

Strategic Planning Update

The following is provided to keep members informed about the ongoing process of consultation that is being undertaken to prepare a Strategic Plan for the Larch Hills Nordic Society (LHNS).

The LHNS Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) has so far conducted two different consultation activities with members and the community, and a third will occur soon.

- The first method was an interview with key stakeholders conducted by members of the SPC in September and October. This method was designed to discover a sense of the issues and values prevalent among members and other users of the Larch Hills. Over 20 interviews were conducted with members and representatives of affiliated groups and agencies.
- The second method, “An Open Space Event”, is a community engagement approach designed to manage complex issues or multiple topics of interest. Typically by the conclusion of an Open Space Event, every issue of concern to anybody had been laid upon the table. Participants self-select topics of interest and discuss issues to the extent that anybody cares to do so. A full written record of all discussions, again to the extent participants recorded the discussion is made available for distribution. The issues discussed are those most important to most of the attendees. Those topics not discussed are maintained as part of the record as this information could become more relevant in the future. This event was held at the Downtown Activity Centre on November 4th.
- The third consultation, an online survey, will occur early in the New Year. Members will be invited to provide further levels of detail on the priority topics to be the focus in the strategic plan. This survey will be available through a link on our website and a notice will be sent to the membership when it becomes available.

Please note the summaries of the interviews and Open Space Event that follow have not been edited beyond removing personal information. The information collected will inform the work of the steering committee as they move towards completing the Strategic Plan.

Summary Stakeholder Interviews

A total of 22 interviews were conducted. Many people offered several responses resulting in over 146 comments. The overwhelming sentiment is that people are very proud of the society's commitment to volunteerism and the resulting programs and services offered.

• DESCRIBE YOUR PEAK EXPERIENCE – A TIME WHEN YOU FELT MOST ENGAGED AND PROUD OF YOUR CONTRIBUTION TO LHNS?

- These are some of my best experiences skiing at Larch Hills and being a part of the LHNS including some where I was contributing to the LHNS.
- The good feeling at the end of a ski team practice or ski team camp that has gone well. Some examples are Mantracker last weekend, the Herald's Park camp, Silverton training camp last June, and watching the Penguins video when I got home from the Silver Star camp last year.
- The trip to the Canadian National Championships in Whistler with 17 athletes in 2012.
- A day of skiing with blue skies, dry snow, and occasionally meeting someone just as happy to be there as myself.
- I felt most engaged at our Midget Championships, when so many of our race team parents were involved in making the entire event the success that it was. In addition, so many LHN parents were coaching the kids and everyone (organizers, volunteers, coaches and parents) were present and there to support the kids in their events. There was a lot of cheering going on! Also, visiting clubs had a lot of positive feedback about the event and were so happy to be at Larch Hills. I get the sense that visiting teams have come to respect Larch Hills and trust and expect that we will deliver a well organized, fun, quality event. They love to come here!
- - The other peak time for me is coming back from a ski when the race kids have been practicing and feeling like such a community – with so many parents, racers and siblings all there together enjoying our facilities and trails! The sight of so many headlamps in the dark on a snowy evening is hard to beat!
- Saturday Jackrabbits and ski team practice – great to see so many kids enjoying the XC ski experience and the families up there.
- When we pulled off a successful BC Championships race weekend. Our recent successful Midget Championships.
- Participating in our yearly loppet (which has been successful for decades) and seeing all the other participants.
- I feel most engaged at the Saturday morning ski practices working with the kids. There is a special energy on Saturday mornings with Jackrabbit families, individuals and the Jr. Race team all skiing through the trails. I feel that I have a presence of knowing so many families and skiers at that time. I feel very connected to the LHNS in that environment.
- Helping to set up the lantern ski: decorating the chalet with ice lanterns and paper bag lanterns.
- B.C. Midget Championships 2014 – everybody came, had a great time – so many kids and such a wonderful experience. We were able to showcase our facilities and our programs to all of the other clubs in the Province.
- On a personal note – also think of that “perfect day” – being up at the North End – skiing on my own for the sheer love of the sport, quiet personal ski experience, opportunity to connect with nature / solitude.–

not so much about contribution to LHNS, but more of a Peak Experience.

