



NORDIC SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

2026 BVCCSC AGM

OVERVIEW

The Nordic Skills Development Program is a community sports organization that provides opportunities for all members of the Bulkley Valley Cross Country Ski Club and our communities to develop their skills in Nordic Skiing and Biathlon. For the 2025-26 season, we enjoyed another year with Head Coach Andrea Stapff at the reins. Our previous NSDP Program Coordinator, Melissa Zarecki, stepped down from her position in Spring 2026. We are grateful for her help throughout the year. In Summer 2026, we hired a new program coordinator, Yeva Glover, to facilitate communications and program-wide organization. Cobey Oilemans, long-time organizer of the Wednesday Adult Drop-In will be stepping down this year. We thank her for all of her work in supporting all of our adult skiers! Erica Haughland will be taking over for Cobey, and Lauri Deveau will continue to be an integral part of the program. The NSDP relies heavily on volunteers who provide coaching, program oversight, race support, and share in the many tasks of building and maintaining our ski facilities in order to keep the programs affordable.

Last year, our skills development programs included:

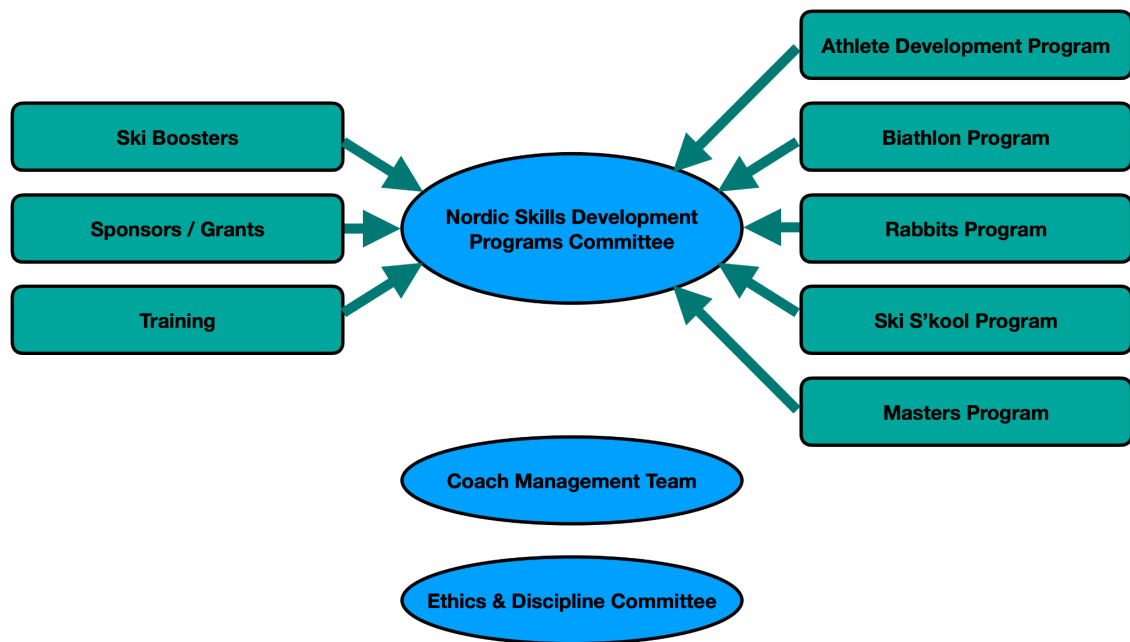
◆ Nordic Skiing

- Skills Development Programs
 - Bunnies (ages 4-5)
 - Rabbits (ages 6-10)
- Athlete Development Programs
 - Track Attack 1 (7-10)
 - Track Attack 2 (10-11)
 - U14 (ages 12-13)
 - U16 (ages 14-15)
 - U18 (ages 16-17)
 - U20 (ages 18-19)
- Ski S'Kool Program (ages 5-13)
- Master's Performance Programs (3 training groups)
- Master's Drop In

