

WHISKEY JACK NORDIC SKI CLUB



Strategic
Plan

2018-2023

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Message from the Board

Whiskey Jack Nordic Ski Club (WJNSC) is a cross country ski club for people in Fort St. John and the Peace Region who want to get outside in the beautiful Boreal forest in the winter for fresh air, sunshine, physical activity and fun.

Cross country skiing is an affordable outdoor winter activity for all ages and abilities. WJNSC provides groomed trails, lessons and family/community events throughout the ski season.

WJNSC currently maintains 15 km of ski trails at Beatton Provincial Park, accommodating both classic and skate skiing as well as skijoring. There are also 10 km of hiking/snowshoe trails at the park that are maintained by the club in the winter months. Additionally, the club maintains 3 km of groomed tracks at the Links Golf Course in Fort St. John and board members continue to participate in planning opportunities to identify additional locations near the community to develop ski trails. A map of the Beatton Park trails can be found on our website at: <https://whiskeyjacknordic.ca/ski-trails/>.

The club was first established in 1982, 15 months prior to the 1984 BC Winter Games held in Fort St. John. Trails were established at Beatton Provincial Park, 20 minutes from Fort St. John, for the purposes of hosting the Nordic events for the Games and were built to trail standards of the day. Construction of 10 kms of 4 meter wide trails were the result of this early initiative.

Between 1993 and 2003 there was a hiatus in the club but in 2003 the club was resurrected and grooming and maintenance of trails resumed. WJNSC began to acquire new grooming equipment consisting of snow mobiles and specialized attachments. Following these acquisitions, the club installed a 20' sea can at Beatton Provincial Park for secure equipment storage.

Demand for facilities for skate skiing was strong by 2009, so began the planning process for trail expansion. WJNSC hired a professional trail designer, conducted considerable fundraising and by 2013, the expanded trails were complete.

Throughout the years of improvements, club membership gradually increased. The club's initiative to offer the Cross Country Canada

Skills Development Program was particularly helpful in increasing membership.

In 2017, having outgrown the sea can, WJNSC constructed a large storage building to store our increased amount of ski rental and grooming equipment, ski program materials, tables, chairs and general supplies.

A stadium area was constructed in fall 2018 and a day lodge is now being planned at Beatton Park.

WJNSC conducts fundraising to accomplish its goals through grants, membership fees, day use fees, donations and grass roots funding opportunities.

The club is a registered society with the province of BC and is a member group of Cross Country BC and Cross Country Canada and Fort St. John Sports Council, guided by an active board of directors.



Environmental Scan

The population growth in Fort St. John and surrounding area outpaced the national average according to Statistics Canada's last census conducted in 2016. During the 5 years between 2011 and 2016, the city saw its population count rise to 20,155 from 18,609, an increase of 8.3 per cent. The population, including Fort St. John, Charlie Lake, Grandhaven, Baldonnel and Taylor rose from 26,380 to 28,396, an increase of 7.2 percent. This growth outpaced the national average increase of 5% for the same period.¹

According to the 2016 census, the average age of the population of Fort St. John was 33 and the median age was 31.² This demonstrates a generally youthful population which is accompanied by a high birth rate.³ All of this bodes well for the WJNSC which supports activities to promote an active lifestyle for adults and families.

According to statistics from Cross Country BC, the sport of cross country skiing continues to exhibit healthy and steady growth in the province with about 13,000 people involved in the sport in 2000 and approximately 18,000 in 2018. ⁴ Additionally, the greatest growth in club membership province-wide is for kids around age 10 and adults, aged 40 to 60. ⁵

WJNSC serves several stakeholder groups including: WJNSC membership, skiers from the public, BC Parks, Cross Country BC, Cross Country Canada, City of Fort St. John, School District 60 students and the Peace River Regional District.