- The 10 years I was involved in tracksetting.
- In the formative years of the club (30 years ago) I introduced the Jackrabbit Program to the LH. This introduced a lot of children and their parents to the sport. Many of these Jackrabbits are now active adult skiers with their own children skiing as well.
- Every fall when we clear Lynx Trot for the upcoming ski season is when I feel engaged and contributing. We are proud to be able to help out with the trail maintenance and look forward to our first ski on the trail.
- Volunteering with fellow LHNS members to host events and work on projects.
- Getting section 57 approval through Recreation for new trails created by logging.
- The Loppet is so inspirational for me
- I love volunteering and also seeing the very young and very senior athletes
- Working for the loppet
- 2006 presentation on climate change
- Helping people make decisions regarding club infrastructure (moving chalet)

• **IN YOUR HUMBLE OPINION, WHAT ARE YOUR UNIQUE SKILLS; WHAT IS YOUR CONTRIBUTION TO LHNS?**

- An ability to work with kids coaching as a Jackrabbit leader or as a member of the ski team coaches.
- Volunteering for race events, Loppet timing,
- assisting with trail clearing on a small scale
- jackrabbit coaching and coaching race team dryland activities.
- - Zone4 registration software experience used for race registration and timing for all ski races including loppet
- Coach for ski team and previously with the Jackrabbits program. I bring less technical skills (having come to XC skiing a bit later), but I try to compensate by being creative about ways to engage the kids.
- Race timing and all the “behind the scenes” work that goes with that. Analyzing the race type, the participants, the location and coming up with a strategy to get reliable results in a timely fashion. Collecting, supplying and teaching about race timing equipment for shared use with Larch Hills, cycling and running clubs.
- My contribution to LHNS is to bring young skiers and introduce them to the sport of XC ski racing. I have the ability to understand where they are coming from and what they need to move forward in the sport. I have a strong desire to make that transition onto the race team a fun and non threatening experience but also build their confidence and skills so they feel that can handle the expectations of the sport.
- Truly, minimal contribution to LHNS, more involved with the junior race team.
- Organizing Jackrabbit Program, Reino Run, Wild Soles Runs, Coaching (technical / coaching expertise).
- Ability to coach kids, technical knowledge and expertise, mapping skills.
- Assisting with track maintenance, advising newcomers on the hill, Santa Claus.
- I like to think that I have done a decent job motivating folk to get involved in various roles in the club. I was club president for six years during the 1980’s during which time our JR Program and Loppet became the largest in the province, and our membership doubled. During these formative years, the emphasis was on instilling a culture of

volunteerism and a commitment to 'free' access to an extensive high quality trail system.

- My cheery greetings to all I meet on the trails gives enjoyment to me and them, I hope. Although this isn't a unique skill it is one that contributes to the friendly feeling on the trails, and makes people feel welcome.
- Working with fellow LHNS members in a collaborative way for the benefit of LHNS.
- Landscape Management.
- Hospitality, hosting
- Communication and social aspect
- Cheering folks on
- Volunteering (hot chocolate for jackrabbits)
- Geo scientist