◆ Biathlon

- Youth Biathlon (U13, Recreational, Junior)
- Masters Biathlon
- Try-It Biathlon Program

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



SKILL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS 2025-2026

PROGRAM	LEAD
Nordic Skills Development Program	Sarah Sacharoff, Adrienne Rosenberger, (Stephen Wickham - grants)
NSDP Coordinator	Melissa Zarecki
Athlete Development Program	Andrea Stapff, Ryan Chapman, Helene Fleury
Masters Performance Program	Andrea Stapff
Biathlon Program	Lea-Marie Bowes-Lyon
Rabbit Program	Michelle Doogan-Smith
Ski S'Kool	Melissa Zarecki
Masters Drop In	Cobey Oliemans

PROGRAM SUPPORT 2025-2026

FUNCTION	LEAD	ROLE
Ski Boosters	Yeva Glover Georgie Watts Amy Klepetar Diana Cullen Michaela Jelen Arlynn Kooger Titia Donker Martina Bezzola	• Provide support and services for families on behalf of the NSDP, including Biathlon • Coordinate NSDP fundraising activities
Coach Training	Melissa Zarecki	• Support coach training for all NSDP Programs
Sponsorships/ Grants	Stephen Wickham Melissa Zarecki Sarah Sacharoff Adrianne Rosenberger	• Coordinate program grants for the NSDP, including Gaming Grant and Viasport, CCBC Grants, NWSDA, Nordiq Canada
Wax Team	Andrea Stapff, Sandy MacLean, Ryan Chapman, Andrew Rosenberger, Josh Wimbush, Ben Forsyth, Diana Cullen, Robbie Stevens, Dan Clark etc	• Led by Andrea Stapff, Diana Cullen, and Sandy MacLean. Coordinate club wax and equipment purchases and wax support for race events

OTHER COMMITTEES

COMMITTEE	PURPOSE	REPRESENTATION
Coach Management Committee	Oversee Head Coach contract, hiring and performance	• Sarah Sacharoff • Ryan Chapman • Adrianne Rosenberger

Program Coordination

Melissa Zarecki was hired as NSDP Coordinator for 2025-26. Melissa coordinated coach and officials training clinics, grant writing, and was instrumental in coordinating the Ski S'kool Program. In addition, Melissa helped coordinate snow camp, fundraising, and managed our NSDP website information. We are very grateful for all she has done to make our programs and club a success.

Head Coach, Andrea Stapff continued to bring her wealth of experience and wisdom to the program.

Andrea's responsibilities include:

- Oversight of the BV Nordics Athlete program from U10 to U20 in alignment with Nordiq Canada's Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD) model.
- Facilitation of BV Nordics Masters Performance Program.
- Development of annual and monthly training plans for ADP athletes.
- Facilitation of athlete participation in local through national races.
- Mentoring of volunteer coaches through the provision of coaching clinics and periodic involvement in volunteer lead practices.
- Provide leadership, wax determination, and direction to volunteer coaches.
- Participate in local and provincial training camps.

