

# Black Jack Ski Club 2020 Strategic Plan





Table of Contents

**Background.....3**

**History .....4**

**Strategic Plan Objectives .....4**

**Vision Statement.....5**

**Strategic Priorities.....6**

**Trails and Facilities.....7**

**Community Involvement .....7**

**Racing Program .....7**

**Environmental Practices.....9**

**Finances.....9**

**Organization .....10**

**Programs and Events.....10**

**Marketing .....11**

**Education and Communication.....11**

**Appendix: SWOT Analysis.....16**



## Background

Black Jack ranks as one of the premier cross-country ski facilities in western Canada because of its variety of trails, excellent grooming, abundant and reliable snowfall, and proximity to Rossland. We host thousands of day-skier visits per year and many high-profile races, from NorAm Canada Cups to the Canadian Masters Championship.

Recently voted Canada's #1 Outdoor Town by Explore magazine, the Rossland area is a natural playground for adventure seekers from around the world. Our stunning alpine town also features all of the amenities you would expect; shopping, casual and fine dining, pubs, bars, fitness centre, and more.

Rosslund is located 8 km north of the US/Canada border in the heart of the West Kootenay region of British Columbia. Rossland is a 2.5-hour drive from the Spokane, WA International Airport, or 3.5 hours' drive from Kelowna, BC International Airport. Daily regional flights are available from Vancouver and Calgary to Castlegar (30 minutes from Black Jack) and Trail Airports (15 minutes from Black Jack).

The Black Jack Cross Country Ski Club is located 5 minutes north of Rossland, close to Red Mountain Ski Resort. There are 45km + of scenic trails groomed for classic skiing and skate skiing. 1 in 4 Rosslanders is a Black Jack member, which we believe is the highest per capita xc ski population in Canada!

Black Jack Ski Club operates Black Jack Ski Team. From Active Start to Learning to Train to Training to Compete, the Black Jack Skier Development Program covers all aspects of skier progression from first steps to feeding athletes to the National Ski Team.

The Skier Development Program is one of the key services provided by the club. In the past 10 years, significant changes have occurred in the organization of skier development in Canada and our club has, and is, changing to keep in step with the latest best practices. In the club programs, we have five levels or layers of Athlete Development as defined by Cross Country Canada's Long Term Athlete Development model.



## History

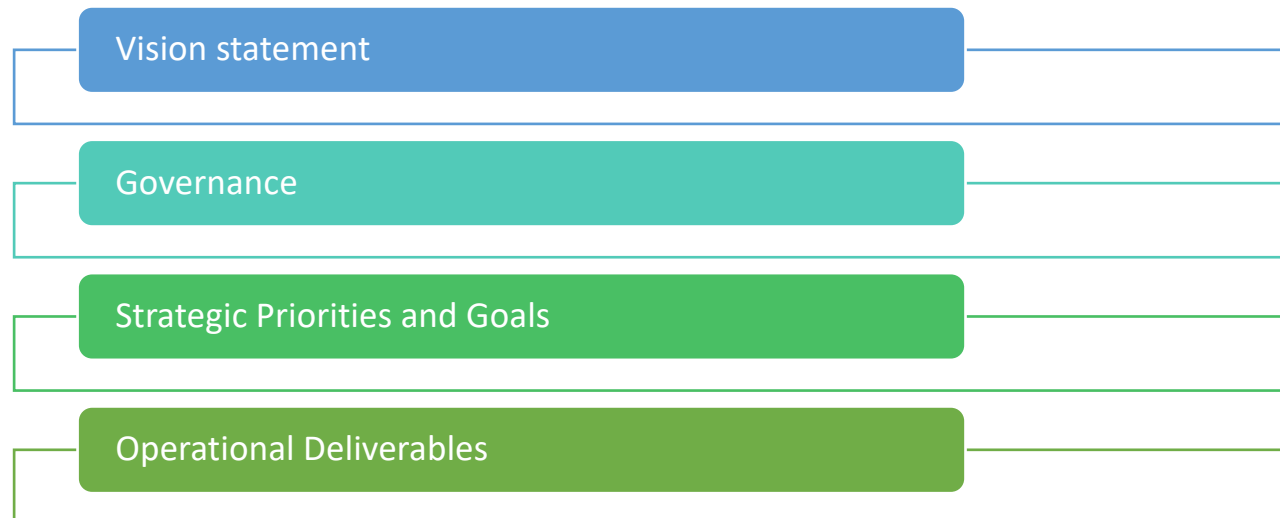
The Black Jack Cross Country Ski Club is a non-profit society with over 1,000 members, established in 1983. Our mission is to build a community of Nordic skiers by providing and sustaining excellence in programs and services. We continually make significant improvements to our club through the tireless efforts of volunteers and the successful management of generous grants.

