

Message from the Executive Purchase of a New Grooming Machine

Background:

The response from the NNSC 2007-2008 survey last year and the many comments we receive during the season indicate that the highest priority for the membership is to improve grooming. The Executive is committed to serving the membership and therefore we have come up with a plan of action to accomplish this goal.

The comments the Club generally receive fall into the following general areas:

1. Not groomed after early morning snowfalls
2. Ridge on skating lane
3. Not all trails groomed everyday
4. More grooming is needed

The NNSC grooming department has been working hard the last several years to present the best grooming possible for the membership. The Club is at a maximum with the current grooming set-up. It requires approximately 12 hours to groom the entire trail system with the Pisten Bulley 160 (PB160). The PB 160 is not wide enough to groom the full width of the trail in one pass, so every trail must receive two passes. It is also difficult to find staff that are willing to work all night, making recruitment and retention of a head groomer a big issue.

Proposal:

The only way that the grooming can be improved is if the trails can be groomed faster. The only course of action that we can see that will do this is the purchase of a new Pisten Bulley. The new machine will be both faster and wider than the current PB160. It will enable us to groom some of our trails in one pass and will do so in a lesser amount of time.

The Club is optimistic that we can reduce the time for a full groom to 6-7 hours instead of the current 12 hours. The reduced amount of time should give us some flexibility in scheduling grooming. Currently grooming starts at about 10:00 PM. We may be able to move this to early morning on most days.

The purchase of a new machine also requires the purchase and construction of a new shop. The current shop is not adequate for a larger machine. The construction of the shop will require volunteer assistance from the membership.

It must also be understood that this purchase will have to be done sooner or later. The PB160 is 14 years old and will have to be replaced within the next 5 years. Maintenance costs for the PB 160 is also increasing as the machine ages.

Costs:

The purchase price of a new machine is approximately \$200,000.
Purchase and construction of a new shop is approximately \$80,000.

With shipping and other unexpected costs, the proposed budget should be for \$300,000.

Funding:

We would be looking for as much money as possible from grants and donations. There are two major grants we will be applying for:

1. A Direct Access Gaming Grant for up to \$100,000 for the grooming machine.
2. A Capital Costs Gaming Grant for a maximum of 50% of the cost of the shop.

The Club will have approximately \$70,000 in the bank at the end of our fiscal year in August.

If the maximum amount of grant money is received (\$140,000), and the Club used all the money in the bank (\$70,000), there would still be a minimum \$90,000 shortfall. The Club would be looking for as much in corporate donations as possible. The Club will also consider a temporary surcharge of \$50 on adult membership fees. There is still a possibility the Club may have to borrow money.

If the full amount of grant money is not received, the Club would obviously be in debt for several more years. We should experience some saving on grooming costs that will also be applied to the debt.

Timeline:

If we get approval from the membership to proceed with this plan, the schedule would be as follows:

1. Apply for the Capital Costs Gaming Grant in November 2008
2. Purchase materials and construction of shop in Spring 2009
3. Apply for the Direct Access Gaming Grant in May 2009.
4. Purchase grooming machine in Fall 2009.

The Membership:

The Executive cannot move forward with this initiative without the support of the membership. Support is needed for the proposal in general and we require individuals to come forward to assist us with all the details for the acquisition and construction of the shop.

Meeting:

A meeting will be held October 19th in conjunction with the annual Work Bee so that you can discuss this proposal with the Executive. The meeting will be at 9:00 at the Apex shelter. If you cannot make the meeting please send us your comments.

Comments can be emailed to: nsc_president@nelsonnordicski.ca, or sent by regular mail to: Nelson Nordic Ski Club, PO Box 486, Nelson BC , V1L 5R3.

The Executive needs to hear from you. Please send us your comments and/or plan to attend the meeting.