



# STAKE LAKE CROSS COUNTRY SKI TRAILS

Annual Report  
2012-2013



**STAKE LAKE SKI TRAILS operated by**

**OVERLANDER SKI CLUB**



## **Executive Summary of Trails Operations in 2012-2013**

In our 22nd year of operations snow conditions were excellent throughout the season. As a result, trail attendance reached a new record at 14,467 and the trails were open for 120 days from December 2<sup>th</sup> to March 31<sup>st</sup>. Snowshoe trail use was also at a new high of 975.

Trail revenues reached \$107,499, which is well above the last year, and trail operating expenses increased to \$79,248. Depreciation was estimated at \$25,000 resulting in total costs of \$104,248 and a net profit of \$3,251. Costs were kept low through the use of many hours of volunteer labour. The estimated value of labour donations was \$24,375. The total net value of assets held by the club and used to operate the trails is \$293,161.

Trail use was promoted through the distribution of the trails brochure, the Club web page, information in the Cross Country BC magazine, participation in local tourism promotions and media releases.

The snow grooming machine and other equipment continued to perform well thanks to our dedicated crew of volunteers. Many volunteer hours were spent grooming track and maintaining equipment.

The trail system was used for teaching skiers of all ages and abilities. Special rates were again offered to all college students. The Ski S'Kool program was very successful with 462 children and 14 schools and groups. The Club hosted the North American Ski for Light event for a third time, the Overlander Loppet and an Okanagan Cup, which is a ski event for local club racers.

Overlander Ski Club plans to continue serving the people of the Kamloops area and the province in the 2013-2014 year.



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# **Stake Lake Ski Trails Annual Report for 2012-13**

## **1) INTRODUCTION**

Overlander Ski Club operates the Stake Lake Ski Trails under contract with Recreation and Trails BC. The contract requires the club to produce an Annual Report on the operation of the trails. This report must provide the management agency with the information necessary to monitor and audit the performance of the Overlander Ski Club in relation to the approved management goals.

Our management goals for the 2012-13 ski season, as in previous years, were to:

1. operate the Stake Lake Ski Trails in such a way that our customers, regardless of skiing ability, enjoy a safe high quality skiing experience each and every time they use the trails;
2. actively promote the use of the ski trails by Kamloops residents, other area residents, and visitors to the area;
3. improve the skiing facilities and trail maintenance equipment through volunteer efforts, public fund raising, and reinvestment of operating surpluses in order to raise the quality of the skiing experience in the coming year and in future years.

Overlander strives to provide facilities and programs that are a clear benefit to the Citizens of Kamloops and the surrounding area, and to our many visitors from afar. Our facilities are available to anyone regardless of age, ability, ethnicity, gender, religion, income or sexual orientation. We engage in long term planning to ensure that our programs and facilities are sustainable for the next generation.

Overlander wishes to thank our many supporters in the local community and financial contributions from government funding agencies.

The Annual Report is intended to provide the management agency with information to assess performance of the ski trail operation.

## **2) OVERLANDER SKI CLUB**

The Overlander Ski Club is a registered, non-profit society and has operated in the Kamloops area since 1981. The objectives of the Ski Club are to foster cross country skiing and ski racing and to assist in the development of skiers in the Kamloops area. The 2012-13 membership was 552 persons.

In the early 1980's, the club played a major role in the campaign to seek compensation for the destruction of the Bush Lake/Timber Lake ski trails during the construction of the Coquihalla Highway. This campaign led to the construction of the Stake Lake Ski Trails in 1986. Following a

public competition, a trails operating contract was offered to Lac Le Jeune Resort. Over the next few years the club made numerous representations to the public management agencies concerning the poor performance of the contractor and the condition of the trails. When the contractor declined the obligatory offer of a new contract in 1991, the club was asked to manage the trails. The membership agreed, but not without many misgivings as the financial and organisational commitments were thought to be close to the limit of our capability, given our status as a voluntary organisation without previous experience in the field.

Since 1991 the Overlander Ski Club has operated the trails with growing confidence under contract with the Provincial Government. The current contract runs until 2021. Public support has been strong, club membership has grown, and after 22 seasons of operations, the quality of the Stake Lake skiing experience is second to none in the province. The club continues to rely upon a dedicated group of volunteers to manage the trails along with a small number of paid staff. The value of volunteer time is estimated to be \$24,375, which is about 80% of the expense of paid staff.