WJNSC is experiencing moderate membership growth due to recently expanded trails and an increase in programming. The club's membership expanded significantly from 2004 when there were 40 members to 130 members in 2017, a 225% increase. Over 100 members joined since the trails were expanded in 2013. Additionally, there has been growth in the number of children joining our

¹ <https://www.alaskahighwaynews.ca/regional-news/census-2016-fort-st-john-taylor-population-growth-outpaces-national-rate-1.9731533>

² <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=POPC&Code1=0298&Geo2=PR&Code2=48&Data=Count&SearchText=Fort%20St.%20John&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&B1=All&TABID=1>

³ http://www.perinatalservicesbc.ca/Documents/Data-Surveillance/Maps-Tables/MapBirthsByFacility2015_16.pdf

⁴ <http://www.crosscountrybc.ca/sites/default/files/documents/2018CCBCAGMPresentation.pdf>, slide 10

⁵ <http://www.crosscountrybc.ca/sites/default/files/documents/2018CCBCAGMPresentation.pdf>, slide 12

club since we began offering Cross Country Canada's Skills Development Program – 24 children in 2017/18 to over 40 for the upcoming 2018/19 season, a 66% increase.

The club anticipates continued growth in our membership both in terms of adults and children as it continues to improve services and infrastructure as well as put more volunteer resources into outreach and marketing.

Mission Statement

The Whiskey Jack Nordic Ski Club is dedicated to promoting cross country skiing as a lifelong activity for the area population by providing high quality trails, programs and facilities for the community of Fort St. John, BC and Peace Region. Additionally, the club provides snowshoeing and hiking trails for the enjoyment of all.

Goals, Objectives, Strategies & Measurables

WJNSC has identified a number of goals, objectives, strategies and measurables. In general, the club continues to work to build awareness of the club, increase membership, solicit volunteers and offer a wider array of programming. Construction of a stadium area has just been completed (fall 2018) and there are plans to construct a day lodge and pit toilet – hopefully in time for the 2020 BC Winter Games. The club has also identified the need for improved grooming equipment to more efficiently groom the expanded trails. Details on each of these initiatives are found in the tables below.

Note: Unless otherwise identified, all objectives, strategies and measurables apply to all years of this 5-year plan, 2018-2022.

Goal #1: Ski Club Development

WJNSC provides a variety of services to the community. It provides accessible, cross country ski trails to its members as well as snowshoe/hiking trails to the public. WJNSC would like to see continued increased use of these trail systems by the community.

Objective	Strategies	Measurables
1. Raise awareness of the availability of the trail system and club sponsored events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Posts on club Facebook, Twitter and website • Emails to members re updates and events • Develop posters regarding club opportunities and distribute to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Northern Lights College ○ Pomeroy Sports Centre ○ Community bulletin boards • Liaise with regional cross country ski clubs to encourage use of all club trails as well as participation in WJNSC’s courses, programs and events. • Annual loppet for kids and adults 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase social media following on Fb and Instagram by 10%/yr

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer adult beginner lessons • Continue with Chicks on Sticks weekly ski night • Offer membership 'bring a friend' lesson day • Offer Ernie's staff ski lesson day • Promote ski swap and ski waxing events • Improve branding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Develop new club logo ○ Ensure updates are reflected on web and social media sites ○ Develop Club window stickers ○ Develop rear view mirror cards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase loppet and lesson participation by 10%
2. Increase club membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment at FSJ 'one-stop' registration event • Promote membership at relevant community events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase membership by 10%
3. Continue to liaise with Links Golf Course and take advantage of area use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groom cross country ski trails as per golf course manager's conditions 	
4. Identify additional trail locations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formally participate in planning opportunities to identify additional ski trail locations close to the city of Fort St. John 	

Goal #2: Host 2020 BC Winter Games

WJNSC is committed to hosting the 2020 BC Winter Games. Accordingly, there are several initiatives that must be undertaken to ensure a successful and efficient event including training of volunteers as well as development of infrastructure and facilities (including a stadium area, timing hut and day lodge).

