



Nordic Centre Report for the 2024 AGM

Yet another great year of skiing! Improvements over several years made many of our trails smoother and better drained. So maintenance was easier, grooming was better and skiing was great, despite last year's low-snow conditions.

The club is fortunate to have a skilled team of individuals who do the snow grooming, plowing, off-season trail work, trail planning, maintenance, repairs, grant applications, and administration. We are always on the lookout for people who want to join our team of volunteers. Contact Jan at GM@bvnordic.ca to find out how you can help.

You probably already heard that we received a VERY NICE Destination Development Fund grant from the BC Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport. Our Bulkley Valley Nordic Center Rejuvenation project was given \$765,452 for grooming equipment, trail improvements and an accessible outhouse. We received the grant last fall and have made good progress on the project components. The Nordic Centre is truly being rejuvenated. Thank you to all who supported us in getting this grant.

New tracksetter: A key part of the DDF grant was to allow the purchase of a new tracksetter. After significant research and lots of discussions, we decided to purchase a 2024 Prinoth Bison, equipped with power tiller, heavy duty tracks, customized blade with tilt-to-engage ice renovators and lots of high-tech gizmos that come standard on this machine. The Bison is sitting in Calgary in the Prinoth shop with our logo on it. Delivery will be sometime in December, when we expect to have enough snow to have it set up and tested. The new Bison is going to be more capable and way more reliable than our 20-year-old PistenBully Edge. By the way, we will not be running two tracksetters as that would be too expensive! We plan to put the PistenBully up for sale as soon as we are confident that the new Bison is running well.



Trail work: Thanks to our super planner & trail coordinator, Kevin Kriese, and funding from BC Destination Development Fund, Wetzin'kwa Community Forest and the club, there are major upgrades for the coming ski season:

- Two bridges have been replaced: one on Pine loop near junction D and one on Wetzin'kwa trail. These are skookum bridges that replace aging wood log structures. They meet current requirements for these fish-bearing streams. Significant material donations came from Northpac Forestry Group and West Fraser Mills – PIR. Thank You!



- The swamp bypass is DONE! This is the long-planned replacement for the section of Pine Creek Loop that crossed the not-always-frozen swamp. The new section of trail starts mid-way on the 5 km cutoff and heads west toward the two bridges near junction D.)



- A new Valley View Connector takes off on a spur road near the bottom of Down the Mountain and links to the end of Valley View, making an enjoyable loop that is also more efficient for grooming. A grant from the Wetzin'kwa Community Forest covered much of the cost of the connector and the swamp bypass.
- There are also more improvements in drainage and grading. And there has been a start on some rock busting on our rocky hills. You probably won't notice these improvements under the snow, but they make a BIG difference. The trails are easier to mow and allow better grooming, especially in low-snow conditions like last year.
- A fancy, hand-crafted, all abilities accessible outhouse is partly built and will be completed next summer. It will be a welcome addition for those skiing from the lower parking lot.
- New signage will be installed over the next year. Partly to include the new trail sections and also some interesting interpretive signs.

Trail Planning: The Destination Development Fund project included some funding for planning how to use or modify our trails for race routes and training. Roger McMillan did a huge amount of preliminary work and then the DDF money allowed us to hire a consultant with expertise in trail homologation (designs that meet international competition standards). The resulting BV Nordic Centre Competition Trails 2024 Master Plan and updated Biathlon loops will be discussed at the Trail Plan info session that will take place prior to the 2024 AGM.

Also at the info session, Trail Coordinator Kevin Kriese will describe and seek feedback on other topics for the next Trail Plan:

1. Proposals for a new dog trail and for a no-dog access from the tunnel to Pine loop. Kevin will describe the proposals and what it would take to make them happen.
2. Trail upgrades that are still needed on some trails.



3. Possibilities for the future. Pros and cons of more expansion. Strategies for challenges like climate change, increasing costs, etc.

Our small machine fleet is used for early season / low-snow conditions and for refreshing the trails or supplementing what the primary tracksetter is able to groom after big snowfalls. The small machines also serve as our backup if the primary tracksetter is down. (Now that we have a new tracksetter, we expect downtime to be far less frequent.)

Our snowmobile fleet includes a 2023 Ski-Doo Skandic that is in good condition but tended to overheat in last year's low-snow and warm conditions. Our 2015 Skandic effectively died at the beginning of last year. Luckily, our new Taiga Nomad electric snowmobile performed magnificently and became our primary snowmobile groomer (after a few software glitches while it was brand new). The Nomad was donated by Corry and Harvey Tremblay to support a greener future. Thank you for your generosity and vision!

This summer we added a Polaris Ranger side by side to our small machine fleet. It has worked well for summer projects. During the winter, it will have tracks and will be used for very early season snow packing, for pulling a drag (snow leveller) and as a backup/supplement for our snowmobiles.

Lodge Heating System

At the beginning of last ski season, we realized that our wood furnace was no longer safe to use. Luckily, it was a mild winter and we were able to cope with electric baseboards and occasional fires in the upstairs fireplace. Northern Development Initiative Trust accepted our grant application for 70% of a heat pump system. Hunterbilt Industries Ltd. did a great job designing and installing the system. It consists of a forced air furnace with heat coming from an air-source heat pump located outside. The furnace also has an electric coil that will assist or take over in very cold conditions. A heat recovery ventilator injects fresh air into the lodge whenever the furnace is running. Heat and fresh air is also vented upstairs now. To allow the upstairs to be extra cozy on demand (for meetings or events) there are two ductless mini-split heat pumps upstairs. The new system will also be healthier, with fresh air circulating into the lodge and no smoke dropping into the stadium area.

And more good stuff ...

Lots of other maintenance and improvements have been happening due to people pitching in with time and donations. More than 50 people showed up for the work bee and put in an estimated 174 hours. Other helpers put in many hours before and after the work bee. Accomplishments include: Emergency Packs and Pack Shelters are replacing our hard-to open/carry buckets. Burned out trail lights are being fixed. Trails are being mowed and side brush cut. Rocks and debris were removed from new trails. Finishing touches have been made to the new bridges. Water tank roof has been repaired and shingled. Windows and floors cleaned. Surplus firewood removed to make room for new storage areas. Grants applications made. Maps about to be updated. Signs about to be fixed or replaced. And then there are the many hours put in by our treasurer and other directors to enable all the good work by our wonderful volunteers, employees and contractors. Sorry for not naming everyone but **thank you!**

Steve Oborn
Director, Nordic Centre Operations