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## Strategic Plan Objectives

The Black Jack Ski Club board of directors recognized the need to update the Strategic Plan, last completed in 2018. The Strategic Plan outlines the priority outcomes to be addressed over the next one to three years (between 2021 and 2024). The Strategic Plan also looks at a longer-term vision for the club. A Strategic Plan is intended to guide ongoing effort and work already underway, create common ground, serve the diverse interests of members, provide transparency for decision processes, and is accountable to the members. The Strategic Plan will serve as a guide as to the further development of business and operational-level planning.

The following elements are included in the Strategic Plan:





The Strategic Plan is designed to inform and provide direction to the following parties:

### Board of Directors

- This plan will provide a guide for the board of directors to follow in order to ensure that regular board decisions fit the long-term mission and goals for the club.

### Black Jack Membership

- This plan is meant to inform the membership base of the long-term strategy, objectives and plans of the club.

### Larger Community

- This plan serves as a communications tool to the entire community as to Black Jacks plans and how it impacts the community.

### Key Stakeholders

- This plan serves to inform key stakeholders as to the opportunities provided by Black Jack. This can include landowners, financial stakeholders (including banks and grantors), donors and other stakeholders invested in the success of Black Jack Ski Club.

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## Vision Statement

**Deliver a world class Nordic skiing experience to its members, community and guests.**

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## Strategic Priorities

Community Involvement, Support and Recognition	Black Jack Ski Club will actively engage with the community, businesses, landowners, land managers, elected officials and other stakeholders and will continue to engage in educational initiatives.
Grooming and Trail Quality	The quality of our trails including a variety of experience levels, scenic terrain, world class grooming, and ongoing maintenance is critical to the success of the program.
Promotion and inclusivity of Nordic skiing	Promoting Nordic skiing to all ages and abilities creates the diversity and support needed for long-term success.
Strong Racing Program	The strong racing program drives recognition and support while creating opportunities through competitive Nordic skiing programs to support young athletes in achieving their individual athletic, academic, and personal goals.
Facilities to support long term success of the club	We recognize that proper facilities contribute to providing all of our members and visitors with a world class Nordic skiing experience.
Tackling Climate Change	Black Jack Ski Club will develop adaptation strategies for year-round changes in weather patterns that result in inadequate snow coverage, fire, flooding and landslides. In addition, Black Jack will do its part to minimize negative impacts on the environment.
Financial Stability	Black Jack Ski Club will operate by ensuring long-term financial stability. This will be achieved by developing a strong operational program which will drive revenue from members and guests, coupled with appropriate fiscal management. Black Jack will seek grant opportunities where possible primarily for the expansion of major capital projects.



## Community Involvement

Black Jack needs to continue to promote Nordic skiing as an integral component of the Rossland lifestyle. Black Jack should become a destination for Nordic skiing in much the same way that Red is a destination for alpine skiing and the Rossland Trails are a destination for mountain biking. The club needs to appeal to all different ages and skill levels of Nordic skiing and facilitate progression for the club for young children, teens, and adults of all ages. Continued promotion of Black Jack as part of the tourism of Rossland will exemplify its importance and its positive impact on tourism revenue. Often when conditions are challenging at Red, they are great at Black Jack. Working together with Red can benefit both Nordic skiing and alpine skiing.

Local adults are the backbone from a community support and financial perspective. Having programs that keep adults interested in regular skiing will help promote the club throughout the community.

