

Trail System

The trails at the Whitehorse Nordic Centre are a **popular destination for recreational skiers** looking for a convenient and safe skiing experience.

- 85 kilometers of ski trails - groomed regularly for classic and skate skiing
- Snowshoeing is allowed on the trail system
- 25 kilometre network of single track trails - available for snowshoeing, snowbiking, walking but some [restrictions for winter use](#)
- Located only 5 minutes from downtown Whitehorse - only a 3 minute walk from city transit stop
- Beginner (green), intermediate (blue) and advanced (black) trails offer a variety of skiing options
- The ski stadium offers a ski playground and the Yukon Adventure trail, a great place for kids to play and there are lights
- 5 kilometres of lit trails for night skiing - a 3 kilometer loop and a 2 kilometer loop
- 38 kilometres of trails open for skiing with your dog(s)
- Trails are signed at most junctions and at some of the major intersections
- Three huts with wood stoves: Harvey's Hut, Fireweed Hut and Sarah Steele Hut - firewood and emergency supplies available at the huts - huts are available to all trail users on a first come-first served basis
- Trail maps available free of charge - available at Coast Mountain Sports, Icycle Sport, Visitor Reception Centre, Canada Games Centre and Mt. McIntyre Recreation Centre
- Trails are groomed most days - check the Trail Conditions on our web site or board at the wax room for updates
- For information about our grooming policies and priorities go to the [Grooming](#) page

Check out our [Trail Maps](#) to see all your skiing options!

Grooming

This page provides a lot of information about grooming at the Whitehorse Nordic Centre. Topics include Policies, Grooming Priorities, Procedures, Equipment Descriptions and links to other information.

Check the trail conditions on our web site or the board located at wax room before skiing. During periods of continuing snowfall, the Priority A trails will always be groomed first. That is why some trails may remain ungroomed for longer periods, especially early in the year when grooming is done with volunteer power and smaller machines.

Grooming is done by volunteers only between 7:30 p.m. and 10:30 p.m. or between 6:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. This also limits the amount of grooming that can be done each day. The reason for this is to avoid conflicting with skiers and to allow time for the snow to harden before being used. Pisten Bully grooming is done mostly between 7:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m.

Grooming is not done if the temperature drops below -25 C.

SKIERS ARE REQUESTED TO AVOID SKIING RIGHT BEHIND GROOMING

EQUIPMENT. PLEASE ALLOW AT LEAST AN HOUR FOR THE SNOW TO HARDEN. IF YOU THINK YOU ARE MESSING UP THE GROOMING, YOU PROBABLY ARE! PLEASE FIND AN ALTERNATE ROUTE.

Priorities

Grooming priorities have been established over many years taking into consideration use patterns, member surveys, snow conditions, and feedback from coaches, instructors, and recreational skiers.

The current priorities were established in January 2016. They are reviewed by Operations each year and approved by the board at the spring planning sessions. Member feedback and questions about priorities are welcomed. Send emails to the Operations Manager, grooming.xcskiwhitehorse@gmail.com

A) Copper to Best Chance Corner, Dog, Sundog, Selwyn's Loop, Coyote, Upper Valley South, lighted loops which include parts of Chalet Trail, Skookum Trail, Olympic, Nighthawk and Stadium Trail, Fraser Loop in October or early November when conditions on lower trails are marginal B) World Cup 5K, Lower Valley, Raven, Whisky Jack, World Cup 10K, Lynx, Stadium, 7.5K, Olympic, Powerline, Logan Burn, Copper from Best Chance to Gravel Pit, Monique Waterreus Trail, Nighthawk, Nugget, 007, The Wall, Jeff Link, Upper Valley North, Pierre Harvey Trail, Sarah Steele outer loop. C) Copper from Gravel Pit to Mordor/Haul Road, Copper Haul Road, McIntyre Ascent/Descent, Fraser Loop - after November 15, Sarah Steele Inner loops.

Associated connectors will be groomed accordingly.

