

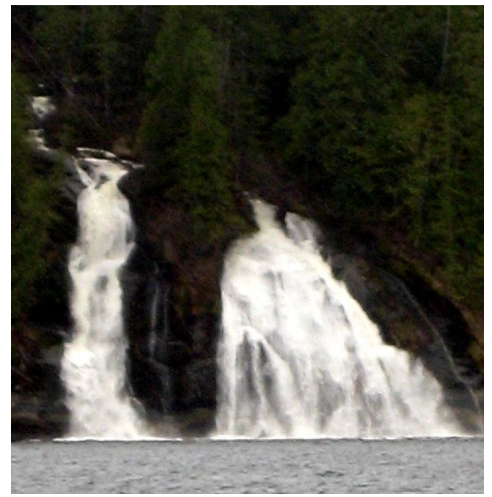
Seagate and Wild Blue Alaska Cruise – Saturday, May 10, 2008

Last night it rained and blew a bit. Our barometer dropped then leveled off at 1010 millibars. Winds were forecast up to 45 knots in our region but very little wind penetrated Bottleneck Cove. We slept good.

Today's destination is Bishop Bay Hot Springs and we've brought our swimsuits to bath in an unending stream of hot water that is tasteless, odorless and colorless. To get there we need to depart at 9AM for near slack waters at Hiekish Narrows. Slack water means little or no current. Sometimes we wait for more current when it's in our favor, and not too fast. IMB, one of the boats that followed us from Shearwater and anchored with us last night in Bottleneck Cove, left just before us. Another boat approached the narrows about the same time as us. When you see lots of boats going your direction through a narrows, it most likely means you timed it right for the currents.



Light rain continued throughout the day yet the temperature remained mild. This rain coupled with melting snow creates waterfalls all along our route. Here's just a few of the dozens of pretty falls we saw.





(← Many towns have been abandoned in northern BC as forestry and fishing decline. This is Butedale, once a thriving Inside Passage community.)



(← We aren't the only cruisers on the Passage. CruiseWest.com operates small, intimate cruising aboard ships like this 150 footer Spirit of Discovery we met off Butedale watching a pod of Orca Whales.)

After 53 miles, about 6 hours, we pulled into Bishop Bay Hot Springs. The dock was empty so we slide into position one on each side of the float and headed to the hot springs.



(← The boats side tied at Bishop Bay Hot Springs dock.)



(← Some signs we ignored, like this one posted at the head of the dock.



(Seagate crew in the Springs)



(← Wild Blue crew in the Springs admiring the ancient artwork.)



Just after we finished our bath, two boats came and wanted the dock, so we decided to push onto another anchorage. It would be Coghlan Anchorage or Hartley Bay, about three hours away. Experienced Alaska cruisers Chuck and Ellen Wood said Hartley Bay was a good stop so that's where we choose. Hartley Bay turned out to have internet wi-fi with great speed. Alex was able to upload several Alaska Blog reports. IMB the boat we keep running into was there too.

(← The boats on the dock in Hartley Bay.)

The Hartley Bay community is recently famous for rescuing the passengers and crew from the BC Ferry *Queen of the North*. Two years ago, the Queen ran aground on nearby Gil Island about 1AM and sank within an hour. Upon hearing the distress call, the entire community went out in their boats for the rescue. Only two out of 101 souls aboard were lost. Cause of the accident rumored to be romance in the pilothouse between the pilot and helmsperson. Google “Queen of the North” to get all the details and photos.



(← Seagate’s pilothouse is a hub of activity when the boats are on the move.)

Tomorrow we push up the Grenville Channel. Although 40 miles long and quite straight, it was made by Mother Nature. If you get on the wrong side of the current in this channel, it’s best to anchor and wait for favorable tides.