### **3) TRAIL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

Responsibility for the operation of the trail system rests with a Trail Management Committee which reports to the Executive of the Overlander Ski Club.

The 2012-13 Committee members and their responsibilities were as follows:

Bob Furseth	Trail maintenance
Luke Guilherme	Equipment and track preparation
Chris Jones	Equipment and track preparation
Len Mackay	Trail maintenance
Al Michel	Snowshoe trails
Kerry Spear	Track preparation
Alan Vyse	President, Overlander Ski Club
Joe Wlasitz	Radio system

The 2013 Executive committee of Overlander Ski Club is as follows:

Alan Vyse	President
Tracy Ronmark	Secretary
David Hallinan	Treasurer
Joan Bernard	Director
Roy Davidson	Director
Sandy Eastwood	Director
Luc Guilherme	Director
Dana Manhard	Director



Neil Steinke	Director
David Takahashi	Director
Brian Vermey	Director

#### **4) MARKETING**

Our marketing efforts continue to develop an enhanced level of awareness of the Stake Lake Trails, Overlander Ski Club, and cross country skiing in general, in the Kamloops area. Our primary medium for marketing is the Club web page.

We also sought publicity for the trails through various promotions. The pre-season ski swap, trail opening and waxing clinics were advertised on radio, TV and in local newspapers.

Further improvements were made to the Club Web Page ([www.overlanderskiclub.com](http://www.overlanderskiclub.com)) as a means of serving our members and promoting the club and the trails system to others. The web page was updated daily during the ski season. A web camera and automatic weather station allow members and visitors to check trail conditions. Ski Trail and snowshoe Trail maps were distributed free of charge to patrons.

Snow conditions were reported daily to area residents through the web page, our staff and our Snow Phone answering machine. The trails are also featured on the Snow Forecast site ([www.snowforecast.com](http://www.snowforecast.com)).

The Club hosted the North American Ski for Light event for visually impaired skiers for a third time in February and an Okanagan Cup race in same month. We also organized the annual Overlander Loppet in March. A race was held on the snowshoe trails in February for the second year by Dirty Feet.

#### **5) CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION**

On Dec 20<sup>th</sup> 2001, Overlander Ski Club signed a Recreational Trail Management Agreement with the B.C. Forest Service, Kamloops Forest District under authority of Section 170 of the Forest Practices Code of British Columbia Act. The term of the agreement was 10 years. In 2006, management responsibility for the trails was transferred to the Ministry of Tourism, Sports and the Arts, now Tourism, Culture and the Arts. In 2010, responsibility was transferred to the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations. The club signed a second 10 year agreement with Recreation and Trails BC of the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations in November 2011.

## **6) TRAIL USE**

The trails were open for a total of 120 days from December 2nd 2012 to March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2013, and there were no closures for bad weather. Night operations continued and staff members were on duty at the trails from Tuesday to Thursday from 4pm to 8pm.

A total of 14,467 skier days were recorded for the year. This number is a new record for the 22 years of operations. Snow conditions were good to excellent throughout the winter. In past years we have noted a correlation between snow on the ground in Kamloops and attendance and this year, there was snow in Kamloops from December to the end of February.

The greatest use of the trails occurred on weekends with Saturdays now almost as busy as Sundays. The highest day attendance was 340. The highest weekly total of the year was during the Christmas holiday period (1,396 skiers). Recorded night use of the trails increased from last year because of extended hours. There were more than 50 skiers on many nights and the highest total was 94, more than many days.

Use of the snowshoe trails was steady throughout the year and the annual total increased threefold to 975 visits.

We know that the total of skiers is more than the recorded total but this difference is not as high as in the past. Opening at night has allowed us to capture some of those who used to ski after hours. In addition, our staff members are often on duty well before official opening time and are aware of early morning skiers. Most of the skiers who ski before or after hours are club members. Skiers used the trails before official opening because snow on the trails was rolled several days before opening. There was also some minor use after the trails were closed at the end of the season. Entry to the trails from access points at the south end of the trails is a minor irritant ... people continue to access the trails without paying.

We sold a total of 424 season passes, including 32 families, covering a total of 522 individuals. Season pass sales were about the same as last season. This is probably a reflection of the poor snow conditions last year and competition from Sun Peaks. Season pass sales generally reflect conditions the previous year, and this year was no exception. 326 six-day passes were sold, a big increase from last year. 2451 day passes were sold. School visits increased dramatically from last year.