HIGHLIGHTS - 2026

- Great summer training programs available for TA1-U20 athletes in Summer 2025 led by Andrea Stapff, including weight training for the older athletes at the Nordic Centre.
- A very successful regional Snow Camp held in December 2025 - 110 coaches and athletes in attendance.
- Andrea Stapff continued to coach the Masters Performance program, meeting twice per week and including a dryland component which ran at capacity, and added a second daytime Masters Lite time slot, meeting once per week on snow - this year added a dryland component also.
- Team dinners and team events while at races. The athletes loved these.
- Great attendance at both BC Cup and tier 1 races.
- Large athlete and family contingent at Nationals in Quebec.
- Supported the Mothers Day Run again this year - are very grateful for the great fundraising opportunity from McBike.
- A lovely ADP family backpacking trip to the Babines in August.
- The club currently has 5 athletes on the CCBC Targeted Athlete List, 4 athletes on the BC Ski Team, 1 athlete on the BC Development Squad and 5 athletes on the BC Talent Squad.
- Jen Chapman organized a very popular BV Nordic Puffy Jacket order which kept the team warm at races.
- Second year of BV Nordic socks and first year of BV Nordic Buff - successful fundraiser and fun to see everyone sporting their BV Nordic gear.
- Ran a successful NCCP Community Coach Course, supported by ViaSport, allowing 14 coaches to complete the next step in their training.
- Thanks to the CCBC Kal Tire grant we were able to purchase fun Animal Signs for the ski playground area - these were a hit with the young kids
- We had 5 graduates from the ADP Program this year - all of whom are continuing nordic skiing while attending post-secondary education.

JackRabbits

The 2026 Bunnies/JackRabbits program had another successful year; we had 97 kids total. Notable items from the season:

- Night ski
- Coach Training session with Andrea
- Season-end finale Bunny Parade at the Wetzin'kwa Loppet
- Provided the JackRabbit progress booklets to kids

Michelle Doogan-Smith did a great job coordinating the Rabbits program for this year - Thank you Michelle!

- Rabbits 2027 Goals:
 - Hoping to maintain around 100 kids next year
 - Enough coaches! (ideally coach:kid ratio of 1:7, and a couple "spares" to cover absentee coaches) For 100 kids this means 15-17 coaches
 - Hoping to standardize Bunny and Jack Rabbit levels and introduce more skating to upper level rabbits through creating level 3 and 4 groups
 - More cross-over/encounters with the older age groups - we have arranged program times so kids end together on Saturday mornings and can play

Biathlon

The biathlon program had a great season.

- Received 4 Ecoaim rifles (electronic rifles) on loan from biathlon BC.
- The Ecoaims were used in a new Intro to Biathlon program that ran for 6 weeks in January-February with a total of 12 participants. Kids 8-13 participated.
- A Biathlon Community Coaching Clinic was held in January where 7 participants began their coaching journey.
- In conjunction with the coaching clinic, 25 members of the club had the opportunity to try biathlon using the Ecoaims.
- Participated in the McBike Welcome Day welcoming participants to try biathlon using the Ecoaims. 40 people participated.
- Introduced 12 women to biathlon using the Ecoaims during the Womxns Clinic in January.
- The biathlon team had its largest biathlon race attendance in several years with the team competing at the Western Championships in Prince George. 7 masters and 4 youth participated.
- Several athletes participated in the second annual Tour de North biathlon event where biathletes from Quesnel, Prince George, Vanderhoof, Burns Lake, and Smithers participated in up to 4 races over two days in March. Participants attended any combination of races in Burns Lake, Vanderhoof and Prince George.
- Three junior-level biathletes attended biathlon camps in spring and summer 2026.

Ski Skool

Ski S'Kool 2026 was another successful year as this popular program continues to be a favourite within the community. Funds from the Bulkley Valley Community Foundation once again allowed us to keep the cost to \$3.00 per student visit and provide us funds to support a coordinator, coach honorariums, and supplies. For the second year, we began Ski S'Kool in January instead of December which seems to work well for scheduling and attendance. The program ran from January 7th to March 20 and 10 weeks in total. We had some icy conditions and very cold weather which resulted in a week of cancellations. We were able to reschedule most of these visits.

7 participating schools this year included:

– Bulkley Valley Christian, Ecole La Grande Ourse, Heartwood Learning Community/Edge, Muheim Memorial, St. Joseph's, Telkwa Elementary and Walnut Park. Witset once again attended through the Spirit North program and is not reflected in our numbers. There were 955 student visits in total and we had 15 coaches this year who were able to cover most of the sessions.

Cross Country British Columbia (CCBC) again provided the ski skool program with grant funds with which we were able to replace the rest of our ageing equipment for 2026/27!



PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

Skill Development	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Bunnies (4 - 5 years)	17	39	51	46	40	37
Rabbits (6 - 10 years)	17	34	35	55	62	60
TOTAL Skill Development	34	73	86	101	102	97
Ski S'kool						
Schools	6	7	10	10	7	7
Student Visits	1451	1273	1302	911	863	955
Athlete Development Summer 2025						
Track Attack(U10)/U12		21	8	8	6	8
U14		11	9	10	6	9
U16/U18		11	14	7	18	18
U20				1	1	1
TOTAL Summer		43	31	26	31	36
Athlete Development Fall/ Winter						
Track Attack(U10)/U12	26	33	33	29	34	31
U14	13	14	9	11	14	12
U16	11	5	16	11	9	11
U18	3	7	4	4	7	9
U20				0	1	1
Biathlon U13 Ecoaim	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	12
Biathlon - U13/Recreational	0	0	3	7	3	4

Biathlon - Junior (13 - 14)	0	0	1	1	5	2
Biathlon - Senior (15 - 16)	0	0	0	0	1	1
Biathlon - Youth (17 - 18)	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL Athlete Development Winter	53	59	66	63	74	83
Masters						
Biathlon - Masters - Experienced	3	3	3	3	4	4
Biathlon - Masters - Coached	N/A	7	6	6	5	6
Masters Performance		12	15	15	16	16
Masters Performance Lite				12	17	37
TOTAL Masters Athletes	3	22	24	36	42	63
TOTAL Masters Performance Waitlist		n/a	14	1		



Build the North

With financial support from Nordic Canada, and administrative support from CCBC, Bulkley Valley managed a short-term project called Build the North in the winter of 2025/26. This was designed to increase the capacity of Northern Region clubs through focused, intentional, financial and organizational support. We were lucky to have Finley Pearce-Gagon take on the coordinator role for this project. Highlights from this project include:

- Connecting Northern Clubs with CCBC Coaches
- Providing support for smaller clubs to attend regional camps and races
- Facilitating a coach workshop in Dawson Creek
- Arranged for wax team mentorship of smaller clubs at multiple races
- Providing smaller club coaches access to education and instruction on nordic ski technique
- Gathering data about what Northern Clubs need to thrive

Finances

A significant portion of the funding for a paid club coach comes from the BC Gaming Grant, for which we are very thankful and appreciative of Steve Wickham who manages this portfolio. For the 2025-26 year, we were able to secure our annual gaming grant at \$29,500. Due to our expanded programming in the last year, for 2026-27 we applied for an increase of \$5,000 to our base grant amount. In addition, BV Nordic NSDP has enjoyed continued support from the National Winter Sports Development Association (NWSDA) Grant for \$8,500.

BV Nordic NSDP was awarded a grant of \$6,500 towards our Ski S'kool Program from the Bulkley Valley Community Foundation (BVCF) for the 2025-26 season. This grant allows us to keep the cost to participate in the program low and also helps cover some of the expenses of running the program.

NSDP also raised funds through the pursuit of other grants and Ski Boosters fundraising activities. The Ski Boosters raised funds through club host shifts, extra lodge cleaning, maple syrup sales, ski swap organizing, and event catering. The Virtual Auction led by Sarah Sacharoff and Alex Forsyth was very successful, raising over \$8,500 this year, despite some challenges with trying to use Facebook as the auction platform! Other forms of income were an account at the local bottle depot that allowed bottle donations to be made to the program and an optional donation field in the zone 4 registration. In addition, NSDP received \$1290 in sponsorship money for the year and \$1,838 from the super supporter pass sales (30% of total).

As a result of a successful year with fundraising and grants we were able to make some significant purchases this year of wax equipment, dryland training

equipment, lactate testing kits, and new dishes and cutlery for the kitchen. NSDP was also able to contribute funds to the creation of the amazing benches for the lower level of the lodge.

