

Covid Risk Mitigation Plan for Stake Lake Trails

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\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Alan Vyse, for Trails Committee

Approved by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Vesta Giles, President

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**Background**

Overlander Ski Club operates the Stake Lake Ski and Snowshoe Trails under a Partnership Agreement with Recreation Sites and Trails BC. The agreement requires the club to provide groomed cross country ski trails and associated warming cabins and shelters within the period of November 1st to April 30th each year. The club has been operating the Trails since 1991, and since 2013 under the current agreement which expires in 2023.

The club sets out management goals in an operating plan before each season commences. The goals for the most recent ski season (2019-20) were:

1. To operate the Stake Lake Ski and snowshoe Trails in such a way that our customers, regardless of ability, enjoy a safe high quality experience each and every time they use the trails;
2. To promote the use of the ski and snowshoe trails by Kamloops residents, other area residents, and visitors to the area;
3. To improve the ski and snowshoe 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.

In addition to these goals, Overlander Ski Club 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. The club also engages in long term planning to ensure that our programs and facilities are sustainable for the next generation.

**Covid 19 threat to health**

COVID 19 has been declared a global pandemic and poses a threat to the health of the world’s population. To mitigate the threat of the virus, British Columbia’s government has issued a series of public health orders, some of which directly affect the operation of Stake Lake Ski Trails. In response to these orders Cross Country BC, Overlander Ski Club’s sport governing body, and our insurance arranger, has issued a directive with respect to reopening club operations in the coming 2020-21 season.

All Cross Country BC Member Organizations are required to develop COVID-19 Reopening Safety Plans that explicitly present the measures that will implement and maintain over the coming 12 to 18 months. Plans must be in compliance with orders from the Provincial Health Officer and must be made available to the public either by posting on the wall of the organization’s facility or on its website. This directive covers all of OSC’s operations including Stake Lake Trails.

In short OSC is required to develop a Covid Safety Plan, to ensure that the plan is reviewed and approved by the Board of Directors and to communicate the plan to all our members and customers

In addition, as an employer, OSC is required by WorksafeBC to develop a COVID-19 Safety Plan that outlines the policies, guidelines, and procedures that have been put in place to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Every employer is required to have a COVID-19 safety plan that assesses the risk of exposure at their workplace and implements measures to keep their workers safe. The plan must be developed in concert with frontline workers and supervisors. WorkSafeBC will review plans of individual employers during their inspections of workplaces. The plan **must be posted** at the worksite in accordance with the order of the Provincial Health Officer.

**COVID-19 Safety Plan for Stake Lake Trails**

This draft Covid Safety plan for the Stake Lake Trails Operations has been prepared by the Club Director responsible for the operation of Stake Lake and the Trails Manager, with contributions from the former and prospective front line workers, Stake Lake Trails Committee members and other OSC Directors. It does not cover the operation of any programs that the club may offer in the coming season.

OSC has created this document, based on Cross Country BC’s guidance document. This document has been cross referenced and is aligned with the:

* ViaSport Return to Sport Guidelines for B.C.
* the WorkSafeBC COVID-19 Safety Plan Checklist
* the Nordiq Canada Risk Assessment and Mitigation Checklist Tool
* the CCBC Reopening directives

Basic principles

The Provincial Health Officer’s direction is that COVID-19 Reopening Safety Plans should cover 3 things:

(1) Processes to open safely,

(2) Measures to keep people safe to avoid further outbreaks, and

(3) A plan in the event that a case or outbreak should occur.

In addition there are several principles from B.C.’s Restart Plan that should be used to create COVID-19 Reopening Safety Plans. They incorporate aspects of personal hygiene and personal responsibility for preventing virus spread, and modifying business operations to increase cleaning and allow members and customers to maintain safe social distancing.

