

SKI TRACKS

Bitterroot Cross-Country Ski Club

January 2015 — Volume 13 — Number 1

Inside:

President's Message

This month's program:

Thirty Days in the Escalante Canyon

Details on:

Annual Free Nordic Ski Lessons



Windy Passage as it was January 2013

President's Message

If anyone had doubts about the value of the arrangement between our Club and Lost Trail—this winter, Lost Trail is grooming the Chief Joseph Trail System using a PistenBully—the month of December should have erased those reservations. The amount of snow that fell during December rivaled the amount the ski trails received last February. As you may remember, February's (2014) huge snowfalls all but shut down the Chief Joseph Ski Trails. It was literally impossible for our volunteer groomers to deal with all that snow in a timely fashion. They beat themselves up trying, but the task proved impossible.

In spite of December's (2014) many frequent snowfalls, most of which exceeded 12", the PistenBully was able to keep the ski trails open. Our volunteer groomers did use snowmobiles to help with grooming when required and, after one snowfall of only 4", actually leveled and set tracks on the classic trails. Our volunteer groomers are very happy (maybe ecstatic?) that the PistenBully is handling the bulk of the work this winter and that their role is mostly one of support.

Changing the method for grooming cross-country ski trails at the pass is requiring changes to the long-standing tradition of always grooming on Friday. However, because the Chief Joseph Ski Trails receive most visitors on weekends, every effort will be made to have the trails in top shape Friday through Sunday.

- When it snows more than 6" (and Lost Trail Powder Mountain is open for business), Chief Joseph Ski Trails will be PistenBully groomed;
- After especially heavy snowfalls (12" or more), all trails are unlikely to be groomed on the same day—even with the PistenBully, it takes a while to groom 30+ miles of trail;
- When it snows fewer than 6", our volunteer groomers will groom the classic trails. This could occur any day of the week; and
- Even though the multi-use trails will usually be groomed by the PistenBully, there may be times when those trails require only a little touchup so will be groomed by our volunteer groomers using snowmobiles.

This is the first season that grooming all the Chief Joseph Ski Trails incorporates the services of Lost Trail's PistenBully machines. It is a learning experience both for our Club and for Lost Trail. It should not be surprising if a periodic glitch occurs. Hopefully those occurrences will decrease as time passes. Grooming suggestions are always welcome and should be directed to either Mel Holloway (tromper0@me.com) or myself (michael.hoyt@gmail.com).

If the trailhead sign-in sheets are any indication, use of the Chief Joseph Ski Trail System this winter is higher than ever. As has happened each of the last 3 winters, Chief Joseph Pass received more early snow than any other cross-country ski area in western Montana. The result has been that people drive long distances to use the beautiful ski trails we manage for free, public use. It would be nice to believe folks who signed in from New York, Wyoming, Washington, Utah, Minnesota, Florida, or even Germany, came all that distance simply to visit the ski trails. But, more than likely, at least some of them were visiting family members who love to ski and happen to live in the vicinity of Chief Joseph Pass.

Please don't make yourself difficult to find. If you change your mailing or email address, please notify Earl Philips so he can keep our records up to date. Reach him at Philips@montana.com or 406-961-0101.

Michael Hoyt

Bitterroot Cross Country Ski Club presents:

Thirty Days in the Escalante Canyon

On April 10, 2008 a dog and four humans of middling age set off on a self supported expedition down the Escalante Canyon in SE Utah. The humans wore wet suits; their water crafts were inner tubes. The dog ran the bank, except when she accepted ferry rides across the river. It was 20 degrees the first night. The water temperature barely above freezing. Thirty days later they emerged....

Expedition leader was Ripley, the dog in whose memory this program is dedicated. Karen Savory, Van Keele, Bruce Weide and Pat Tucker, all of whom have been and done many things, rounded out the crew.



Everyone Welcome - 7:00PM - Thursday - January 8
Presbyterian Church - 1220 West Main

Bitterroot Cross-Country Ski Club

Board Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: Thursday, December 11, 2014

In attendance: Michael Hoyt, George Corn, Richard Stone, Jack Cooley, Mel Holloway, Jim Greenfield, Earl Phillips, Marrea Mathews

Call to order: 5:38pm

Treasurer Report: Mike gave a treasurer's report for Reine who is out of state. We have \$31,000 in the bank and we have taken in more than we've spent since July 1.