### Daily Ski Trails Use Record

Date	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	total
02-Dec	100	25	21	28	36	64	156	430
09-Dec	156	50	56	132	78	93	189	754
16-Dec	168	15	73	105	57	103	167	688
23-Dec	241	125	126	207	215	256	226	1396
30-Dec	290	134	253	139	115	179	274	1384
06-Jan	340	19	50	83	82	162	110	846
13-Jan	245	113	58	167	129	176	291	1179
20-Jan	308	78	78	152	124	197	253	1190
27-Jan	252	87	106	153	184	126	230	1138
03-Feb	218	43	108	208	168	207	284	1236
10-Feb	213	284	42	114	105	126	299	1183
17-Feb	281	53	45	128	73	121	186	887
24-Feb	158	59	35	102	85	60	123	622
03-Mar	123	39	42	94	85	92	139	614
10-Mar	96	53	21	44	21	21	36	292
17-Mar	73	40	39	39	48	46	85	370
24-Mar	106	31	15	16	11	27	19	225
31-Mar	33							33
total								<b>14467</b>

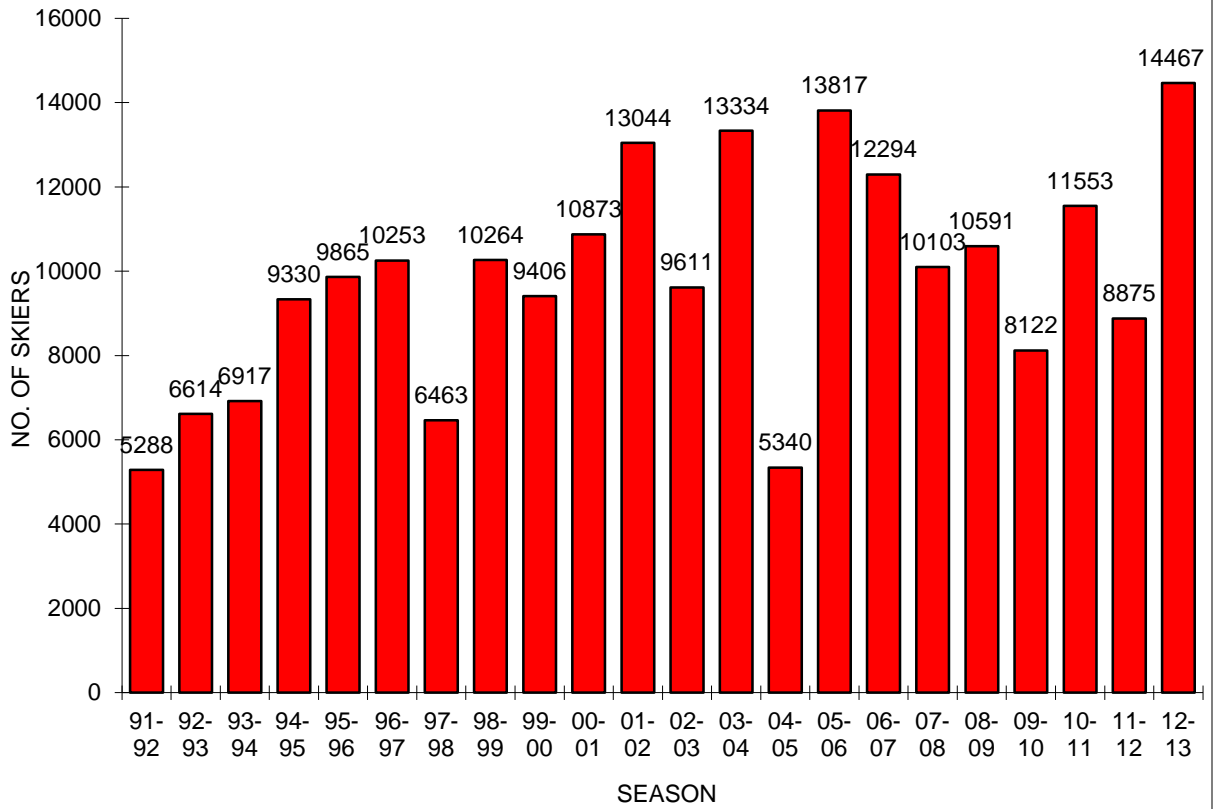
## Snowshoe trail use

Date	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	total
02-Dec	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
09-Dec	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	4
16-Dec	29	0	0	2	3	0	6	40
23-Dec	13	9	19	9	19	18	32	119
30-Dec	32	22	36	28	9	7	21	155
06-Jan	22	5	6	10	7	0	13	63
13-Jan	17	4	3	2	13	4	28	71
20-Jan	30	3	4	4	5	0	24	70
26-Jan	25	2	6	14	30	13	26	116
03-Feb	109	3	4	10	26	1	22	175
10-Feb	22	29	2	2	6	7	11	79
17-Feb	19	1	2	9	2	1	10	44
25-Feb	8	2	2	3	2	0	0	17
03-Mar	2	4	0	0	4	0	2	12
10-Mar	2	0	0	3	0	0	0	5
17-Mar	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	3
24-Mar	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
31-Mar	0							0
total								<b>975</b>

## Ski Trail use in 2012-13 compared with previous seasons

The following figure compares trail use in the 2012-13 season with yearly use over the previous 21 years that the trails have been under Overlander Ski Club management. Attendance last season was a record high. Mean attendance is 9,832 skiers per year and the total number of skier days is 216,299.

### SKIERS AT STAKE LAKE TRAILS



## **7) FINANCIAL SUMMARY**

At April 30th 2013, trail revenues were \$107,499, a 30% increase from last year. These revenues were from the sale of passes and rental of ski and snowshoe equipment. A further \$24,375 was donated in volunteer labour bringing total revenues to \$131,874. Operating expenses were \$122,807. The major expenses were employee wages and benefits, track setting and equipment, snow removal, insurance, fuel and bookkeeping. Depreciation accounts for \$25,000 of this total. The net profit for the year was \$9,067.

The financial position of the club continues to be sound. However, additional revenues are required to build reserves to replace machinery and improve trail facilities.