Black Jack will be expanding its community involvement and awareness by creating more social events including expansion of the Loppet to involve more people including and offering food along the way. The club will also create masters skiing events, adult development programs, parent development groups and more fun year-round social events.

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## Trails and Facilities

The club is renowned for its excellent grooming, however there is a need to upgrade the facilities. Improvements include a kiosk building with proper space, rentals in the same building, proper restrooms/changing area, storage and including office space for people to work out of. Depending upon grant availability this facility could include additional amenities including a waxing area, community meeting space, food service, sauna, showers and training area for the team. The club needs to set up a task force to determine the next steps.

In addition to the building improvements, the club also sees the need for upgrades for drainage and more woodchips, a warming hut at biathlon, creating a way to practically ski from town or a connection between Blackjack and Red Mountain, adding snowshoe trails, winter camping options for RV's and improved parking at the biathlon area.

Year-round consideration is also important. Maximizing full-year utilization of the space can be a benefit to all members through either additional revenue generation or facilities that can be enjoyed by club members throughout the year. This includes using the new building throughout the year, potentially building a 2-4K roller skiing loop, optimizing frisbee golf relationships, and hosting trail runs, bike events and training camps.



Climate change will continue to be an issue that could mean a long-term plan to move infrastructure to biathlon. New trails should focus on biathlon or additional connections to biathlon. This may include building additional infrastructure at the biathlon area including a connection to the 100 Acre Wood.

Additions should maximize skiing enjoyment while minimizing carbon footprint in construction, grooming and maintenance.

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## Racing Program

Black Jack is known as a Nordic community that promotes excellence due to the success of the racing program. Racing is important to Black Jack on many levels. The racing team builds awareness of the excellence of Black Jack throughout BC. By capitalizing on this, the racing program can benefit the entire club. Racing is also a fantastic avenue for youth to become involved in a lifelong sport. The racing program needs to be expanded by offering several paths for youth and adults. Starting at the feeder programs, the racing program promotes excellence in skiing technique and ability. The programs should have a competitive racing track for youth, a program for youth to stay involved who aren't interested in racing and an adult program for racer development.

A strong team will not only be self-sufficient but also increase awareness of the club that will increase the overall economic stability of the club. By hosting races, the club benefits from increased revenue, greater awareness of the club and more money-driven into the Rossland economy.





## Environmental Practices

Black Jack Ski Club is planning for climate change on two levels. The club recognizes that climate change is happening and that measures need to be taken to optimize the skiing experience despite climate change. The club also recognizes that it can do its part to minimize its contribution to climate change.

To optimize the skiing experience the club is working on upgrades for drainage and trail maintenance. As the climate continues to get warmer, the biathlon facility will become more important. The club recognizes that there needs to be a long-term plan to move infrastructure to biathlon. We will look for opportunities to expand to higher elevation in partnership with local forestry.

The club can also do its part in reducing climate change by building more efficient grooming strategies. We will plan trail revisions to minimize the energy required to groom and maintain. Seek technological improvements in grooming equipment (e.g. switching to electric machines as the technology is available) and install charging stations for electric vehicles in the parking lots.

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## Finances

Recognizing that financial sustainability is critical to the organization, the club will become financially sustainable through operations. This includes determining appropriate membership fees and also promote day pass sales to meet or exceed projected expenses. The club will look to grants for building funds. Additional funds for infrastructure will come from corporate partnerships, government and private donations.

By partnering with local businesses on advertising we could potentially leverage the business's current marketing and promote the club with fewer funds than if we did it on our own.

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## Organization

The club currently relies heavily on volunteers. The club has identified the need to hire a general manager to ensure that volunteers don't get overextended. The general manager will help to organize and execute the initiatives set forth by the board. The general manager will also help to build and utilize a wider volunteer base in addition to overseeing employees of the club, such as the groomer.

In addition to the general manager, the club is committed to building the skill level of coaches. The club needs a person to run youth programs in addition to a coach (which it currently has). The club will also consider adding a communications director.