• **WHAT DOES THE LHNS AS AN *ORGANIZATION* CONTRIBUTE TO THE COMMUNITY?**

- Access to cross country skiing a sport with many health and fitness benefits (the cost is relatively low).
- Access to trails and facilities for snowshoers as well now.
- The skiing at Larch hills attracts visitors to the area.
- The Reino-Keski Salmi loppet one of the largest in B.C. attracts many skiers from out of town and has done so for 25+ years.
- Larch Hills has produced National team level athletes in both cross country skiing and biathlon. Alysson Marshall is currently a member of the National cross country team.
- A community is defined as a network of persons who are connected by social relations, and who mutually agree that relationship is important to their identity. I expect all members of LHNS would say their involvement with the organization is important and very much part of their identity. So perhaps it is LHNS that in part MAKES our "community".
- Active, healthy, outdoor family recreation contributes important facets to all LHNS members, this helps to ensure a healthy, active community.
- An opportunity for multigenerational recreation. A great spirit of volunteer-ism. Great sense of community and opportunity to interact with others (i.e. very social environment).
- Promoting a healthy lifestyle in a fun and environmentally manner.
- LHNS provides a platform for social connections and fitness through the LHNS ski facility. The social environment of the LHNS brings people together with the common element of skiing or snowshoeing at the LH facility. This social connection develops strong friendships within the organization which filters through to many other community activities and events. The whole community is stronger due to the relationships developed through the LHNS.
- A family centered winter sport that is extremely cost effective.
- Great venue for outdoor summer and winter recreation with an emphasis on non-motorized activity.
- Accessible and affordable programs and opportunities for kids and adults.
- Provides low cost family entertainment, increases level of fitness in all ages.

- We provide an affordable and easily accessed skiing experience thereby encouraging and enabling participation (to a broad segment of society – rich and poor) in a family sport which is all about healthy lifestyle.
- Our trail network is also used year round by hikers, cyclists and trail riders.
- The LHNS contributes greatly to the community in providing a safe, well maintained and enjoyable outdoor experience during the winter months for residents and visitors alike. Having this fabulous trail system so close to town with such easy access is very appreciated. The special events and programs run by the club give further skills and knowledge to skiing newcomers whether young or more mature.
- A safe, fun, inclusive and diverse winter recreation experience that is affordable, accessible and welcoming.
- Gets people out into a Forest management experience with nature and recreation in a working forest.
- Encouragement and commitment to outdoor physical activity
- Economic stimulation with various event
- Engagement of children with pirate loppet and jack rabbits
- Youth development – ski team, pirate loppet, jackrabbits
- Scholarship to a skier from the Larch Hills going on to higher education
- Healthy living – message “to keep fit” Heart and Stroke
- Valuable recreational resource
- Makes living here a lot better

• **WHAT ARE THE *CORE FACTORS* THAT GIVE LIFE TO LHNS AT ITS BEST?**

- Highly motivated volunteers which run all aspects of the club.
- Family oriented club and sport. There are several families with 3 generations in the club that are actively participating.
- A location relatively close to town with a good long season each year (for an area in the southern interior).
- A range of trails from well trackset trails, to backcountry, to snowshoeing.
- Volunteers are the first thing that come to mind, all with a variety of skill-sets. Members seem to work well with each other and rely on each others’ strengths.
- Our membership has a lot of depth – from the smallest of Jackrabbits, to casual skiers, to the Challenge group, to the Race Team, to adults who are the parents and grandparents. We have several multi-generation families involved in our club.
- Members **ACTIVELY** participate and care for our facilities and trails.
- Our facilities have been progressing and improving each year – it seems that the future of the LHNS is important to everyone and that there is a lot of work being done now to ensure that our club has a good future.
- Volunteer track setters, coaches and executive members are the life of LHNS. With paid positions it is inevitable that others will back away and let the “paid person” do the work. Other clubs are envious of the LHNS club and the amount of volunteerism.
- Frequently groomed and track set trails. It is rare that there isn’t a fresh course to ski on everyday.
- Strong volunteer base and volunteer spirit.
- Continuous improvement – since arriving in Salmon Arm 15 years ago, I’ve seen many trail upgrades, tracksetter upgrades, stadium upgrades, the chalet moved to a better location, the Jackrabbits program improved and the race team improved. This constant

moving forward has greatly improved the club, the number of members and the experience for all the skiers.