Trail Report: Mel reported that some of the trails are in rough shape at this time due to not enough fresh snow. However, tracks may be set Friday night. These tracks should last through the weekend. There are reports that some skate skiers are making use of the classic trails. There will be a track set from the parking lot of Hwy 43/Hwy 93 all the way to Windy Corner.

The trail signs are ready, about \$400 was saved by printing on the back of the previous signs. The final cost was a little over \$600.

Mike discussed the incident with the posting of a pine marten caught in a trap on Gibbons Pass Road. He passed out pg. 4 of the Furbearer Regulations. There may be an article in the Ravalli Republic. Mike contacted the District Ranger, Russ Reibe, and had a couple of follow-up conversations. It looks positive for having similar restrictions on trapping as those in place at Como Lake.

Instead of doing the ski race this year, Tony and Annie of Valley Bike Shop in Hamilton will coordinate a "Tour the Divide" of the new multi-use trails (*19+ miles*) December 20.

The grooming contract with Lost Trail is signed. Mike is facilitating the signing of the contract between Lost Trail and the Forest Service.

Ski Lessons: George Corn set the date for January 17

Youth Cross Country Ski Days: Richard has January 20, for Darby, January 29 for Victor, February 10 and the 12 for Salmon, February 11 for Corvallis for ski classes for public school students.

Website: We still need a volunteer for the website. Word Press has been updated.

Membership: Earl reported there are currently 125 memberships which represents 190 individuals.

The meeting closed at 6:10.

These minutes were prepared by: Marrea Matthews



Nearly 60 people attended Transceiver Training Part I at Hogan's Meadow on December 14

Avalanche Transceiver Training & Hot Dog Roast Part II

January 11, 2014

IF YOU EVER HAVE THE MISFORTUNE TO BE INVOLVED IN AN AVALANCHE, YOU DON'T HAVE TIME TO READ THE INSTRUCTION MANUAL FOR YOUR TRANSCEIVER: YOUR REACTION HAS TO BE AUTOMATIC, AND THAT MEANS **TRAINING** AND **PRACTICE**

The Western Montana Avalanche Center and the Bitterroot Ridgerunners Snowmobile Club will host the second half of a transceiver training program at Hogan's Meadow starting at 12 noon on Sunday, January 11. Part II will focus on ways to evaluate avalanche threats as well as hands-on beacon training. The class is free and the public is invited to participate. Hotdogs provided - bring your own beverage.

Where: Hogan's Meadow, just east of Hogan's Cabin

When: 12 Noon, Sunday, January 11

Contact: Lee Scharff, 370-0849



Bitterroot Cross-Country Ski Club

Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: Thursday, December 11, 2014

Number attending: about 38

Meeting called to order: 7:00pm

Membership: Earl Phillips reported we have 125 memberships, 190 individuals.

Treasurer Report: Mike reported for Reine Hilton. The club has \$31,000 in the bank.

Trail Reports: Mel Holloway reported the trails should be groomed and track set on Friday and the trails should be good throughout the weekend. On Tuesday the Middle Fork had barely enough snow for the snowmobiles to compact with rollers. Most of the multi-use trails have enough snow cover, except Rabbit Run and the Connector on the northern end of the ski trail complex.

Mike Hoyt reported new metal signs will be posted at the intersections on the multi-use trails next week.

Steve Slocum was asked to talk about his encounter with the pine marten caught in a conibear trap. It was still alive, screaming, and flailing. Mike explained he has asked the Forest Service and Fish & Wildlife to restrict trapping in the area. Once the issue is resolved, it will be posted on our Website and Facebook page. Steve added he is receiving accusations of illegal tampering with traps.

Tour the Divide: A guided tour of the multi-use trails with skiers divided into groups based on distance/skill is set for January 20, 11am in the Gordon Reece cabin. Tony and Annie of Valley Bike Shop in Hamilton are the coordinators.

Election: Earl asked for nominations for president from the floor. Mike was nominated and seconded. Earl asked for nominations for treasurer. It was motioned and seconded that Reine Hilton should continue serving as treasurer. Both Mike and Reine were reelected by proclamation.

