

Bulkley Valley Cross Country Ski Club Secretary's Report for 2018 AGM

In addition to handling agendas and minutes, I have been working with other directors and key volunteers to have decisions and administrative details taken care of so that others can do good stuff like the projects described in the Nordic Centre Report. Thanks to the rest of the board for taking over much of the minute-taking to allow me to continue to do non-secretary stuff.

Board meetings are open to members. Meeting schedules and minutes of past meetings are posted on the [club's website](#) under Our Club. That is also where you can find club policies, newsletters and other club information that the secretary is supposed to keep track of. Please contact the secretary if you something seems missing or out of date.

Last year, with the AGM approval of changes to our constitution and bylaws, our club successfully transitioned to BC's new Societies Act. The new documents are available on our website under Our Club.

Steve Osborn, Secretary

Bulkley Valley Cross Country Ski Club Nordic Centre Report for 2018 AGM

The Bulkley Valley Nordic Centre continues to improve. With a new 3 km loop for the dog trails, a 1 km addition to the Biathlon loops and a 1 km extension to the popular Wetzin'kwa trail, we will have a total of **52 km trails of which 5 km is lit and 10 km is dog-friendly**. Over summer a number of our high-use trails received better drainage, smoothing and brushing to allow better grooming in low snow conditions. Our recently renovated lodge now has a new drying shed for firewood (less smoke!) and two comfy couches, the tracksetter finally has its own fuel storage tank, and the aging machine shed is getting its roof beams reinforced. And maps and signs continue to see big improvements. All this is in addition to the projects done last year. (Check out the project summary on pages 10 & 11 in the [2017 Directors' Reports](#).) More info about this year's projects is presented later in this report.

These major repairs and improvements to our facilities were only possible because of key people stepping up to seek funding and manage the projects and because of the **generous funding support from Wetzin'kwa Community Forest, Recreation Sites and Trails BC, BC's Rural Dividend Fund, and individual club members**. Some club funds were used for the projects, but most funding came from outside sources.

So far, outside funding has only been available for major repairs and improvements. Nordic Centre operating costs (tracksetting, utilities, maintenance, etc.) are funded totally from user fees (season pass and day tickets). Surpluses from membership fees and events are often applied to the Nordic Centre but the available surpluses are usually minor. NSDP fees are kept separate to ensure the long-term sustainability of those programs. Recent analysis of Nordic Centre revenues and costs reveal that user fees are covering normal operating costs but in recent years, revenue has been insufficient to adequately contribute to the long-term savings that we need for tracksetter replacement and major infrastructure repairs. Although our savings targets are \$15,000/year for the tracksetter fund, the current fund of \$60,000 has not increased since 2015. The savings target for our infrastructure fund is \$10,000/year but it was depleted to approximately \$5000 to pay for the club's share of recent major repairs and improvements.

The club has taken the following steps to address the situation:

- Day use fees will increase this year, subject to approval from the Province.
- A trail optimization plan has been developed to improve efficiencies in tracksetting. For example, Valley View has been shortened to the first viewpoint, redundant sections of the logging roads trails have been removed and some lesser-used trails may be groomed less frequently.
- After considering a preliminary assessment of machine replacement strategies, the board decided that given the information and analysis available at the time, the club was not able to consider buying a second Piston Bully. The decision affects planning for the replacement of our aging machine shed and grant applications in the near future. Although our existing Piston Bully may have another 10 to 15 years of use, down-time and maintenance costs will likely increase.
- When Wetzin'kwa Community Forest granted the club \$30,593 as a one-time share of profits from the recent logging near our trails, the board earmarked \$20,000 to replenish the Infrastructure Reserve Fund and \$15,000 towards the Tracksetter Reserve Fund.

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- This year, the club will develop a management plan for the Nordic Centre with strategies for long-term maintenance and investments in our machines, buildings and infrastructure. The plan will support future funding applications and will also guide the club in how to sustain operations without relying on future grants.

Nordic Centre Update

Trails for Tomorrow:

The 2017 [Trail Plan](#) (developed by Kevin Kriese and approved by the board and BC Recreation Sites and Trails) set out goals and strategies for annual maintenance, improvements and potential expansions, subject to funding. Maps designated Early Season Trails, Trail Repairs and Potential New Trails. The plan has strategies for trails that can be groomed and skied early in the season and during low snow years.

Due to great support from the BC Rural Dividend Fund, Recreation Sites and Trails and Wetzin'Kwa Community Forest, significant improvements were made during the summers of 2017 and 2018. The project is being managed by Kevin Kriese with machine work supervised by Brant Dahlie.

A large part of the \$78,000 Rural Dividend grant is budgeted for approximately 5 km of new trails (3 km loop for the dog trails, <1 km addition to the Biathlon trails, and >1 km extension to Wetzin'Kwa that will create a loop to the Demo Forest trails). After the club applied for approval to construct the trails, the Province consulted with Wet'suwet'en First Nation and specifically with the Cas Yex House. We received approvals, and as a result of the consultation process, we hope to have a closer relationship with the Cas Yex House. Some Wet'suwet'en trail names may soon be included on our new maps.