- The core factors of the LHNS are the volunteers that run the organization. I strongly believe that the volunteer base is what is making LH so successful.
- As a coach I see other ski organizations and facilities that are run by paid staff and there seems to be a lot of politics and negative relationships between volunteers and paid staff. I believe that paid coaches are also a source for conflict within organizations. If LH can stay away from paid coaches as long as possible, I think the programs will continue to be strong.
- I have heard talk about LH hiring a snow groomer. I think that the parameters in hiring a staff person need to be carefully examined and laid out to make sure the relationships between staff and volunteer remain healthy.
- Volunteer driven, democratic decision making
- Volunteer spirit which seems to be unique to our organization.
- Volunteerism. It makes LHNS what it is.....
- -A continued emphasis on getting kids on skis – Jackrabbits, Ski team, School Ski Program, Pirate Loppet.
- - A strong spirit of volunteerism – members have a sense of pride and ownership (not often seen at ski areas with a trail fee system and which often end up with a ‘service for fee’ mentality)
- The core factors of unstinting volunteering of club members to support events and the maintenance of trails gives life to the organization. Without volunteers there would be no organization or even a ski area.
- - LHNS members are a friendly & welcoming community of winter recreationist. We welcome visitors including and especially school groups.
- LHNS members place a strong emphasis on member volunteers getting the job done: “powered by volunteers” is on our website home page.
- With a diverse and large LHNS membership we have found (and continue to find) ways to work together for the benefit of all members.
- Unique environment and terrain.
- Passionate engaged dedicated volunteers
- Vibrant creative vision that looks well into the future
- Volunteers
- Positive encouraging environment
- Rates are excellent
- School programs
- The setting is gorgeous – well maintained
- A good winter snow pack
- Great volunteer track setting
- Course maintenance, planning

• IF YOU HAD A MAGIC WAND AND COULD HAVE ANY THREE WISHES GRANTED TO HEIGHTEN THE HEALTH AND VITALITY OF THIS ORGANIZATION; WHAT WOULD THEY BE?

- Maintain the focus on family oriented activities with a club that is run by primarily by highly motivated volunteers. Avoiding situations that can lead to serious disruption within the organization.

- Trackset trails in town for all club members. In past years we've set trails at the Field of Dreams and the ski team set tracks at the Salmon Arm golf club one year. The trail to South Canoe is great but a pretty long and steep climb in some place for some skiers.
- Trails designed for racing. These would be a design to benefit to racers wishing to train, recreational skiers looking for more of a challenge, and for holding race events.
- A strong drive to move the facilities/infrastructure forward – chalet upgrade as a priority, a night loop and improved race trails.
- Ongoing development of the Jackrabbit program and the ski team. This includes coach development and development programs for adults who want to become better skiers.
- Continue promoting XC races (both recreational and competitive).
- Lit trail loop;
- race courses near the stadium;
- trail fee donation boxes more prominently displayed with greater signage to guilt people into paying their trail fees.
- Trails that are purpose built for racing – would provide opportunity for our club to host larger / more competitive events and would provide opportunity for our skiers to develop racing skills that cannot be practiced on existing trail system.
- More reliable funding.
- Less special interest groups (dog trails).
- Upgrading of chalet.
- New / expanded daylodge – needed to accommodate large number of skiers up at Larch Hills on many occasions. Important part of infrastructure for hosting major races.
- Lit trail system – would greatly improve accessibility of ski trails for people who work during the day and can't ski until evening. Would greatly enhance training opportunities for highschool aged kids who don't get out of school until late into afternoon. Would make Larch Hills Ski Area much more "friendly" in the evening and would be safer as well. It is currently very dark and unfriendly to most people once the sun goes down.
- - That our primary focus continue to be on the skiing experience itself and all that entails (good tracks on good snow) and not on infrastructure development.
- - That we become more intentional about welcoming and encouraging new skiers (eg. look into bus service from town, promote free introductory group lessons, increase school participation, etc.)
- - That we have confidence we will have enough skiable snow from the Chalet, at 1,000 M elevation, into the foreseeable future. (Long range snow depth trends across the province are not encouraging)
- 3 wishes are continued communication among all the various users, keeping the trails and facilities for human recreation and limiting track setting. It is so pleasant to ski on the ungroomed narrow trails rather than super highways with many set tracks.
- Limit the track setting to main routes, nice to have some loops to ski like the one up to Cec's cabin and the southern loop as well as the loppet route.
- a wish that each of the four LHNS Executive Directors will serve as a contact and advocate for LHNS' programs, events and functions to spread the work around so the President's and Executive's big job is shared.

