

Bulkley Valley Cross Country Ski Club

Nordic Centre Report for 2020 AGM

Like I said in last year's report, "The Nordic Centre is getting better each year."

Trail improvements

Previous trail work to improve drainage and smooth out trail surfaces really paid off last ski season when we were able to have good skiing despite low snow conditions until January. This year, Recreation Sites and Trails BC is funding \$40,000 of work on early season trails. The Club's share is \$5,000 which will come from our operational budget for trail maintenance. RSTBC has provided huge support over the last few years.

Kiosk and Signs

Brant Dahlie's awesome woodworking skills produced the beautiful and helpful information kiosk for the lower parking lot. New signs makes it much clearer how to buy a ticket, where to go and how to practice good dog skiing etiquette.

Machines

Norther Development Initiative Trust provided \$30,000 towards the **tracked skid-steer** that we bought last summer. We outfitted it with a plow and mower. Our crew is gaining expertise with this versatile machine. Last winter, it handled most of the parking and access plowing and this summer Geoff Recknell and Kevin Kriese mowed our trails with the skid steer.

A key strategy in our management plan has been to optimize maintenance and use of our biggest asset, our **PistenBully Edge tracksetter**. Last year's challenges with the PistenBully are described in detail in the [January](#) and [February Nordic Centre Notes](#). Synopsis: We have been giving the PB lots of love but it still broke down a couple times last winter. Not a lemon. Not too old. It is a great machine well suited to our trails. But like any complex machine, it requires more maintenance and will have down times. So we are improving our fleet to we have more backup options. Smaller machines are also better for low snow conditions and cheaper when we don't need the PB's full capabilities.

Another way we are taking care of our PistenBully is by building a new **tracksetter garage** that will be dry, heatable and roomy enough to do maintenance on the PB or any of our machines. The Club allocated \$40,000 towards the new building, mostly from previous logging profit grants from Wetzin'kwa. This summer we received a Wetzin'kwa community grant for another \$15,000 towards the garage. And we are waiting for a decision on a \$57,000 grant application. A keen crew has been working on plans, permits and estimates and they decided to volunteer their time to get the slab foundation built this fall so that it will be much easier to complete the project next year. Steve Howard, Brant Dahlie, Wally Lesawich, John Schibli contributed many hours of skilled labour to getting the slab foundation done. Eerik Lilles donated his professional services. Kevin Kriese and Jack Stratton also helped out.

Last winter we started a [fundraiser](#) for a **new auxiliary tracksetter**. We had great support! 37 personal donations plus a related employer donation and some top-up from Nordiq Canada resulted in \$13,039 so far. We were hoping to get an Alpina Sherpa but the machine and groomer had a \$73,000 price tag. Given available funding and other priorities, we would not be able to buy the Sherpa this year. Given the imperative to improve the reliability of our tracksetting backup and given the fundraiser support from members, we decided to forgo the expensive Sherpa and instead buy a more affordable tracked quad.

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The quad is on order now using money raised to date plus borrowing from some internal funds. We will relaunch the fundraiser and look for other sources to finish funding the \$21,000 tracked quad. (About \$6,000 to go so stay tuned). We have a separate grant application for a Tiddtech G2 groomer (similar to the Ginzu) which would allow us to run two auxiliary tracksetters at once.

Other Challenges

We had a not-so-small challenge of a new virus going around last spring. We had to sort of shut down. We cancelled the Loppet and shut the lodge but we kept up the grooming as long as there was groomable snow. We had to keep a low profile on our website to discourage out of town visitors but those who kept skiing were very appreciative. We received lots of heartfelt thanks by email and verbally (from a distance).

The **Coronavirus** is probably here for awhile. At least this ski season. But now we know a lot more about the virus and we have lots of official guidance. The board of directors recently adopted a [COVID-19 Safety Plan](#) to allow us to keep operating throughout the season. We may have to adjust or even curtail programs and events, but with our wide trails and big parking lots we expect to be able to continue providing great skiing all winter. When you register, please make yourself aware of our plan and your responsibilities.

We gave a heads up about **proposed logging** in our [August Season Wrap-up newsletter](#). Wetzin'kwa recently informed us that they are now logging the blocks at the end of Valley View which are concentrations of dead pine and blowdown that Wetzin'kwa wanted to clean up. They will do their best to complete the hauling ASAP but it may result in Valley View trail not opening for early season skiing. Wetzin'kwa also noted that they removed old logging ribbons (eyesore) and chipped or burned most of the debris piles on both side of Hudson Bay Mountain Road.

Questions, compliments or suggestions about our ski trails can be sent to trails@bvnordic.ca. General feedback about our club should be sent to feedback@bvnordic.ca

Steve Osborn,
Director – Nordic Centre Operations