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## Programs and Events

Black Jack understands that creating a social atmosphere for the club will create a loyalty to the club that extends beyond a "set of trails" or a "racing team". Creating inclusive year-round social events for the community is a great way to promote the club and develop a stronger loyalty. Black Jack will continue to create new and exciting social events such as bonfires, night skiing, dress-up fun races, summer and winter Wednesday night race series, fondue night skis and other events. Black Jack will work to promote a more social atmosphere as it hosts races and work to create a spectator event.

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## Marketing

Black Jack has an amazing trail system with world-class grooming. Integrating Black Jack into Rossland tourism advertising and local lodging can be quite successful. Black Jack should work with Red to capture market share were part of the family alpine skis and the other likes Nordic. This could include promoting Nordic skiing as an alternate to days that you don't want to alpine ski, or for family members that don't alpine ski. Create awareness so that Black Jack is seen as a destination that contributes positively to the economics of the community through increased lodging, restaurants and shopping expenses.

Bringing more races and training camps to Black Jack also exposes Black Jack to a wider audience of Nordic enthusiasts. Hosting races not only brings racers to Rossland bringing with it lodging, restaurant and retail spend, but it also creates awareness from racing families and friends of the fantastic experience that Black Jack has to offer.

In addition to promoting Black Jack directly, there are many organizations that Black Jack can partner with to leverage marketing reach including Tourism Rossland, local hotels, Red Mountain, KCTS and others. Black Jack has lodging closer than almost any other Nordic centre in BC which is also an attribute that can be promoted and cross-marketed.

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## Education and Communication

Nordic skiing is often touted as one of the sports with the greatest long-term health benefits. By creating education and training for everyone, the enjoyment of Nordic skiing can be increased greatly and contribute to it being a life-long sport.

Black Jack has excellent youth education programs that can be expanded to promote skiing further as kids age. These programs provide a fantastic way for kids to develop into young adults as they proceed on their journey of skiing.

Providing a strong program for local adults is very important. Having programs that keep adults interested in regular skiing will help promote the club throughout the community. In addition to advertising annual passes, this can include technique classes, organized group skiing and public use of facilities including existing cabins, restrooms and the future potential of waxing areas.



Black Jack Initiative	Black Jack Deliverables and Activities	Community Involvement, Support and Recognition	Facilities to support long term success of program	Financial Stability	Grooming and Trail Quality	Promotion and inclusivity of Nordic Skiing	Strong Racing Program	Tackling Climate Change	Start	End	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
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**Community Involvement, Support and Recognition**

Social Events	Create a written social program that also integrates racing but in a fun way	X				X			6/1/21	9/30/21					
	Create plan for events that draw in tourists	X				X			10/1/21	12/31/21					
	Monthly Fondue night ski, where people ski out to a cabin and have fondue during a full moon.	X				X			10/1/22	3/31/23					
	Make into more of a true Loppet. Potential to cater to kids experience. Food along the way	X				X			1/1/22	3/31/22					
	Mix of racing and participation focused – year round. Small community events (Wednesday night race series – winter and summer)	X					X	X	10/1/21	12/31/21					
	Social Events year round	X							4/1/21	6/30/21					
Volunteer Support	Building and utilizing a wider volunteer base	X				X			4/1/21	3/31/22					
Community Outreach	Partner with KCTS more in both promotion and trail building	X							6/1/22	9/30/22					
	Support year round activity – skiing, running, mountain biking, rollerskiing	X							6/1/21	9/30/21					
	Work with Red to capture market share where part of the family alpine skis and the other likes Nordic.	X		X		X			10/1/21	12/31/21					
Awareness	Integrate Nordic skiing into Rossland tourism advertising as well as local lodging can be quite successful.	X		X		X			1/1/21	3/31/23					
	Create Program that shows Black Jack as a destination that contributes positively to the economics of the community through increased lodging, restaurants and shopping expenses.	X		X		X			6/1/21	3/31/23					
	Show local lodging companies how much traing camps bring in lodging revenue and get their assistance at advertising / packages.	X		X		X	X		6/1/21	3/31/22					

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**Grooming and Trail Quality**