Currently there is the identified Director for Programs (see website). The other three Directors could serve as contacts and advocates for say, "Events & Communication", "Trails & Track setting" and "Property & Safety". This would take the load off the President's shoulders and allow the Executive to be in better touch with the

membership. The membership will know who to talk to on the Executive about a specific suggestion or concern.

- that the Strategic Planning process will provide a strong foundation and context for future collaborative and Executive decisions for all LHNS members and that the LHNS Executive will adopt an annual operations / tasks planning process with an opportunity for input and direction from the broad LHNS membership.
- that we continue to enjoy the LHNS experience and find new and creative ways to contribute to the larger community
- No idea, but took his kids there when they were younger and one had a bad experience so switched to Sovereign and went through their Jackrabbit program. Lives in Armstrong and says he will come back and give it try again. Plans to drive up and look at their recent logging.
- Steady stream of funds
- Night skiing
- More beginner trails with little or no elevation change
- Expanding the clubhouse and a safer location for the stove
- Keep encouraging both juniors and seniors and families
- Always remember our caretaker, Pauline Hixon, support her, encourage her – she is vital to the club
- Improve ski experience by:
- Having a relatively FLAT area for beginners and older people and skate skiing
- Don't change the skiing experience
- Facilities – money would be better spent adapting to climate change – moving facilities higher up the hill where the snow is
- #1 To have programs for youth after they finish the jackrabbit program or are coming into the sport of XC in their early youth years. The Jr. Race team has become a catch all for kids wanting more than the jackrabbit has to offer. The Jr. Race team is not necessarily the best fit for some kids but since there is a lack of choice, they join the team by default. The Jr. Race Team has also been identified as the “go to team” for fun and fitness on XC skis. There needs to be alternative programs with the same attraction for skiers that are not necessarily ski racers.
- To have John's Ski Shack have a rental office at Larch Hills Cabin. It would be better to have rentals right at the ski cabin rather than at John's as there are occasions when people forget equipment or it breaks at the hill and then people have to drive down and get it. I would not want to see John lose this service that he is providing so feel that John business needs to be incorporated into the onsite rental service.
- To have a better selection of trails for people that are first time beginners or people who are at risk of severely hurting themselves by going down hills. To have a few trails that are 2 – 3 km long and basically flat would be good for those that are not comfortable going to LH because of the hills to basically go anywhere.
- Chalet improved to accommodate group activities inside ie) team pot-lucks, fundraising concessions, race office space, enough space to host other teams inside during races
- Lit trails – to allow for more “skiable hours” particularly for our young skiers and families
- Improved sprint trails & steeper terrain for our race team to train on

Summary of Community Engagement Session

Over 120 people participated in a community dialogue to identify and prioritize topics for consideration as part of the LHNS executive's strategic planning process. Participants self-selected topics for further discussion and explored the topic and next steps in small breakout groups. Group participants recorded comments using a template provided by the facilitator. Each group recorded key points on a flip chart and the summaries were presented by a group member to the plenary session. Some topics proposed by community members were not selected for further discussion. A list of these additional topics is included in this summary document along with the notes recorded in the breakout groups. The topics are listed in no particular order.

Prioritize Tracksetting

- Core tracks done regularly, before others farther out. (Core tracks including Stig's Loop, East Dales, Willow Switch)
- Know what day of the week which trails will be set
- Tracks set every day on holidays and weekends. Good tracks are what it's all about.
- Tracks set early enough so skiers will know where setter has been and give time for tracks to set up
- Tracksetter coordinator appointed by exec and reviewed annually
- GPS unit for tracksetter -know where it is (on smart phone, etc) ie. Rossland?
- Track setter must have discretion on conditions -check online? Avalanche and snow conditions web site
- Tracksetting Planning
- Tracksetting Priorities (schedule)

Improving Trail Diversity

(and promoting more non-trackset trail routes)

- Group trails into identifiable linked loops i.e.: Loppet Loop, Bogs route
- Create identifiable non -trackset routes to the North hub - group and promote multiple trails as routes
- Some single tracks for Classic Only
- Low or flat gradient for new or elderly skiers
- More long ski routes

- Create maps similar to George Zorn's cycling map - ie: with one overall map and several named loops/routes detailed on back.
- LHNS should devote more resources to making non-trackset trails safer and more ski-able under variable or less-than-ideal conditions.