Objective	Strategies	Measurables
1. Train volunteers to undertake operation of event.	<p><u>2018/19</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host Officials Level 1 course • Encourage volunteer officiating participation at other clubs • Host sanctioned race event prior to Games • Recruit volunteers from neighboring clubs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of participants
2. Develop facilities at Beatton Park to accommodate event.	<p><u>2019/20</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host Officials Level 1 & 2 courses • Host sanctioned race event • Construct stadium area <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build temporary (moveable) timing hut for stadium race administration and other relevant race infrastructure such as fencing and podium blocks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of participants • Completed fall 2018 <p><u>2020-21</u></p> <p>Increase in membership due to awareness from BC Winter Games</p>

Goal #3: Solicit Volunteers

Volunteers are integral to the overall success of the club. They fill the roles of the club executive, carry out the majority of trail and facility maintenance, collect user fees, coordinate events and take responsibility for a host of other functions. Historically and generally, the WJNSC has not had an adequate number of volunteers to carry out operations. Further efforts must be made to increase club volunteers.

Currently there are 7 volunteers on the WJNSC Board of Directors. This meets a minimum; however, ideally there would be 8-10 directors. Presently there are 6 coaches; however, 8-10 active and available coaches are needed. Additionally, there are 17 trained officials to run the BC Winter Games in 2020 and we need approximately 35. We have approximately 25+ other volunteers who show up for various work bees.

Objective	Strategies	Measurables
1. Increase number of general volunteers for WJNSC	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue to request members to volunteer via email, social media and word-of-mouth• Commit to follow up in a timely fashion with those that offer to help• Enlist volunteer coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• #of volunteers per year
2. Increase number of volunteers for hosting of 2020 BC Winter Games	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue to recruit volunteers via email, social media and word-of-mouth• Solicit support from other provincial cross country ski clubs as well as Cross Country BC for support	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• # of volunteers solicited

Goal #4: Increase Lessons and Events

WJNSC wishes to provide sufficient coaching opportunities to members of the community and the club. To meet this goal, on-going opportunities for training courses will be offered.

Objective	Strategies	Measurables
1. Ensure sufficient qualified coaches and instructors to meet demand from Club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer CCC's Skills Development Plan Program • Offer National Coaching Certification Program Coaching Levels 1 & 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of participants • # of participants
2. Increase youth events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host more youth competitions in collaboration with Bear Mountain Nordic Club • Develop a youth team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of youth memberships

Goal #5: Improve Infrastructure

WJNSC is working towards building capacity for program delivery by constructing much needed infrastructure including an accessible pit toilet and day lodge as well as improved accessibility from the parking lot to these public structures.

Objective	Strategies	Measurables
1. Construct Day Lodge at Beaton Park	<p><u>2018/19</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake fundraising • Seek cost estimates • Select construction company <p><u>2019/20</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proceed with construction <p><u>2020/21</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek additional funding for improvements to Day Lodge as required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased membership

2. Construct an accessible pit toilet at Beaton Park	<u>2018/19</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build pit toilet (summer 2019) 	
3. Improve access to storage shed, day lodge, pit toilet and stadium	<u>2019</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek funding for an accessibility plan 2020-21 • Seek funding for accessibility construction • Construct accessibility paths 	
4. Minor trail amendments as per permit application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct required grading on trails as per permit application 	

Goal #6: Improve Grooming Equipment

The WJNSC has been using sleds for grooming since 1982 when the club and trails were first established. Newer equipment in 2009 - 2011 improved the grooming experience but since the trail expansion in 2013, the sleds are no longer adequate for the task.

Objective	Strategies	Measurables
1. Better prepare snow for races and deal with icy snow conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fundraise for new grooming equipment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquisition of new grooming equipment
2. Enhance safety for groomers		

Goal #7: Fundraising for Additional Needs

WJNSC will continue to seek sources of funding support for a variety of activities required to keep the club operational and trails maintained.

Objective	Strategies	Measurables
1. Conduct fundraising for club operational needs including: - trail amendment work - adult rental equipment including skate ski equipment - workshops for coaches, instructors and officials	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue to solicit from main sponsors as well as miscellaneous corporate donors and sponsors	

Operating Budget Including Budget Philosophy

WJNSC runs a modest surplus every year as operational expenses are relatively low for 2 main reasons: first, due to the type of grooming equipment used (snow mobiles vs. large grooming machines); and second, due to an absence of land taxes, rent (trails are situated in a provincial park).