Clearing the new trails of trees and removing roots etc. was not possible earlier due to the approval process, fire hazard and logging logistics. If all goes well, we might be able to have the new trails ready for this winter.

Funding (2017 & 2018):

- \$10,000 Wetzin'Kwa Community Grants \$10,000 (2017)
- \$10,000 from Recreation Sites and Trails BC for equipment hire plus 12 culverts (2017)
- \$4000 from BC Government Grant (2017)
- \$6,000/year for two years from Club trail maintenance budget
- \$77,954 Rural Dividend Grant

Trail Maps and Signs:

Most of the trails received new trail signs last winter. Still more to do, including new junction letters (some letters re-located to better cover our expanded trail system) and new you-are-here maps. We revised the map brochure last year but since we knew there would be new trails and other changes, the 2018 map was viewed as an interim version with a new map planned for this year. Peter Tweedie

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managed the first phase of the project and Steve Osborn worked on the implementation phase. We have several people willing to work on GIS revisions. Hopefully there will be one or two people joining Steve Osborn with the ongoing project management and implementation (i.e. installing posts and signs).

Recreation Sites and Trails BC has been awesome in providing encouragement, guidance and funding for this project.

Funding:

- \$5,000 in 2017, \$5000 in 2018 & \$3000 in 2019 from Recreation Sites and Trails BC
- \$3,000 from Club funds
- Part of the Rural Dividend Grant for additional signage and web presence

Woodshed:

Due to the initiative and encouragement of caretakers Robbie and Andrea Dunbar, we have a new drying shed for firewood. The project was managed by Wally Lesawich with construction by Patrick Dumais, Ismail Alismail, Brant Dahlie, John Schibli and Caedmon Dunbar. Over 20 volunteers came out for a July 8 work bee to fill up the new shed with fresh wood giving the semi-dry wood a full summer under cover before the winter. At our October 13 workbee we will transferring that wood into the main woodshed and refill it with wood that will have a full year to dry.

Funding:

- Wetzin'kwa Community Grant 2018 (\$3,300 of \$15,000 grant)
- Recreation Sites and Trails BC (\$1,900 materials)
- BVCCSC (\$1000)

Machine Shed and Fuel Tank:

Brant Dahlie and Steve Howard have been the movers and shakers on this project. A fuel storage tank has been purchased and installed with help and environmental protection guidance from Ray Hollenberg of Northwest Response. This fall, beams will be added to support the roof of our aging machine shed. Wally Lesawich is assisting Steve and Brant on that task.

Funding:

- \$25,000 Federal Gas Tax Grant (2017), through Regional District of Bulkley Nechako
- Wetzin'kwa Community Grant 2018 (\$11,700 of \$15,000 grant)
- BVCCSC funds for balance (approximately \$1000)

Logging:

Last year, the club requested Wetzin'kwa Community Forest Corporation to address the hazard from dead pine trees along our trails by logging affected areas. In the absence of logging, the hazard would have required extensive trail closures. The logging resulted in skiing closures for part of last year and had

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a major impact on the area but it reduced the danger from dead trees and in the process, opened up views from a number of trails. The Club thanks Wetzin'kwa and its contractors for their cooperation.

There is still some clean up work underway from last year's logging. The debris piles should be burned this fall and trees planted next spring. There is new logging planned for this fall in areas with dead trees between the 5 and 7.5 km loops on Pine Creek. The logging will only cross our trail and with any luck will be done before ski season, so we don't anticipate any closures. This is expected to be the end of beetle salvage near our trails.

Wetzin'kwa will hopefully be able to log the trees from our new trails within the next few weeks and then we will have our hired equipment removing stumps and shaping the trails. We anticipate new trails done by mid November.

Caretakers:

Andrea and Robbie Dunbar and family have been our caretakers for the last 3 winters. They have made awesome contributions to our club, over and above their caretaker responsibilities. We won't miss them because they are still part of the community. They will just have to drive up from their home in the valley, like the rest of us.

Gen Perkins and Michel Poulin are taking over the caretaker role starting November 1. They are really looking forward to it. Welcome them when you see them.

Contact Steve Osborn (secretary@bvnordic.ca) if you want more information about any of the active or proposed projects; especially if you want to explore ways that you can help our club maintain and improve the Nordic Centre.

Thanks for the ongoing support and expertise of our key players at the Nordic Centre and all the volunteers who keep the place going, including: Brant Dahlie, Steve Howard, Wally Lesawich, the scheduled groomers, the casual groomers, the unsung members who clear brush, etc.

Steve Osborn, director responsible for the Nordic Centre (sharing the role with Daryl Wilson)