New Trails	Create task force to create master plan for trails				X	X		X	4/1/21	9/30/21					
	Connect to the 100 acre wood				X				6/1/24	9/30/24					
	Connected to the town and main tourism accommodations to allow practical / enjoyable ski to the main trails from town or key parking areas (for example – connect to Red Mountain's planned future parking lots).	X			X	X			6/1/23	9/30/23					
	A connection to Red	X			X	X			6/1/22	9/30/22					
	Improved beginner area	X			X	X			6/1/22	9/30/22					
Maintenance	Maximize early season skiing by improvements on existing higher elevation trails including foundational items like grading and ditching as well as fine tuning such as rock removal and wood chip / sawdust cover on top.				X			X	6/1/23	9/30/23					
Alternative Uses	Add snow shoeing	X			X	X			6/1/22	9/30/22					
Other Infrastructure	Create more lighted trails.	X	X		X	X			1/1/24	3/31/24					
Communication	Showcase our Amazing trails	X			X	X			1/1/21	12/31/25					



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**Promotion and inclusivity of Nordic Skiing**

Promotion and Marketing	Promote that you can walk from accommodations at Red to the trailhead. Not many places have this capability.	X				X			10/1/21	3/31/22					
	Campaign that focuses on Nordic skiing as a fantastic avenue to keep youth active and devoted to a healthy lifestyle.	X				X			10/1/21	3/31/22					
	Part of "Winter Adventures" – tourism Rossland	X	X	X	X	X			10/1/21	3/31/22					
	More social media utilization.					X			1/1/21	12/31/25					
	Promote Nordic as an alternate to days that you don't want to alpine ski, or for family members that don't alpine ski.	X		X		X			10/1/23	3/31/24					
New Programs	Market an all seasons destination, training camps, partnering with KCTS	X		X		X			6/1/21	9/30/21					
	Create Parent development group					X	X		10/1/22	3/31/23					
	program that keeps non-racing youth interested in Black Jack and Nordic skiing.	X				X	X		10/1/21	3/31/22					
	Promote biathlon more – maybe partner with Army base	X				X			10/1/23	3/31/24					
	Fun masters programs					X			10/1/21	3/31/22					
Education	Improving Dog Friendly skiing				X	X			10/1/23	3/31/24					
	Create adult development programs	X				X			10/1/22	3/31/23					
	Increased school programs (Castlegar, Trail and others)	X				X	X		10/1/21	3/31/22					

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**Strong Racing Program**

Importance of Racing	Forge a better relationship with CCBC to bring more training camps			X			X		6/1/22	9/30/22					
	Promoting local races as a spectator sport	X		X			X		10/1/22	3/31/23					
Support	A person to run youth programs in addition to a coach						X		1/1/21	3/31/21					
	Race team that is self sufficient			X			X		1/1/21	12/31/25					
Excellence in Athletics	Building skill level of coaches						X		6/1/21	9/30/22					
	Summer and Winter training						X		6/1/21	9/30/21					
	Youth and senior teams						X		10/1/23	3/31/24					
Hosting Races	FIS races			X			X		10/1/21	3/31/22					
	BC Cup – We aren't in the central corridor. Lobby to get races outside the central corridor.			X			X		10/1/22	3/31/23					
	BC Toonie			X			X		10/1/23	3/31/24					
Longevity within Racing	Create a focus plan on feeder programs			X			X		6/1/22	12/31/22					
	Lengthen the amount of time that youth remain in the program and grow the base of teens that utilize Black Jack for sport and recreation.			X			X		9/1/22	3/31/23					
	Options for racers and non-racing youth to grow and continue with the club.			X		X	X		9/1/23	3/31/24					



Facilities to support long term success of program																
Main Building	Establish task force to create plan for new building	X	X								4/1/21	9/30/21				
	Buildings including Running Water, Changing rooms, Everything together, Modest and Mobile, Storage, wax room, office and race office		X								10/1/21	12/31/21				
	Facility that people can rent out and utilize year-round	X	X								10/1/21	12/31/21				
	Have a Sauna and a shower as well as a place to change	X	X								10/1/21	12/31/21				
	Having a facility at Black Jack similar to Rafters	X	X								10/1/22	12/31/22				
Other Buildings	A cabin or shelter at the Viewpoint Trail.		X								6/1/23	9/30/23				
	A warming hut at biathlon		X								6/1/22	9/30/22				
Infrastructure	A 2-4KM Roller ski loop		X				X				6/1/22	9/30/22				
	Parking – accessible and consistently cleared		X								10/1/21	12/31/21				
	Add more first aid including AEDs		X								6/1/22	9/30/22				
	Winter camping options for RV's	X	X	X			X				10/1/23	12/31/23				