New Chalet

- All agree present chalet too small for :
 - Saturdays (150-200 kids)
 - special events
 - Tues and Wed ski team
 - races
 - pirate loppet
 - no room for race timer
- Would like to see either:
 - a new chalet
 - an addition to current chalet (preferred but dependent on cost)
- Would like the following features:
 - room for indoor waxing
 - concession/ kitchen space
 - about 4000 sq. ft. total space (similar to Sovereign, Nickelplate, Kelowna)
 - room for overnight accommodation
 - accommodations upstairs for caretaker
- If anything were possible
 - move current chalet to Cec's site
 - new chalet at base/ parking lot
 - Cec's moves to Summit? LH traverse?
 - build totally new

- Possible budget aid - rent out space

Stadium

- Tie in with plans for race trails and sprint loops.
- Large flat area to accommodate sprints
- Access from multiple directions
- Line of sight for spectators
- Long term: is it the right location?
- more space for teaching/instruction grids
- (Jackrabbits, Adults, and Race team)
- Potentially expand North up Metford

Racing Trails

- We need challenging trails for training and racing. Our current trails are not demanding enough for racing (other than loppets). We need more difficult terrain for the groups to train on. Its also important for the kids to race on their own trail system.
- Hosting events is an important source of funding for LHNS and race team.
 - could host prestigious events (ie Noram)
 - could offset the costs of building.
 - also brings funds to community
- We are obligated to host events in order for the provincial racing system to continue (due to having a very large team)
- On event days, have a separate trail system for non-competitors to use
- Require loops from about 1.5 km- 5 km (with cut-offs)
- Require sprint courses from 300m-1.6 km
- Important issues:
 - Need a professional trail designer

- Need to address environmental and private land issues, parks, woodlots, etc.
- Need to maintain natural feel of hill
- Need funding for design and building
- Can fundraise and apply for grants (ie hosting grants)
- Would need a waxing hut with wood stove and proper ventilation to support the racing events
- Could get CCC sanctioning of trails

Action: Obtain a qualified trail designer and funding to build

Lighted Trails

- Important for all persons unable to access trails during the day
 - working and school-aged users
 - sunset at 4 pm
- For Safety as well as Security
 - makes skiers feel safer
 - skiing in the dark reduces visibility
- Use for multiple programs as well as opportunity for expansion
 - ie: Jackrabbits, Race team, Masters, etc
- 3-5 km loop with lights (to start)
- ie :Loop to South hub, back on Reinoâ€™s. add on short cut loop
- Define budget/ Find funding
 - Gaming grants
- Possibility to expand on shorter loop, then add on as time/budget allow
- Aesthetically pleasing design
 - underground wiring
- solar-powered LED lights

- Protect sensitive areas (especially bogs)
- Environmental impact assessment

Dog Trails

*Revisit the dog trail proposal to make it a workable option for the majority of the club

- Dog trails are typically the MOST USED trails at other ski areas
 - important to attract families (DOG+FAMILY+EXERCISE time)
 - people want to pack up their family, park, and go for a ski with their dog
 - how do we attract younger families with dogs? Healthy family experience
 - some people prefer bringing their dog for safety/security
- What do we need to make this work?
 - Alternative location (private land?)
 - awareness
 - encourage responsible dog ownership
 - needs to be a loop
 - 800m is too short
 - boot tracks have been a concern for some
 - need a SKI ONLY loop
 - problem/challenge: how to expand?
- Location, private land, existing trails
 - park by entrance, 5 km option, need good sight lines
 - unleashed vs. leashed?
 - push trail to the south
 - Ginzu option: create a new trail in a clear cut area
 - safer to have a wider trail
 - one way only trail in opposite direction

- Sunshine, Skyview, etc
 - wildlife concerns not a big issue
 - need to understand the concerns of people opposing the dog trail

*Majority of ski areas have dog trails and they are typically the most used trail. Gets families out SKIING!

