

Castlegar Nordic Ski Club

Strategic Plan 2024-2029



Planning Committee:

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Executive Summary

The presented document outlines the strategic vision, guiding principles and values that will steer the direction of our club over the next five years. These principles are designed to serve as a compass for Executive Members and Staff in their planning and decision-making processes.

Decisions and planning which fall outside of the club Strategic Plan must be proposed to and reviewed by the Executive to determine benefit to the club and sustainability of the decision.

Organizational Statements

Mission – What we do

We create a unique winter recreation opportunity that is safe, enjoyable, affordable, accessible and family-oriented through programs and a network of well maintained and diverse trails where our users can engage in healthy outdoor activity, connect with nature and their community.

Vision – Where we see ourselves

To provide a truly unique recreational Nordic skiing experience of the highest quality, which offers an inspirational natural connection for our trail users, is recognized widely as a premier ski destination and is safe and accessible to all segments of the local population and visitors.

Purpose – Why we exist

To maintain the values of healthy winter recreation and connection with nature, community, family and affordability and to continue a tradition of Nordic skiing at the Paulson.

CNSC - 6 Guiding Principles

Guiding Principle #1 – Safety is Paramount

1. **Safety is the first and most critical consideration in all aspects of the club's operations and activities.**

A) Executive, including the safety officer position will regularly oversee and ensure safe operations and review safety processes and procedures.

Actions

- i. Trail Safety Procedures will be communicated through signage and outreach to members and trail users each season.
 - ii. Self-rescue tools and warming facilities will always be accessible to trail users.
 - iii. We will work with the local SAR branch on an ongoing basis to ensure that our safety operations are being correctly implemented.
 - iv. Incident reports will be filed in the case of any injury, accident, or close call, and the file will be reviewed by the executive to decide on necessary operational considerations.
 - v. There will be an annual review of safety procedures led by our safety officer, and necessary changes and implementation will be made.
2. **CNSC is a member of Cross Country BC/ Nordiq Canada to receive coverage of comprehensive and reliable Ski Club insurance.**
 3. **CNSC will maintain compliance with all WorkSafeBC requirements.**
 4. **Standard Operating Procedures will be developed for all at-risk operations:**
 - A) Trail Grooming Program
 - B) Skier Development Program
 - C) Volunteer Work Parties
 - D) Fun Troll Loppet
 5. **All bridges, cabins, and trails will be maintained to a high safety standard**
 - A) The Trail Grooming team will monitor trails on an ongoing basis and take corrective actions or report unsafe trail conditions requiring changes to ground infrastructure.
 - B) Any hazard identified by an employee or executive member will be reported to the executive for corrective action. Copies of reports delivered by email or otherwise should be archived along with a write-up of corrective planning/actions taken.

Guiding Principle #2 – Exceptional Ski Experience

1. Trails being groomed to a high standard is our single highest priority for the enjoyment of our club members and day users.

A) Purchase and maintain trail grooming equipment sufficient to efficiently and effectively set ski tracks

- i. Three snowmobiles will be available at all times
- ii. Every two or three years, the oldest machine will be replaced
- iii. Roller packer, compactor dragger, and ginzo groomers will be the primary tracking equipment

Actions

- i. Look into acquiring a Ginzo style tracker with a powered rotavator head to process the snow when conditions are difficult to groom with static snow processing equipment

B) Provide Equipment/Storage facilities which are spaciouly adequate for storing all necessary grooming, fueling, and trail maintenance equipment and heated to improve lifetime and operability for the equipment, reduce difficulty on Grooming Team.

Actions

- i. Purchase an additional storage container so that 3 sleds can be stored in clean and secure environments with additional room for fuel, trail equipment, signs, first aid equipment, and fuelling station
- ii. Find funding for a heating solution for the storage container which can store the 2 primary sleds.
- iii. Plan and create timeline and funding targets to develop an improved Equipment and Storage facility with heating, draining floors, and a snow-shedding roof over the entire facility

C) Create, maintain and train Grooming Team in a trail grooming strategy to achieve consistent quality grooming

Actions

- i. Write a track setting and grooming strategy with the Head Groomer as lead which designates actions for days of the week, weather conditions, track setting, and signage and use current trail grooming operations as a guide. Have this strategy approved by the Executive and Grooming Team trained in these operations.
- ii. Continue to work with Head Groomer to hire and train new employees in anticipation of when needed.