The majority of WJNSC’s revenue, outside of fundraising for capital projects, is derived from membership, day use fees and program fees. As a result, the club is able to contribute towards capital projects in any given year.

The WJNSC does not incur any debt. If funding goals are not realized, capital projects are deferred until funding target is reached.

Our 3-year operating plan, for 2018-2019 can be found in *Appendix A*. This includes a detailed list of funding sources and expenses.

Capital Plan and Budget

WJNSC capital plan and budget is based on an overall desire to:

- improve skier experience
- create access for skiers of all abilities
- provide opportunities for expanded programming and event hosting
- provide other outdoor experiences in addition to cross country skiing such as snowshoeing
- contribute to worker retention in the region through the establishment of a high quality outdoor recreation amenity

Regular Revenue	Capital Project Revenue	Non-financial Partners
Membership	Local government: Peace River Regional District	Cross Country BC
Day use skier visits	Provincial Government: BC, Northern Development Initiative Trust	Cross Country Canada
Program fees	Corporate donations	Ministry of Environment (BC Parks)
Ski rental revenue	Private donations	

Past Projects

The WJNSC has been working diligently to establish the Beatton Park trails as a destination cross country ski area and to bring the trail standards and facilities in line with other cross country ski areas in BC.

2009-2011	Acquired new grooming equipment (sleds + attachments)	Approx. \$46 k capital investment; \$2k in maintenance + fuel annually
2009	Installed a sea can storage container	\$1600 capital outlay; \$0 to operate
2012-2013	Constructed new ski trails; widened existing ones	\$150k capital cost; resulted in increase in skier visits + membership; \$1600 annual mowing fee and 50-70 volunteer hours to clear trees
2017	Constructed larger storage building for increasing amount of equipment and ski supplies	\$120k capital cost; ease of use for volunteers, limited event hosting capabilities in shop; increase in insurance and hydro expenses estimated at \$1500 annually
2018	Constructed stadium area for race events start/finish zone and ski programming needs	\$28k capital cost; \$100 mowing expense annually

Future Projects

The WJNSC continues to work towards providing cross country skiers and outdoor recreation enthusiasts an optimal and high quality experience.

2019-2020	Build Day Lodge to host skiers and welcome athletes to 2020 BC Winter Games	\$575k estimated cost; \$4,200 annual expenses; will result in increase in membership, skier visits and rental revenue opportunities
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Day Lodge

Benefits of Day Lodge:

- focal point for all club activities
- allow club to expand programming host summer and/or winter camps for skiers
- allow club to promote skiing among youth in the region, which in turn promotes positive relationships among youth and provides opportunities for them to develop leadership skills which they can take back to their communities
- make the Beattton trails a destination in all seasons
- help support community/regional worker retention, especially professionals
- a place to warm up during longer ski outings and on cold days
- a place to facilitate programming, e.g., lessons for children and adults
- a place for non-skiing parents to watch their children
- a place to administer events
- a place to meet other skiers/promote socializing/community building
- a place to eat, drink and extend the ski day
- offer learning opportunities for teachers and students from School District 60
- provide a venue for the main hosting hub for the Nordic events for the 2020 BC Winter Games

Considerations:

- Need a committed volunteer manager to oversee maintenance and rental schedule
- Increase in expenses for club such as insurance and hydro

Expense	Amount	Revenue	Amount
Insurance	\$2,000	Corporate rentals	\$3,000
Chimney Cleaning	\$300	School District 60	\$500

Expense	Amount	Revenue	Amount
Fees to BC Parks	\$500	Other renters	\$5,000
Annual pump out - toilet	\$400		
Contingency	\$1,000		
Total Expenses	\$4,200	Total Revenue	\$8,500

It is anticipated that the Day Lodge will result in net revenue for the WJNSC.