**Applying the principles to Stake Lake Ski Trails**

The Ski Trails comprise 60 km of ski trails, 10k of snowshoe trails, a day lodge with two floors, a washroom building, a ticket booth, a small teaching and race administration building, a metal storage shed, a fuel storage shed, a machine service shed and numerous pieces of equipment for maintaining the trails in winter and summer. The upper floor of the day lodge is used by skiers and the lower half is used for ski rentals and a first aid room. There are also numerous pit toilets around the trails and several simple shelters open on one side.

The trails open when snow conditions are suitable and close in late March. Over that period, the club will record 16,000 user days at the trails. Customers buy day passes, or a season’s pass. Day passes are bought at the trailhead and Season’s passes are purchased on line. Season’s pass holders automatically become OSC members and OSC has about 900 members each year. The club employs a staff of 6 to 7 employees and two contractors to run operations and programs at the trails.

The operations at the trails have been divided into several areas of concern with respect to mitigating the risk of virus infection.

* Trail maintenance in summer
* Trail maintenance in winter
* Trailhead operations
  + Parking
  + Washrooms
  + Pit toilets
  + Rentals
  + Ticket booth
  + Day lodge
  + Rescue operations and first aid
* Staff

Each of these areas of concern is addressed in the virus infection mitigation plan.

In normal years the club runs a ski program for local school children but under the current guidelines from the school health authorities a safe program may not be possible for the coming season.

The plan will be revised as public health orders change and advice from public health officials and the sport governing body changes.

**Covid infection mitigation plan**

**General actions to reduce risk of infection for all trail operations**

Communications with the public will be given high priority. The Mitigation Plan will be posted on line and all members will be directed to read the plan. Members will also be reminded of their personal responsibility if they choose to come to the trails:

• If you don’t feel well or are displaying symptoms of COVID-19, you must stay home.

• If you have traveled outside of Canada, you must self-isolate for a minimum of 14 days and you cannot ski or snowshoe at the trails

• If you live in a household with someone who has COVID-19 or is showing symptoms of COVID-9, please stay home.

• Wash your hands before arriving at the trails or at one of the hand washing stations

• Bring your own equipment, if possible, and a water bottle and hand sanitizer

• Comply with physical distancing measures at all times

• Avoid physical contact with others, including shaking hands, high fives, etc.

Signs reminding the public of key mitigation measures will be placed at strategic locations in the trail head area, and in machine service area and on buildings in the stadium area.

The staff will carry out a full disinfection at start of morning, and afternoon shift change. All high touch areas will be cleaned at least every 2hrs (door knobs, sinks, trash can lids, toilet seats and flushers, baby change table). Tables and chairs will be wiped between groups. Sleds, tablets and other 'work' gear cleaned at start of shift.

In the event staff members are informed by public health of a Covid contact, the club membership and general public will be told of the details and dates by through the commonly used social media channels. The Trail facilities will be closed for a full day to allow for deep cleaning. Staff will remain on site to monitor trails activity and to provide rescue capability if necessary.

**1. Trail maintenance in summer**

Trail maintenance in summer has two components. Individuals and small groups of club members drive to the trails, park and then walk the trails removing wood debris, rocks and small trees from the trail surface using hand tools. Vegetation that cannot be removed using hand tools is treated by second, much smaller, group of volunteers operating brush saws.

The risk associated with these activities is low because the volunteers are working in the open air and are well separated. The biggest risk is likely in shared transportation. We will manage the risks by contacting all volunteers before work starts and remind them of the basic principles of hygiene and social distancing. We will advise that the size of groups should be limited to 10 people and that transportation should not be shared unless the vehicle occupants are in a social “bubble”. Tools should not be shared. Club brush saws will be sanitised after use. Volunteers using club equipment will be encouraged to use the following best practices:

* Use sanitary wipes provided to sanitize chainsaw and brush cutter handles, gas and oil caps,starter recoil rope handles and gas can caps after use.
* Use sanitary wipes provided to sanitize hard hats and face shields after use.
* Use hand sanitizer supplied as needed.
* Wear a supplied face mask if social distance of 2m cannot be maintained.[i.e. when driving to work site]
* Use a "one machine, one person" system when operating the brush cutters or the chainsaws and avoid using multiple machines.
* Encourage volunteers to use their own PPE (chaps, hard hats, eye and hearing protection) for use with saws and other equipment to limit use of club PPE.

