



SKI TRACKS

Bitterroot Cross-Country Ski Club

February 2015 — Volume 13 — Number 2

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This Month's Program (moved to March):

Roadless Areas and Wilderness

...Our Best Landscapes

by Howie Wolke

President's Message

For a couple of weekends, Saturday, January 24th through Monday, February 2nd, skiing at Chief Joseph Pass was not particularly terrific. At the beginning of that period, daytime temperatures reached into the high 30s and low 40s which, along with some light rain, turned the top layer of snow to ice—skiing on ice is not everyone's favorite activity. Then, to compound the problem, it stopped snowing and daytime temperatures did not reach high enough levels to soften the ice and make it possible for trail grooming, even using the PistenBully.

Fortunately, it began snowing again the night of February 2nd and normal grooming routines resumed two days later on Thursday, February 4th. The standard grooming procedure and schedule is as follows:

- 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*), the entire trail system is 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 less 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 volunteers pulling grooming equipment using snowmobiles.

This is the first season that grooming all of 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*).

On Friday, January 23rd, I attended a meeting to discuss how trapping on and near the Chief Joseph Ski Trail System should be managed. In attendance were, Julie King (*Bitterroot National Forest Supervisor*), Chuck Oliver (*Bitterroot National Forest Darby/Sula District Ranger*), Joe Jaquith (*Region 2 Warden Captain*), Montana FWP, Tod McKay (*Bitterroot National Forest Public Affairs Officer*), and myself.

An agreement was reached under which the Bitterroot National Forest would coordinate efforts to reclassify the area containing the Chief Joseph Trail System (*including multi-use trails*) as an official "Recreation Area." This area includes portions under management by the Bitterroot National Forest, the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest, and the Salmon-Challis National Forest. Montana FWP Region 2 also has management responsibilities for this area. Whether the designation, "Recreation Area", will apply only during the winter months or on a year round basis remains under consideration. A "Recreation Area" designation would eliminate trapping on or near the Chief Joseph Ski Trail System.

The process will take more than a year to complete—lots of paperwork—and will, at some point, include a period of public comment. The Bitterroot Cross-Country Ski Club will work closely with the Bitterroot National Forest to provide information and expedite the process whenever possible.

Lesson Day Instructors

A special thanks is due each of our Club Members who volunteered to act as instructors on Lesson Day.

John Schiever	-	Richard Stone
Linda Stoudt	-	Mark Behrman
Kent Myers	-	Linda Hoyt
Michael Hoyt	-	Ken Loucks
Patrice Loucks	-	Karla Shiever
Chelsea Schiever	-	Paul Stanton
Laurie Stanton	-	Bob Schumaker

Thank You!

Bitterroot Cross Country Ski Club presents:

Roadless Areas and Wilderness ...Our Best Landscapes

Howie Wolke will discuss the public land roadless area issue and the effort to keep designated Wilderness wild. They are the lifeblood of a healthy landscape, the best remaining repositories for native species and evolutionary processes. According to Wolke these wildlands are irreplaceable, with intrinsic values that go way beyond what they are perceived to mean to any user group.



Former Bitterroot resident Howie Wolke has been a wilderness advocate and wilderness guide since the mid-1970s. He leads wilderness trips from Alaska to New Mexico, has authored two books plus many articles on the vanishing American wilderness, and is past President and current Vice President of the national conservation group Wilderness Watch.

7:00 - Thursday - March 12 - Everyone welcome
Presbyterian Church - 1220 West Main Street

Board Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: Thursday, January 8, 2015

In attendance: Michael Hoyt, Kelly Glasser, Mel Holloway, Reine Hilton, Marrea Mathews, Jim Greenfield, George Corn, Earl Phillips

Call to order: 6:15 pm

Treasurer Report: Reine reported that our checking account has \$6,800 and the savings account \$29,000.

Trail Report: Mel reported that Lost Trail's Pistenbully was used on Broadway, The CD, Let-R-Rip, Joseph Creek, Vista, LT Loop, Sunny Meadow and Moose. Middle Fork, Banshee and more work to level Broadway will occur tomorrow. Currently the snow is very workable. Tomorrow morning tracks will be set.