As the day lodge is the most significant undertaking for the club in terms of amount of funding to be raised, considerable thought has gone into the long term benefits and costs that will result. Internal research over the past decade within the WJNSC and local ski community has shown a consistent demand for such a facility and as a result, it has been determined that the benefits far outweigh the risks.

Grooming Equipment

The WJNSC has been using sleds for grooming since 1982 when the club and trails were first established. Newer equipment in 2009 - 2011 improved the grooming experience but since the trail expansion in 2013, the sleds are no longer adequate for the task.

2019-2021	Acquire new grooming equipment to better prepare snow for races and deal with icy snow conditions	\$120k estimated cost; maintenance expenses unknown; better, safer grooming for groomers and improved trail conditions
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Benefits of new grooming equipment:

- better handle the wider trails, hills, heavy snow events and icy conditions
- compress the snow for a harder ski surface (mandatory for race conditions)
- safer and less time consuming for groomers
- less labour intensive for volunteer groomers

- able to prep the course for race events (ability to lift and set track pan when required as per race standards and general grooming practice protocol)

Considerations:

All cross country ski clubs need to invest significant capital into grooming equipment. It may be the single most expensive acquisition for many clubs and ski areas with no clear cost recovery. The main challenges of owning a large machine are increased maintenance expenses and the need to put funds aside each year to plan for eventual replacement.

The increase in maintenance expenses can be mitigated through an increase in membership fees, increase in trail use fees and expanded marketing and programming to attract more skiers to the trails.

Summary

The WJNSC exercises due diligence when embarking on major projects and does not move ahead without careful research nor until funding targets are achieved. The club consults its membership regularly and prides itself on striving to continually seek ways to improve the cross country ski experience for both visitors to and residents of the North Peace.

Appendix

Appendix A: WJNSC 3-Year Operating Budget – 2018-2019 *(see next page)*

Whiskey Jack Nordic Ski Club - 3 Year Operations - 2018-2019

	Actual 2017-18	Current 2018-19	Projected 2019-20
Revenues			
Federal Funding	-	-	230,000.00
Provincial Funding	31,970.00	27,200.00	202,400.00
Municipal Funding	35,000.00	30,000.00	50,000.00
Community Gaming Grant	-	12,574.38	50,000.00
Licensed Gaming	-	-	-
Memberships/Drop Box	10,856.90	13,700.00	15,250.00
Donations - Individual		2,000.00	5,700.00
Donations - Corporate	3,000.00	3,000.00	55,000.00
Fundraising	2,733.40	3,000.00	5,000.00
Pitch In/Honourarium	525.00	150.00	150.00
Sale of Equipment	1,047.62	-	-
Equipment Rentals	1,910.00	2,209.38	2,350.00
Programs, Coaching, & Events	1,789.00	2,650.00	2,950.00
Other	200.82	225.00	425.00
	89,032.74	96,708.76	619,225.00
Expenses			
Membership Dues CCBC	2,687.10	2,849.00	3,025.00
Insurance - Equipment	1,983.00	2,000.00	2,000.00
Insurance - Storage Shed	-	600.00	600.00
Hydro/Utilities	-	600.00	600.00
Maintenance - Equipment	2,197.28	1,500.00	1,500.00
Fuel	371.19	500.00	600.00
Storage Building Project	116,130.18	10,000.00	-
Stadium Project	525.00	38,000.00	-
Day Lodge Project	-	6,000.00	575,000.00
Accessible Pit Toilet Project	-	-	25,148.76
Accessible Path Plan	-	-	4,200.00
Trail, Trailhead & Lot Maintenance	2,283.94	2,850.00	2,700.00
Officials & Timing Training	1,986.08	1,200.00	2,500.00
Ski Rental Equipment	135.88	800.00	800.00
Programming & Event Expenses	928.54	1,100.00	1,100.00
Administrative & Society Fees	288.85	409.00	419.00
Web Hosting & Club Promotion	221.02	152.00	152.00
	129,738.06	68,560.00	620,344.76
Revenues - Expenses	- 40,705.32	28,148.76	- 1,119.76