The trail buildings are valued at \$145,007 and include the day lodge, trailhead chalet and the machine maintenance building. A 1997 Bombardier Plus MP machine was purchased in December 2002 at a cost of \$110,000. All debts on this machine have now been paid. The total value of assets held by the club, and used to operate the trails, now stands at \$293,161.

## **8) STAFF**

Matt Bruce, Lee Card and Theo Seal were employed for this season.

## **9) TRAIL CONSTRUCTION, MAINTENANCE and LIGHTING**

No new ski trails were cut this year. A new snowshoe trail to the top of McConnell Hill was located and trail markers installed. Club members checked every kilometre of the ski and snowshoe trail system prior to the ski season, removing deadfall and overhead hazards, cutting shrubs and trees and replacing signs. During the season, trees falling across the trails were removed by the tracksetting crews and the snowshoe trail crew.

## **10) TREE REMOVAL AND LOGGING**

There were no logging operations this year. Dead trees are continuing to fall on the trails and many are removed each year by trail maintenance workers.

## **11) TRAIL GROOMING**

Trail grooming was again carried out mostly by volunteer crews. Groomers were at work for 77 shifts. 15 individuals and Meeko the dog took part in the grooming for a total of 493 hrs.

## **12) SNOW REMOVAL**

A local contractor was engaged to clear snow from the parking lot.

## **13) EQUIPMENT**

The Bombardier snow cat again performed well this season, although some parts were replaced due to normal wear. The Ginsu groomer, which is towed behind a snowmobile, was used to allow rapid touch up of trail conditions after heavy use days and proved invaluable during periods of low snowfall. An additional track pan and hitch was acquired for tracksetting during special events.

## **14) BUILDINGS**

The club has built a number of permanent structures to operate the trail system. A day lodge is sited at the trail head and requires regular maintenance. All of the trails machinery is stored in a large building at the south end of Stake Lake close to the stadium area. A small cabin provides shelter in the Stadium area for officials during events and for younger children during lessons and the trailhead ticket booth provides office space for trail staff. The Kamloops Astronomical Association uses a small observatory at the south end of the stadium to shelter a large telescope.

## **15) PROGRAMS**

The club carried out a number of programs to promote cross-county skiing and the trails. All children under 9 are admitted to the trails free of charge.

The Ski S'Kool program, which encourages school classes from grades 3, 4 and 5 to come to the trails and take ski lessons, continued this season. The classes use skis which were purchased by the Club for this purpose. 14 sessions were held with a total of 462 SD73 children, a large increase from last year.