Access

- Develop alternative access to Cec`s Cabin /Rubberhead
- Upgrade the road on the way to the area
- Consider access from Klahan/ Park Road
- Transportation to the ski hill?
- Could the city bus system service Larch Hills on weekends and holidays?

Long Term Trail Planning

Priority: Maintain diversity and quality of trails: Tracked and non-tracked (back country, signed)

- Partner with BC Parks, Rec sites/trails and Regional Partners to obtain funding for long term trail planning.
- Establish a collaborative and comprehensive approach involving all stakeholders
- Must be exceptional Stewards of the environment
- Diversity of trails-winter and summer
- Work through the process before new trails are developed
- Good rationale for expanding trails
- Maintain Nordic culture of the area
- Trails end up being developed following a logging operation in that area
 - just because it is there, does not mean we have to develop it.
 - logging companies are building our trails (lack of planning and coordination)
 - untrack set trail is less invasive

- protect sensitive areas and woodlots as well as owner's interests
- keep non-set trails
- capacity of track setting?
- volunteers? Machines? Costs?
- establish a core area to set and record how often its set. Then other areas 1-2 times a week.
- we need a plan that creates a progressive series of skiing opportunities
- Prepare for climate change
 - 10-15 years decreasing snow pack will shorten the season
 - we can develop more higher elevation trails to extend the season
- For future what would we like to see?
 - Another heated hut at farthest NE location
 - minimize user fees -available to all
 - maintain significant untracked trail system
 - keep cross country skiing affordable to ALL
- Subsidized programs for vulnerable families
 - keep free public access to Larch Hills
 - in the future, we have confidence that we have reliable, good quality snow for our trails.
 - Larch Hills staying very similar with :
- Diversity of trails
- Volunteer run
- Low cost
- Improved:
- Improved governance
- Higher elevation trails

- Expanded chalet

Solutions: Develop a long range plan with a deadline (one year) and communicate with the logging companies to access new routes/roads, cut blocks, etc.

- Planning committee for new routes should include input from skiers and logging company personnel.
- Contact the Ministry of Forests regarding trails within the park system
 - plan together with forest companies for development of new trails
 - have a strategy to present which involves all the players
- Use existing roads
- Do not lose sight of the quality of the trails.
- Designated back country routes that are well signed.
- Maintain variety of views and diversity of trees.

*Currently there is no long term plan or coordination with logging companies for tracks.

Campsites

- Multi -use
 - water tank for horses
 - behind chalet in kids area. Good permanent corrals and camping site.
 - old chalet area for camping
 - Cec's cabin for a few sites?
- Do it in phases for multi-use
 - start with firm staging area (gravel) manure disposal, storage
 - picnic tables, central or separate
 - fire pits that can be moved for winter use (on existing stadium area and/or parking lot south of chalet)
- End Result: 6 campsites/pull-throughs for horse trailers, motor homes, travel trailers, etc.
- 3-6 tenting sites at North end of stadium

- Create more dialogue with user groups to encourage use:
 - Military, Air Cadets, Search and Rescue, Army Cadets, Girl Guides, Scouts, Naturalist Club, Back Country Horsemen, EQ trails, Artists Club
- NO INTERFERENCE with winter use
- Infrastructure
 - level ground
 - gravel
 - pull throughs
 - picnic tables
 - fire pits
- DO IT IN PHASES
- For future: maintain simplicity of Rec area

Change in Snowpack

- A 2006 report showed:
 - 50% change @ 1000m over historic levels
 - trend: could see 25% of historic levels in 15-20 years
- There are new data and tools available
- For long term planning it would be important to know what the snow pack may be like before investing.
- Three LHNS members Geoscientists/Hydrologist have volunteered to do an updated report at no cost.