All volunteers will be asked sign the on line participation agreement before starting work.

These actions will maintain the risk for volunteers at a low level.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Risk before actions** | **Actions** | **Risk after actions** |
| Trail maintenance hand tools |  | hand hygiene, distancing, no tool sharing, communication; |  |
| Trail maintenance power tools |  | hand hygiene, distancing, sanitize saws, communication |  |

**2. Trail maintenance in the winter**

Ski trail maintenance is carried out by about 20 volunteers who are all ski club members. Their centre of operations is the Machine service shed which is about 700 m from the main parking lot and day lodge. Most of the trail maintenance is carried out at night or in early morning and consequently there is rarely interaction between skiers and maintenance crews. The trail maintenance crews also maintain the machines conducting regular jobs and taking care of any equipment failures. The risk of virus infection is low because the group almost never meets together and communication between members is excellent.

The following protocols are intended to reduce the low level of risk that exists:

* Post signs reminding all volunteers basic hygiene instructions, stay home if sick and follow social distancing.
* Restrict number of people in service shed to 5 people at one time.
* Restrict entrance to authorised volunteers only.
* Ask all volunteers to use sanitary wipes provided to sanitize door handles, office desk draw handles, tool box draw handles and any tools used, microwave oven controls, radio controls and any other high touch surfaces before leaving the building.
* Use hand sanitizer supplied as needed.
* Wear a supplied face mask if social distance of 2m cannot be maintained.

When working on the trails, volunteers will be asked to follow basic rules when working with the snowcat and the snowmobiles.

SNOWCAT.

* Use sanitary wipes provided to sanitize snowcat door handles, in cab operation controls [i.e.switches and joy sticks] fuel filler cap, engine access panel handle and latch lever and oil dip sticks and any other high touch surfaces after use.
* Use hand sanitizer provided as needed.
* If operating the snowcat with a partner both driver and passenger should wear a supplied face mask.
* When driver and passenger change places contact surfaces must be sanitized using sanitary wipes provided.

SNOWMOBILE.

* Use sanitary wipes provided to sanitize snowmobile handlebars, switches, throttle lever, hood release latches ,oil dip sticks, fuel filler cap and any other high touch surfaces after use.
* Use hand sanitizer provided as needed.

The activities will reduce the risk for volunteers from medium to low.

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| **Activity** | **Risk before actions** | **Actions** | **Risk after actions** |
| Machine maintenance |  | hand hygiene, distancing, sanitize tools, communication |  |
| Trail grooming |  | hand hygiene, distancing, sanitize saws, communication |  |

1. Trailhead operations

* Parking

Trail customers arrive by car or bus. Cars angle park in the ploughed lot and are spaced approximately two car widths apart. Members and day visitors will be asked to maintain appropriate social distancing on the web page and on signs at the entrance to the parking lot. Buses park parallel to the edges of the lot. Bus passengers will be reminded of social distancing protocols. The risk of infection in the parking lot is low and the proposed actions will keep the level low for both staff and public.

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| **Activity** | **Risk before actions** | **Actions** | **Risk after actions** |
| Parking |  | Signs requesting distancing, 2 car widths, communication |  |

* Washrooms

Washrooms present a moderate infection risk to customers and staff. There is one wide entrance, a vestibule with benches and a drinking fountain, a mechanical room, men’s and women’s toilet facilities and a family/disabled room with toilet.

Signs will be posted with reminders of hand hygiene and social distancing. A handwashing station will be placed in the vestibule. The maximum occupancy will be restricted to 7 people by closing one stall and one sink in each washroom. The drinking fountain will be closed but the associated water bottle filler station will be retained. No storage will be permitted. Entrance to the mechanical room will be locked and restricted to staff. If more than one staff member is in the mechanical room all will wear masks. Pit toilets at the trail head will be signed and walkways maintained.