Mike reported the number of users, as measured at the sign in box, is good.

Ski Lessons: George reported information has been sent out to the newspapers and the TV stations about the ski lessons to be held on January 17th.

This is the same date for the dogsled races. The club will extend grooming out Trail Creek Road to create a turn-around for the longest dogsled race. The club will be reimbursed \$200 for dogsled race grooming.

Membership: Earl reported 193 members and 280 individuals which is similar to last year.

Mike followed up an earlier discussion about the pine marten trapping incident on Gibbons Pass Road. Russ Reibe appeared to be in favor of limiting trapping at the pass, but the new Forest Service Supervisor claimed this issue should be handled by the Bitterroot National Forest not the Beaverhead and that the final decision is with MFWP. Mike will work to bring all parties together to make a decision.

The most recent RTP Grant did not cover the amount needed to add an additional outhouse at the trailhead. We will apply for a tourism grant, but it will not pay for the entire cost.

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

Website: We are still looking for a volunteer for handle the Club's website.

Meeting closed: 6:40.

These minutes were prepared by Marrea Mathews

February Club Meeting Cancelled

Because of a scheduling conflict with the Hamilton Winter Wildlands Alliance Backcountry Film Festival, Bitterroot Cross-Country Ski Club's February Meeting has been cancelled.

The WWA Backcountry Film Festival will be on Thursday, February 12th, at 7:00 pm, in Hamilton's Bedford Building. Admission at the door is \$10.

So many of our members are planning to attend this WWA event, attendance at our Club's meeting would likely have been in the single digits. Therefore, the Club's Board of Directors voted to cancel this month's regularly scheduled meeting.

Howie Wolke's presentation, Roadless Areas and Wilderness—Our Best Landscapes, has been rescheduled for the Club's March 12th meeting. By graciously rescheduling, Wolke has ensured that the Club's members will be able to enjoy both of these special events.



10th backcountry film festival

winter wildlands alliance



celebrating the human powered experience

Ski Club Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: Thursday, January 8, 2015

Number attending: 58

Meeting called to order: 7:00pm

Membership: Earl Phillips reported we have 193 memberships, 280 individuals.

Treasurer Report: Reine Hilton reported the club has just under \$36,000 in the bank.

Trail Report: Mel reported most of the upper classic trails were groomed today. Scott will return tomorrow to work on other trails.

Mike Hoyt asked for feedback on the trail grooming. Please let Mike know what you think or post to the website or Facebook.

Ski Lessons: George asked for volunteers for the ski Lessons January 17th for approximately 2 hours. He assured that any skill level can be of service. Mike added before and after the lessons, the dog sled races are very much worth watching.

An attendee pointed out signs need posting on the Gibbons Pass Road for limiting dogs to the groomed trails.

Mike updated the pine marten incident. Beaverhead Deerlodge is the manager of the area. The new Beaverhead Forest Supervisor believes it is the Bitterroot Forest Service's responsibility because of the location of the traps. MFWP is also involved. Mike is working to bring the various parties together and find a resolution.

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

Program: Jim Greenfield introduced Bruce and Karen Savory, Van Keele, Weide and Pat Tucker who presented Thirty Days in the Escalante Canyon of SE Utah. These five shared their experience inner-tubing approximately 35 miles of the canyon in April a few years ago.

Meeting closed: 8:20 pm.

These minutes were prepared by: Marrea Matthews



Sponsored by

Seeley Lake ROCKS & The Trailhead

Peter Hale Nordic Ski Race

SATURDAY, FEB 21

RICH RANCH, SEELEY LAKE, MT

22K • Skate Ski Start: 9:30am • Classic Ski Start: 10 am

Register before Feb. 1st - \$35 • \$40 Registration Feb. 1st to Race Day

Register here: www.406running.com • Info: www.seeleylakenordic.org



Don't forget the amazing [Mountain Film Festival](#):

Sat. @ 7:00 Lindey's Prime Steakhouse, Seeley Lake

For LODGING: www.seeleylakechamber.com ask for the Peter Hale Special.

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 tromper@bitterroot.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 rcstone@msn.com 406-642-9648	Ski Lessons George Corn gcorn@bresnan.net 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: \$ _____