **Beyond Nootka - A historical Perspective of Vancouver Island Mountains** by Lindsay Elms. For more information go here: <http://members.shaw.ca/beyondnootka/>