Toilets will be cleaned at the beginning of each shift and high touch areas will be cleaned every two hours.

The proposed actions should reduce the risk of infection to a low level for the public and staff.

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| **Activity** | **Risk before actions** | **Actions** | **Risk after actions** |
| Washrooms |  | Signs, hand hygiene, close stalls to improve distancing, more frequent sanitizing, communication |  |

* Pit toilets

The risk of infection at the pit toilets to staff and customers is low. Signs with reminders of hand hygiene and social distancing will be posted on each toilet building round the trails.

Hand sanitizer will be placed in each toilet close to the trail head. Access to those toilets through the snow will be maintained as necessary. The Toilets will be cleaned at the beginning of each shirt and high touch areas will be cleaned every two hours

The proposed actions will maintain the risk level at Low for both staff and the public.

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| **Activity** | **Risk before actions** | **Actions** | **Risk after actions** |
| Pit toilets |  | Signs, hand hygiene |  |

* Rentals

Ski equipment is rented from the basement of the day lodge. Customers pay for rentals at the ticket booth and go into the open area rental shop to meet a staff member and select suitable equipment. The risk of infection in this component of the trails operation to the staff is high, and the risk to the customers is medium.

Occupancy of the rental area will be limited to 2 staff and 4 adult customers in a single group. Masks will be required. A wall will be built to create a vestibule for waiting customers and to separate rental staff and equipment from the customers. Signs will be posted reminding staff and customers of distancing and hygiene advice. Rentals will be purchased at a POS station in the vestibule. Staff and customers will wear masks. Clean gear will be handed to customers. Gear that does not fit will be placed in the used section for cleaning. Hand washing station will be available for staff and for customers.

Customers will be allowed to rent for several days with a commensurate deposit.

Staff will maintain daily records of use with the name of person or party renting, the type of gear rented and contact number for contact tracing.

When equipment is returned, hard gear will be disinfected and set aside overnight, and soft gear will be disinfected and set aside for a minimum of one full day (eg. rented Monday, out of service Tuesday, back in pool Wed). NB this will limit school ski

No customer storage will be permitted.

Signs with standard Covid advice and occupancy limits will be posted outside and inside the rental area.

Stop 'loaner' sunglass offerings

Install a wireless doorbell system for customers to alert staff in the rental room or the ticket booth.

Night rentals will be handled in the same way as day rentals. This may require one extra staff member for the first part of the night (until 7pm?)

These actions will reduce the Covid risk from High to Medium for staff and from medium to low for customers

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| **Activity** | **Risk before actions** | | **Actions** | **Risk after actions** | |
| Rentals | staff |  | hand hygiene, distancing, masks, separate customers and staff communication | staff |  |

* Ticket booth

The ticket booth is the main point of contact between staff and customers and thus is a high risk point for staff in trail operations. A staff member greets every vehicle that enters the parking lot and on a very busy day might encounter 150 vehicles. Regular customers with season’s passes are provided with information on the trail condition and current hazards and waved through. There is no physical contact. Customers who have six day passes, hand over the pass to be punched and have it returned, while receiving trails information. If customers must purchase day passes or six day passes, they pay either cash or use the electronic POS system. Customers also pay for rentals at the booth, often approaching the booth on foot after they have parked. Customer numbers are recorded in the ticket booth

The risk to staff is high and to customers low.

Signs explaining Covid precautions will be placed on the ticket booth and on boards 3-4 car lengths before the booth, and reminders for staff will be posted in the booth.

No more than two staff members will work in the booth at any one time. Volunteers and customers will be discouraged from entering.

A hand wash station will be installed in the booth.

Customers will be encouraged to use credit or debit cards. The POS machine will be passed to each customer using the Stake Lake Canadarm and disinfected regularly.

Groups that arrive by bus will be requested to pay as a group.

All rental payments will take place at the rental location.