2. Trails will be laid out and constructed to create a diverse and enjoyable ski experience

- A) A mix of green, blue, and black trails, all well indicated on the trails map
- B) Primarily classic ski trails will be provided; however, skate skiing will be made available in an evolving manner based on available terrain for safe development and available resources
- C) Redesign trails as necessary and maintain or replace trail structures as necessary

Actions

- i. Relocate Winterberry trail, near the junction with the connector trail, around persistent water
 - ii. Develop plans to implement new proposed trails which have been funded by CBT grant money
 - iii. Find funding and develop a time frame to implement trail upgrades
3. **Maintain cabins in a clean and functional manner to support the skiing experience and provide comfort and safety**
- A) Repairs are done when necessary
 - B) Firewood and fire starting tools are always made available at cabins
4. **Ensure adequate parking at our two access points in relation to anticipated numbers of members and visitors**
- A) Maintain a relationship with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure regarding their ongoing snow clearing
 - B) Budget and maintain communications with available contacts for incidental snow removal in times of high snowpack, club events, or in failure of Ministry to remove snow.
 - C) Find a dedicated snow plow service that can perform a quality service and operate on demand or in anticipation of the above-stated conditions

Actions

- i. Investigate options for increasing parking size at Mud Lake entrance
5. **Continue to have strong advocacy with our land partners and stakeholders for the maintenance of our unique and beautiful trail settings and experience.**

Guiding Principle #3 – Prudent Financial Management

1. **Maintain affordability for members and day users.**
- A) Create a strategy for 5-year fee evolution to follow
 - B) Maintain low-income options such as early fees, 5-day pass booklets and Library pass

2. Create a qualitative plan for the growth of members and retention of user experience.

A) Analyze membership and day user data as available for the past 5 years

Actions

- i. Create Data reports which allow for Executive to complete data analytics and identify future needs for growth targets
- ii. Discuss targets for growth based on revenue needs for necessary operations

3. Continually review sales points for membership and day user sales for cost-effectiveness and ease of access.

A) Continue to improve the online registration and day pass purchase points to move toward increased online purchasing

B) Maintain a non-digital point of sale for community engagement and accessibility

C) Provide distinctive community registration days with benefits for increased visibility and community outreach.

4. Maintain a constant understanding of the financial situation in relation to upcoming needs and uncertainties.

5. Pursue all viable grant opportunities to support infrastructure projects, equipment purchases, or operational costs.

A) This will be a central role of the General Manager's duties

Actions

- i. Create a grant database table and calendar for ongoing grant opportunities and responsibilities, which can be used each year and added to
- ii. Seek an executive member to act as a supporting role to GM for seeking and applying to grants

6. Utilize sponsorships and maintain sponsor relations as a method of increasing club financial stability without commercialization of our club's public spaces or compromise to our mission.

Guiding Principle #4 – Dynamic Executive

- 1. CNSC is a volunteer non-profit society that is run by a volunteer executive for the benefit of the recreational public of the local residents and visitors from beyond.**
- 2. Renewal and succession planning of the executive are important for the continuing vigour of the society.**
- 3. Develop and execute an executive strategy that adds directors as needed to support those activities which are deemed as critical to the future functioning of the club**

Actions

- i. Identify high-priority tasks that are not currently assigned to an executive member, establish a new director position, and canvas for filling.
 - ii. Develop an incentive program for executive members to encourage greater participation from our membership.
4. **Executive Member Portfolio will be reviewed regularly, or at the end of each season to ensure equitable workload, alignment with skills and interest, and that club needs are being covered by these roles.**

Guiding Principle #5 – Volunteer Based, Employee Supported

1. **Volunteers are fundamental to the functioning of the club and members should be given an opportunity to contribute this way**
 - A) Volunteer Coordinator with assistance of GM will contact those that have put their name forward for volunteer opportunities and allow them to participate in the club in a way that is consistent with what they can do to help

Actions

- i. Volunteer database to be created to retain names and contact information as well as their roles, experience with the club and volunteer interests.
2. **Use volunteers to the extent that people are willing to participate, while using current and future incentives for that volunteer effort**
 - A) Volunteers fill the roles of the Club Executive, carry out the majority of pre-season trail and facility maintenance, collect user fees, coordinate events, and carry out a host of other duties and functions.
 - B) Incentives to include free memberships, out-of-pocket expenses recovery, recognition badges, and club-sponsored appreciation social events.
3. **Retention of volunteers and recognition of their efforts are critical for them to continue their willingness to continue**
 - A) Club will have an appreciation event at least once per year to show its appreciation to all of the volunteers throughout the year