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Tackling Climate Change																
Minimizing Our Impact	A way to get to skiing without driving	X						X	10/1/24	12/31/24						
	Charging stations for electric vehicles		X					X	10/1/23	12/31/23						
	More efficient grooming strategies to help with climate change					X		X	1/1/22	3/31/22						
	Plan for technology changes in grooming equipment (ie. Switch to electric machines as the technology is available).				X	X		X	10/1/24	12/31/24						
	Plan trail revisions to minimize energy required to groom and maintain (lower carbon footprint in short to medium term).				X	X		X	6/1/24	9/30/24						
Climate Adaptation	Create infrastructure and trails at higher elevations.		X			X		X	6/1/24	9/30/24						
	Long-term facilities at Biathlon. More parking at Biathlon		X					X	6/1/24	9/30/24						
	Maximizing enjoyment while minimizing carbon footprint in trail development.					X		X	1/1/21	12/31/25						



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Financial Stability															
Organizational Structure	A person to run youth programs in addition to a coach			X			X		1/1/21	3/31/21					
	Add communications director to the club or build communications into the role of general manager.	X		X		X			4/1/21	6/30/21					
	Having a general manager to make the club sustainable.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	10/1/21	12/31/21					
Maximize Financial Impact	Higher Membership Fees			X	X				10/1/22	12/31/22					
	In addition to advertising annual passes this can include technique classes, organized group skiing and public use of facilities including existing cabins, restrooms and the future potential of waxing areas.	X		X		X			10/1/22	12/31/22					
	Minimize the dependence on volunteers.	X		X					1/1/21	12/31/21					
Financial Goals	Bring in enough funding to cover normal operations and costs of future vision.			X					1/1/23	3/31/23					
	By partnering with local businesses on advertising we could potentially leverage their current base and promote the club with less funds than if we did it on our own.	X		X					1/1/22	3/31/22					
	Continue to pursue grants that will help in building the infrastructure and even consider a capital campaign if necessary.			X					4/1/21	9/30/21					
	Corporate Partnerships for infrastructure			X					4/1/21	9/30/21					



## Appendix A: SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. High recognition in the racing program</li> <li>2. Coaching Legacy of Dave Woods, strong new coach</li> <li>3. A good amount of Classic only trails</li> <li>4. Decent disposable income in the community</li> <li>5. Money spent on lifestyle / sports</li> <li>6. Cutting edge for online trail maps</li> <li>7. Good relationships with other organizations (KCTS, Disc Golf, Tourism Rossland)</li> <li>8. Created a lot of good people</li> <li>9. Warming Huts</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Web presence and social media presence needs improvement.</li> <li>2. No General Manager</li> <li>3. Enforcement of trail passes</li> </ol>
Opportunities	Threats
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Infrastructure at biathlon</li> <li>2. Remote pass sales (stores in town / online)</li> <li>3. Payment plan through Nelson &amp; District Credit Union</li> <li>4. Promote the value of Nordic skiing</li> <li>5. Donations on the website</li> <li>6. Program for Recreation Management (Selkirk College)</li> <li>7. Fulltime administrator (General Manager)</li> <li>8. Partner with GIS program at Selkirk College</li> <li>9. Finding central records storage</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Logging</li> <li>2. Most trails are on private land</li> <li>3. Reliance on key volunteers</li> <li>4. Limited population</li> <li>5. Challenging topography (washouts)</li> <li>6. Other winter trails being developed</li> <li>7. Red Mountain developing trails</li> <li>8. No Air Canada to Castlegar</li> <li>9. Motorized Traffic on trail</li> <li>10. Government land renewal in 4-5 years</li> <li>11. No power at biathlon</li> </ol>