Volunteers

It is safe to say, our program does not exist without the generous commitment from our volunteers. Thank you to all who have helped out this season!

A big thank-you to our ADP, Biathlon and Rabbits coaches and Ski Boosters for this year, without whom there would be no ski program.

Thank-you to, Josh Wimbush, Helene Fleury, Stephen Wickham, Sandy MacLean, Adrienne Rosenberger, Rory Luxmoore, Matt Beedle, Shannon Pearce, Ryan Chapman, Jodi Preto, Andy Rosenberger, Richard Alton, Brandin Lilgert, Stefan Bucher, David Doogan-Smith, Elizabeth Czechmeister, and Kira Hoffman.

Thank you to our Rabbits coaches led by Michelle Doogan-Smith - Vickie Irish, Roger McMillan, Eric Holdyk, J, Lauren Boddy, Hans Erasmus, Evan Hannah, Jordy Guillon, Micheal Moen, Doug Wiggil, Robyn Van Iderstine, Tlell Glover, Erin Williams, and Norah Williams.

Diana Cullen, Amy Klepetar, Georgie Watts, Laura Eustace, Erica Lilles, Stephanie Capyk, Ben Forsyth, Arlynn Kooger, Titia Donker-Mes, Karolina Wenzel, Michaela Jelen, and Yeva Glover made significant organizational contributions towards Ski Boosters.

Many thanks to coaches Nils Erasmus, Léa-Marie Bowes-Lyon, and Callie Lancaster for their dedication to the biathlon program. We'd also like to recognize and thank the new coaches supporting our new athletes: Martina Bezzola, Tania Halik, and Britt White.

This was our last season under the direction of Sarah Sacharoff who has spent countless volunteer hours working to make our program great. A huge thank you for all of her time and effort throughout her tenure as NSDP Director.



Looking Forward – 2026-27

We welcome back volunteers leading our different ski programs. The Rabbits Coordinator role will be held by Michelle Doogan-Smith . Yeva Glover will be leading Ski Boosters and be our NSDP program coordinator. Diana Cullen will be leading our wax team.

The biathlon program is continuing to build its youth program. It will share 4 Eco-Aim rifles with the Spirit North program (purchased by Biathlon BC) which will provide added opportunities for the program and the club. The masters biathlon program will welcome the masters from last year's program and new masters will be able to join as space permits. Finding funding to complete the biathlon target roof project (Phase 1 of which was complete in 2025) has been a challenge. We are awaiting the outcome of a grant application (closing date Sept. 30) to determine how to proceed. Our goal is to complete it in Summer 2027 with the support of our volunteer builders.

Andrea Stapff has been re-hired as our head coach, overseeing the ADP and Masters Programs. We are very excited she continues to make our programs great!

NWSDA has granted us a \$10,000 grant for 2026-27 to target overall athlete development, maintaining the head coach position and increasing BV Nordic athlete participation at provincial and national events. They merited our club based on our proven ability to develop competitive skiers and coaches based on long term development planning.

We applied for and were granted \$6500 to support our Ski S'kool program for the 2026-27 season by BVCF.

The playground enhancement project is in the process of being completed thank you to the direction from Ryan Chapman and both the Nordic Club Fundraiser and the Wetzinkwa grant awarded this summer.

With two paid employees under NSDP's wings, we are financial planning out 5 years into the future. Our aim is to provide stability for our programs by finding a sustainable balance of fees, grants and fundraising while closely managing our expenses. We are very fortunate to have a sizeable reserve which has allowed us more confidence in risk management. We plan to continue to make small incremental increases in our athlete and program fees yearly to match inflation, in order to fund our expenses. Our fees are still low in comparison with other BC clubs that have full time head coaches.

Following up on the success of the first one, we are again planning to facilitate a 5 year visioning meeting to develop a strategic plan for the NSDP going forward.