## **16) SKI AND SNOWSHOE RENTAL**

Skis and boots for children and snowshoes are rented from the basement of the day lodge for a nominal fee.

## **17) SAFETY**

Safety of clients, employees and club members continues to be a high priority in our management plans and actions. The safety manual was updated. Staff and club members patrolled the trails on a regular basis. We continue to operate a check-in procedure for our employees when they are working on their own, in accordance with WorkSafe BC advice.

There were several minor injuries reported and all were dealt with by trails staff.

## **18) SECURITY**

Break-ins and vandalism are a constant concern. The Day Lodge and machine shed were equipped with alarm systems two years ago and were upgraded. Video surveillance was installed. Despite this, thieves broke the locks on the fuel tank and stole the stored diesel fuel and the electric pump. Steel doors were installed on the fuel shed to prevent similar thefts.

## **19) CUSTOMER SUGGESTIONS**

We maintain a customer suggestion box in the Chalet. Suggestions were generally very positive and acted upon when possible.



## **20) RECOMMENDATIONS**

In the management plan for 2013-14, the Overlander Ski Club will undertake to:

1. provide a safe and enjoyable experience for all skiers
2. promote the ski program for schools
3. promote night skiing
4. host the BC Cross-Country Ski Cup and the Overlander Loppet
5. promote snowshoe operations, clear Bushwacker trail on the top of McConnell Hill and improve trail signs
6. increase trail fees by about 5%
7. construct toilet building
8. construct Rustler by-pass

Any trail improvements will be paid for by the Overlander Ski Club and its supporters.

## **21) ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

Overlander Ski Club wishes to thank the staff of recreation Sites and Trails BC for their co-operation throughout the year. In particular we wish to thank Noelle Kekula for her efforts to ensure that Stake Lake Trails are managed in the best interests of the people of Kamloops and the Province. We also wish to express our appreciation to the B.C. Gaming Branch for their generous grants and numerous other supporters.

We also wish to thank:

- Our employees
- Our volunteers
- Spoke N' Motion, Runners Sole and Dirty Feet for their support of the trails
- The Kamloops media for their assistance in publicising the sport of cross-country skiing and the Stake Lake trail system

## APPENDIX A

### Stake Lake Trails Financial Information for 2012-13

#### Pass sales

Regular day passes sold	2451
Night passes	1584
Under 9's (free)	720
School visits	462
Snowshoe passes	975
6 Day passes	326
Season passes	424

<u>Trail revenues (Passes and ski rental)</u>	107,498
Volunteer labour donations	24,375
<u>Total revenues</u>	<u>\$131,874</u>

#### Trail Costs

Advertising and Promotion	0
Bookkeeping	2,123
Building maintenance	2,712
Depreciation	25,000
Equipment, repairs and maintenance	9,290
Electricity	1,823
Freight	36
Fuel for tracksetting	9,955
Insurance	6,119
Signs	1,673
Snow removal	4,905
Snowshoe rental equipment	830
Telephone and radio system	1,406
Ticket booth supplies	1,166
Trail maintenance	1,015
Travel	4,794
Volunteer labour donations	24,375
Wages and benefits	31,399
<u>Total costs excluding labour donations and depreciation</u>	<u>\$79,248</u>
<u>Total costs including depreciation</u>	<u>\$104,248</u>
<u>Total costs</u>	<u>\$128,622</u>
<u>net revenue or net loss</u>	<u>3,251</u>

## APPENDIX B

### Trail use by user category

Category	user days
Senior	2180
Adult	8610
Student	216
Junior	756
Rabbits	720
Night	1584
Unknown	401
Total	14467
Snowshoe	975

## APPENDIX C

### Photos from the Ski for Light event for visually impaired skiers



## APPENDIX D

### TRAIL FEES 2012-13

#### Day passes

Category	6 day pass	day skiing	night skiing	snowshoe
Adult	65	13	5	3
Senior	60	12	5	3
Student	50	10	5	3
Junior	30	6	free	free
School groups	free	free	n.a.	free
<9	free	free	n.a.	free

NB no time limit to 6 day pass

#### Season passes

Category	Membership	Season Pass	
		early	late
Adult	25	110	135
Senior	25	100	125
Student	25	80	95
Junior	17	40	50
<9	10	free	free
Family	55	260	320

Skiers under 9 years of age ski free of charge. School groups ski free of charge. Rates for large groups are available.