

# PROSPECT / REFUGE

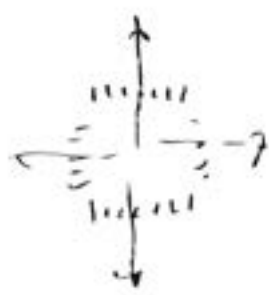
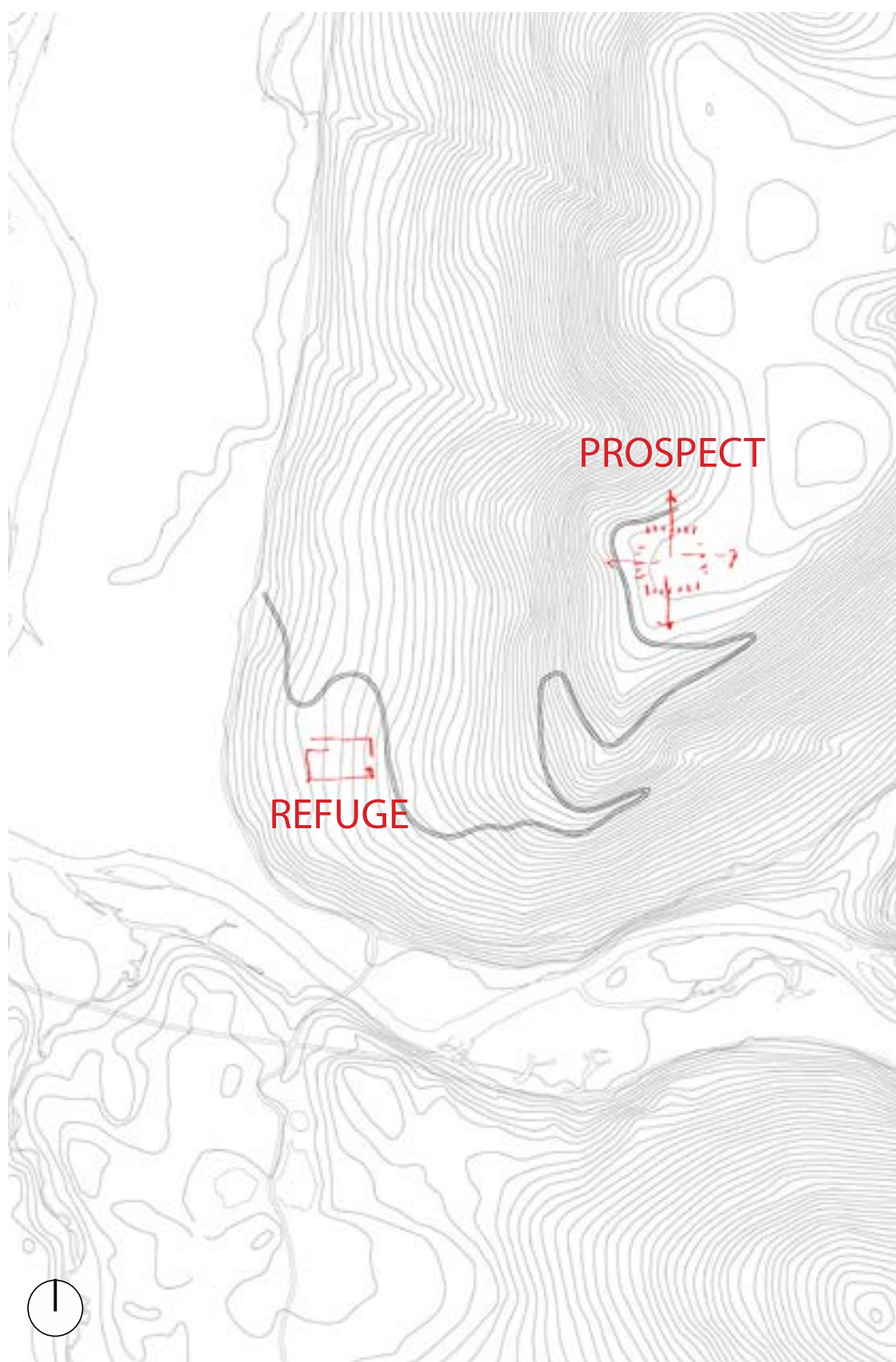
The Prospect and Refuge structures are an exercise in design and build. Multipurpose structure and warming hut prototype situated on MacKenzy Mountain in Margaree Forks, Cape Breton, shelter hikers and skiers from the Les Suêtes winds. It is important to engage with the material culture of this place. The architects have undertaken a life-long critical study of local buildings including barns, farmhouses, fishing sheds and vernacular houses. The studies' material culture involves both an understanding of the local building tradition and its typical materials and methods of construction. Research themes of wood construction, prefab vs shop fabrication and material culture framed the design discussions and direction. In order to achieve this, the architects and students studied the natural properties of various wood species as they are used in agricultural and shipbuilding constructions to explore and determine which to use for the various structures.

The architects led groups of students from Dalhousie University faculty of Architecture and Planning in the design and build of these structures. The design conversations focused on form, materiality, and construction sequencing.

These projects were each designed and built in a two week period as part of the architecture students' free-lab studio and the result is a pair of buildings - Prospect is situated at 1000 ft elevation at the top of a trail to overlook the valley, and Refuge is at 300 ft on the side of the mountain nestled in its surroundings - each complimenting and referencing the nature surrounding it.

Prospect is made of a mix of hemlock and naturally preserved cedar. It resembles a forest of birch trees, naturally aged and grayed wood spaced and notched, cladd the exterior of the structure. Together with the architects, the students studied various configurations for the cladding and developed a design for prefabricated wood cladding panels that emulate the mottling of the existing birch trees on the site. Cedar boards stand on edge in a seemingly random, but very intentional pattern to achieve this.

Refuge is made of rough sawn spruce timber. To protect the spruce from the elements, a bitumen waterproofing was placed on the reverse board and batten wall and roof envelope. It has a very taught skin with no overhangs and a skirt that is scribed to the ground, this is to minimize the effects from extreme up lift from the prevailing Suetes winds. Openings in the hut are small, creating a dimly lit space. A bench and table focus on the front loading woodstove, the fire gives light and warmth in contrast to the extreme elements. The processional sequence starts on the trail as you step off one is greeted by the firewood piles they guide you to the bridge and then into the recessed covered entry. The door is made of larch wood recycled from a local larch wood business. The handle in the door was made of lathed larch wood with a simple sliding block of wood recessed into the door frame - it is always unlocked.



PROSPECT