Actions

- i. Delegate organizer for the event and plan date, location and event for each year as part of season events
4. **An effective communications program is important to inform past and current members of the activities and status of operations of the club**
 - A) Regular Newsletters for volunteer opportunities leading up to and throughout the season

- B) Orientation must be provided for volunteers prior to the commencement of regular season activities
 - C) Volunteer coordinator will work closely with GM and communicate regularly to ensure that all positions and needs are being fulfilled by available volunteers
5. **Club will hire employees as necessary and within the annual revenue stream to support those priority activities included in this strategic plan.**
 6. **Staying in touch – annual surveys of different membership components. New members, returning members, day pass users may be targeted for different interests. Surveys are short and directed at those aspects of the club that we require or desire input on. Use different media to most effectively contact specific focus groups.**
 - A) Determine inquiry needs, focus group and medium prior to termination of season each year for the best engagement of members

Guiding Principle #6 – Inclusive Community Engagement

1. **Our prices will be kept as affordable as possible to ensure that the price is not a limitation to people using our facilities while at the same time having sufficient funds to continue operations in a business-like manner for the long term.**
2. **Our club, facilities, and programs are accessible for all ages and skills**

A) Provide access to rentals either at the club or through store partnerships to improve accessibility

Actions

- i. Learn the long-term possibility of rentals being provided from Mallards (We Need and annual guarantee, affordability and kids rental gear available)
- ii. Propose collaboration with Mallards and Gericks for them to offer rentals and have a discount for day pass fees and lessons

3. **Social Community events which are inclusive to all skiers**

A) Loppet as our major annual event

B) Social Events hosted and advertised throughout the season

Actions

- i. Develop a volunteer network for social events
- ii. Create an executive position to plan and oversee the implementation of social events with GM

4. **Provide Programming for community participation and an entry point to the sport**

A) Skier Development Program,

- i. The SDP is seen as an important component of a club that offers an inclusive opportunity for the community. As well, it works to build and maintain a strong base to sustain the membership
 - ii. Continued evolution of this program is required to retain participants and create a future base of lifelong skiers
- B) Elementary school field days i. Fee charged should be enough to cover administration and coaching, but maintain the program as not for profit.

Actions

- i. Outreach should be done each year to all schools, education, and nature groups in the area to inform them of the opportunity
 - ii. Initiate Fall school activity days for improved outreach
- C) Adult lessons provided for a fee to increase the enjoyment of the sport

Actions

- i. Provide training opportunities to volunteers and staff to be able to provide classes
- ii. Training certifications should be covered by grants - Viasport Women's Leadership Grants, Others for implementing new programs
- iii. Renegotiate interest with Any Morel/ Nordic Ventures. He is not active, prominent enough to create a draw or provide what we need. iv. Propose collaboration with Charles from Gericks. Is already certified and offers classes through Gericks when customers purchase a ski kit
- iv. Focus on women's groups – beginners, intermediate, train for loppet
- v. Create Open Adventure Group vii. Classic and skate Classes
- vi. Have scheduled class days – Every second Saturday or 1-2 Saturdays a month. Consistency is key.
- vii. Include in our registration options on website

5. External Party Communication and Liaison

- A) Recreation Sites and Trails BC- continuance of our positive working relationship with representatives of this government agency and request and comply with all necessary authorities
- B) Other Nordic skiing clubs in the Region – continue supportive dialogue with the adjacent clubs of Nelson Nordic, Blackjack, and others to collectively enhance the Nordic skiing experience
- C) Forest Management companies: BC Timber Sales, Atco wood Products – maintain and enhance dialogue with the two primary logging companies/agencies with operating areas

over the Paulson recreation site to minimize conflict and maximize a cooperative relationship

- D) First Nations peoples' rights and title recognition – respect that our operations lay within unceded territories of a number of indigenous bands and to plan sufficiently to allow for input to those activities that might infringe on their rights and title

Actions

- i. Identify which bands are in the area of our operations
- ii. Informal outreach for information sharing with intent to explore the relationship

6. Active Promotion and Marketing

- A) Design and Implement an Outreach Strategy with a goal of Day-user Growth and Tourism Outreach (Strong, comprehensive marketing plan and consultation).

- B) Consider hiring a Marketing consultant and media creators if funding is available

Actions

- i. Collaborate and create packages with local tourism and accommodations
- ii. Conduct Respectable Local outreach (Nelson, Rossland, and other locales)
- iii. Identify target POTENTIAL demographics not being reached
- iv. Consider our branding online and at club
- v. Upscale our marketing
- vi. Professional media creation in mixed media
- vii. Social Media reach increase