These actions will reduce staff exposure significantly. Public exposure will not change significantly

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| **Activity** | **Risk before actions** | | **Actions** | **Risk after actions** | |
| Ticket booth | staff | public | hand hygiene, distancing, limit cash, single payment for groups, on line payment? communication | staff | public |

* Day lodge

The upper portion of the day lodge is used by customers as a place to warm up, eat lunch, greet friends, change clothes, store gear and is used by the club as a location for disseminating information. Staff enter the lodge during the day in order to tend the wood stove and to clean tables and chairs as necessary. The space can be heavily used and very crowded. The Covid risk to staff and public is high.

Signs with reminders of basic COVID etiquette will be posted at several locations.

Customers and staff will enter the building through the front door and exit through the back door creating a one way flow.

Occupancy will be limited to 24 people including children. Four tables with 6 chairs each will be available

Basement access will be discouraged using signs but not locked (note there is some disagreement on this point).

Customers will be asked not to store personal effects while they are skiing.

Hand cleaning stations will be placed at the entrance and the exit.

The back porch will be repaired and new door handles installed on the back door and basement door.

Ski racks outside the day lodge and washrooms will spaced out to allow for social distancing.

These actions will reduce risk of infection of staff and public to a low level.

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| **Activity** | **Risk before actions** | | **Actions** | **Risk after actions** | |
| **Upper floor day lodge** | **staff** | **public** | **hand hygiene, distancing, reduce occupancy; one way flow; communication** | **staff** | **public** |

* Rescue operations and first aid treatment

Rescue calls requiring first aid and transport are dealt with by trained staff. Members of the public often assist. Although the frequency of rescue calls is low, there is a high risk to staff and low risk to the public with each call.

To minimise physical contact, all trail pick-ups will be done with rescue toboggan. Members of the public will not ride on the snowmobiles. If two staff members are required to attend, they may ride tandem but only with masks. Staff will be trained in Worksafe Covid First Aid protocols.

OSC members or members of the public who assist in rescues will be advised when first contact is made to wear gloves and a mask.

Examination on location or in the first aid area will be done wearing personal protective equipment as required (gloves and mask or faceshield).

These actions will reduce infection risk for staff from high to medium

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| **Activity** | **Risk before actions** | | **Actions** | **Risk after actions** | |
| **Rescue and first aid** | **staff** | **public** | **hand hygiene, distancing, reduce occupancy; one way flow; communication** | **staff** | **public** |

* Waste disposal:

Staff remove waste from the lodge and washrooms on a daily basis and transport the bags in personal vehicles. OSC will engage a waste disposal company to supply a waste bin and to empty the bin on a regular basis.

1. **Staff safety**

Safety of our staff is the highest priory for our operation. To protect the staff, Worksafe BC has instructed employers to develop a safety plan for their workers. OSC is required to assess risks at the workplace and implement protocols to reduce the risks and a checksheet is provided to guide the process. The Worksafe checksheet for Stake Lake is provided in Appendix 1.

In addition to modifying our operations to reduce the risk of infection to staff and the public we will increase staffing to ensure that there are 2 staff on duty at all times during day time hours with 1 in ticket booth and 1 responsible for rentals and sanitizing public spaces. Rentals will not be offered at night except by pre orders. During peak times (weekends, holidays, christmas break) 3 staff will be on duty with 1 ticket booth, 1 rental, 1 lodge host (who will maintain lodge capacity and cleaning). Staff duties and preliminary schedules are shown in Appendix 2.

OSC will develop a staff sickness policy which is shown in Appendix 3

OSC will acquire FRS radios for staff to communicate between buildings to a maintain social distancing and avoid use of OSC 1/2 channels

**Public communication**

Overlander undertakes to keep our members and public well informed about the steps we are taking to mitigate Covid risk at the trails. This plan and subsequent updates will be made available on the Club website along with any other relevant material about cross country skiing and Covid.

COVID-19 information will be shared with participants and staff as follows:

* links on the OSC website
* Social Media
* direct email to members and program participants
* signage at the Trails