Governance/ Committee Structure

- Fine tuning of current structure
- Club is operating well under current committee. However, the concern is that work is done ad-hoc at Committee Level. i.e.: stove replacement at Cec's
 - We need to look at committees in place
 - Match the needs of club with current committees in place

- what do they do?
- are they relevant?
- how are the committees developed?
- how do we choose new chairs?
- reporting back to the Board and GM
- Communication, and financial reporting
 - Risk management is overlaid over committee operation
 - Define goals for each committee. Who is on it?
- Volunteer succession (leadership)
- Review of current committees: Goals, relevance, recruitment
 - formalize committees :
 - 1 coordinator for each area
 - reports back to GM
- Transparency of operation and reporting committees, membership, and board
 - committee accountability: 1 committee chair reports to exec
- Risk management as it is related to committee operation
- Match needs of club with current committees
 - identify strengths and weaknesses.
- SWOT analysis
- Link between board and committees

Ecological Preservation, Education, and Stewardship

- Stop the 'us' vs. 'them' mentality
- The no hunting issue is not mutually exclusive of Habitat preservation
- LH is a non-exclusive tenure.
- Many interests

- OGMA, BC Parks, etc
- Outdoor Education programs for KIDS
- Celebrate habitat diversity through directed access
 - via trails and interpretive information
 - facilitate stewardship
- Create a platform for community involvement
 - ie: BC Wildlife Federation
- Foster First Nations involvement/ empowerment
 - ie paid stewards for access to ecological reserve
- Out of town people appreciate wilderness experiences: Keep it that way!
- Recognize humble roots:
 - Shuswap Outdoors, trails, watershed, Violet Creek eco-reserve

**Core component of both winter and non-winter trail strategy (see long term strategy ideas)

Daily Trail Fee System

- Currently the combined membership and volunteer donation system provides for a positive cash flow for Larch Hills, and allows for a family centered club.
 - currently we run at a surplus because of gaming grants.
- Charging a mandatory trail fee would threaten the atmosphere and decrease volunteerism.
 - currently, we are one of the only clubs in BC to maintain a volunteer trail fee.
 - this helps the community feeling
 - last year's donations totalled \$17,748.00
 - installing a daily fee may decrease volunteers
 - may require someone to collect fees

- Is the prospect of a paid executive and a larger chalet going to destroy the community feeling?
- Will it lead to the inevitable need to increase membership fees?
- Members should receive a membership card and occasionally spot checks should be done.

Consensus: The discussion group feels we should maintain the combined membership fees and volunteer donation system. Do not start charging a trail fee.

Social

- more social programs
- more youth programs
- more social activities for members/volunteers
- keep current rustic family experiences

*important: inclusion, friendly, well-organized, fun events. Terrific trails/systems

Volunteers

- NORD
 - key stakeholder
 - need consultants
 - Jackie Pearase Arena `F` Director

Work towards the goal of establishing Larch Hills Recreational Area as a year round non-motorized community recreational area.

- Volunteers
- The club should remain a volunteer based society as opposed to a business model like Sovereign Lake.
 - How do we ensure we have enough volunteers for everything?
 - paid staff? Contract out some jobs
 - ie: funding grant applications
 - maintain volunteers. No paid employees.

- instill positive ideas about volunteering in kids
- succession planning : encourage younger people by mentoring.
- engage youth recreationally, not only as racers
- If LHNS continues to grow, at what point is the volunteer basis overwhelmed?
- As LH grows, the non-corporate, grassroots vibe is maintained.
- Don't try to be a `big center` ski area- it's all about quality trails.

Action

- mark eco-sensitive areas, service areas
- downloadable trail maps

Additional Topics (not selected for small group discussion)

- improve signage
- increase cell coverage for emergencies
- daily grooming
- no hunting in close proximity to trails
- first aid facilities for Loppet
- ski trails on Larch Hills canine free.