Ronnie Gillette was welcomed as a new member to the club. He and his wife have moved back to the area after years of living elsewhere.

Youth Cross Country Ski Days: Richard Stone has January 20, set for Darby Schools, January 29 for Victor Schools, February 10 and the 12 for Salmon Schools, and February 11 for Corvallis School. These are ski classes for public school students. Richard Stone asked for volunteers to help with the lessons.

Program: Jim Greenfield introduced Dr. Lawrence Brouwer who presented a wonderful program "Wilderness in Winter, Are You Prepared?" He discussed preparedness, critical knowledge for recognizing the signs of danger and how to survive hypothermia and frostbite.

The meeting closed at 8:15 pm.

These minutes were prepared by: Marrea Matthews



idaho
nordic

GRAVITY
SPORTS

McCall 2015 Re-Mastered

January 24 & 25, 2015 - McCall, Idaho



JUG MOUNTAIN RANCH
MCCALL, IDAHO



City of McCall



Precision Snow Grooming
McCall, Idaho



Saturday, January 24

Freestyle Event

Ponderosa State Park

2008 World Masters course

15K, 30K, & 45K

Sunday, January 25

Free-Ski day and after party

at Jug Mountain Ranch

Food, beer, and music



mccallremastered.com

Annual Free Ski Lesson Day

Learn a great way to enjoy our Montana winters for free. On Saturday, January 17, the Bitterroot Cross-Country Ski Club is again hosting their annual free cross-country ski lesson day. Lessons are for beginners through lower-intermediates of all ages. The traditional classic style of cross-country skiing will be taught. Would-be skiers and beginning skiers of all ages are welcome. Lessons will last approximately 1 to 2 hours long depending upon the groups and weather. You must bring your own ski gear.

Lessons will begin at noon. Participants are asked to arrive 20 minutes early, equipped with ski gear. Cross-country ski gear is available for rent from local sporting goods stores.

Be sure to dress in layers of warm clothing, including warm mittens or gloves and hats for the variable weather conditions at the Chief Joseph Ski Area (*7,000' elevation*). Don't forget to bring water and snacks.

The ski area is located 1 mile east of Lost Trail Pass on Highway 43. The turn-off for parking at the Chief Joseph Ski Area trailhead is marked on the highway.

A few Club Members are needed to act as instructors for this annual event. Please contact George Corn (gcorn@dmlaw.com or 406-363-1163) if you can help. You do not have to be an expert skier to help others learn to cross-country ski. Simply knowing how to get skis on and off, how to hold ski poles, and how to get up from a fall, are all the knowledge that is necessary.

If you volunteer your time to help the Club at no other time, please be an instructor for this one-day-a-year event. Helping people learn to ski helps perpetuate the healthy outdoor sport of cross-country skiing and attracts new members to our Club. If you wish the Chief Joseph Ski Area to continue as a groomed cross-country ski area, please volunteer your time for this event.





Bitterroot Cross-Country Ski Club Officers

President Michael Hoyt michael.hoyt@gmail.com 406-360-3803	Vice President Kelly Zeiler krz-inc@live.com 406-363-8631	Treasurer Reine Hilton hilton@mcn.net 406-375-1952	Secretary Marrea Mathews mmathews5@aol.com 406-381-8377
Trails & Grooming Mel Holloway tromper0@me.com 406-381-1334	Programs & Map Jim Greenfield jkgreenfield@q.com 406-363-2110	Webmaster Jack Cooley jackc@jcphotography.com 970-227-1360	Membership Data Earl Philips philips@montana.com 406-961-0101
	Youth Coordinator Richard Stone rstone@msn.com 406-642-9648	Ski Lessons George Corn gcorn@dmlaw.com 406-363-1163	

Membership Renewals / Dues

Annual Memberships Expire on November 1st of each Year

Please Renew Your Membership Now

Family - \$25

Supporting Family - \$40

Individual - \$15

Supporting Individual - \$30

Mail To: Bitterroot Cross-Country Ski Club, PO Box 431, Corvallis, MT 59828-0431

Name (families, please include childrens names): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zipcode: _____

Email (to receive monthly newsletters): _____

Type of Membership (see above): _____

Amount Enclosed: \$ _____