The Ski Club will make the best efforts to groom all category A and B trails weekly and category C trails biweekly.

Policies

1. The ground must be frozen and there must be sufficient snowfall before packing and grooming begins.
2. Snow machines should be used sparingly when temperature is warmer than 0 and not at all when warmer than plus 5.
3. Grooming should not be done when snow is wet or temperature is above freezing.
4. When packing fresh powder, especially early season, snow machines must travel at a speed that will not blow snow off trails.
5. Minimum of two machines to groom. If only one person available then work to be done at Manager's discretion – within walking distance of the Chalet.
6. Pack and/or grade snow before track setting. Use graders for leveling and grooming without packing if under 3 cm of fresh snow.
7. When new snow exceeds 5 cm pack only with twin tracks or with single track and roller or Pisten Bully when base permits.
8. If snow is falling heavily and more than 10 cm is expected it is best to pack during the snowfall if possible – drive slowly.
9. Twin tracks should overlap and where trails are wide enough leave the trail edge unpacked
10. Jaca track setter should only be used when packed snow base is deeper than 7.5 cm.
11. PB should only be used when packed snow base exceeds 10 cm.
12. Pisten Bully grooming will be the priority choice in most conditions.
13. Upon completion of task, equipment operators should fuel up and clean

machines and clean shed of snow & ice.

14. Alpina Sherpa operators must be trained and certified by the Operations Manager or a delegate of the OM.

15. All groomers must attend an orientation workshop before being authorized to operate any of the snow machines.

16. Pisten Bully to be operated only by trained, qualified operators who have been contracted by the ski club. The Pisten Bully is a very expensive, technical machine and the expectation is that it will be operated only by paid staff.

17. Snowmachine grooming is done by volunteers between 7:30 p.m. and 10:30 p.m. or between 6:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. This can vary depending on volunteer preferences so groomers may stay out later in the evening or start earlier in the morning. Volunteers are not expected to be grooming later than 11:00 p.m. for safety reasons. Generally, volunteers are not expected to groom before 6:00 a.m. due to comfort and realistic expectations.

Grooming Decisions

Decisions for day to day grooming are made by the Operations Manager, based on the priorities and consultation with the Club Manager, volunteer groomers, Pisten Bully operators, ski team coaches, and recreational skiers on a daily basis.

Grooming decisions are affected by many factors, including safety, budget, weather, condition of the snow base, care of equipment, operator availability, time of year and amount of use.

Grooming policies and seasonal decisions are based on best practices as learned over many years by considering industry standards, Cross Country Canada/Yukon standards, risk management concerns and skier enjoyment.

Feedback or questions about day to day decisions and policies may be directed to the Operations Manager, Club Manager

Procedures

Tracksetting Guidelines for Groomers

1. Tracks should not be set on any tight turn – ie 90 degree turns or sharper. Any turn where the skis are going to scrape the sides are considered tight turns. Examples: Upper Valley where it rejoins Lower Valley just before Crossroads, Selwyn's Loop at the hairpin turn.

2. Tracks should not be set at major junctions such as Crossroads.

3. Ski your tracks as soon as you can after setting them - best way to learn

4. If you can't ski a tight turn on the flat the track should not be there

5. If a track is going to tend to throw skiers (even experts) out of a curve then there should be no track.

6. When possible and practical, tracks should be set on the outside radius of a turn or group of turns – example Sarah Steele Loop should be set on the right, going counterclockwise – that way it will generally follow the outside radius.

7. The track should be broken near the top of a steep or long downhill so that novice skiers will have an opportunity to leave the track. (Some skiers are not capable of stepping in and out of the track at any speed)

8. If you are 'moving' the track closer to the edge, it should be done in increments of about 6" – that way we will always have a good solid poling track.

9. If tracksetting in very hard snow in very cold conditions it may be necessary to do two passes with the Jaca

10. Do not trackset unless packed or graded first. It is best to leave packed snow a few hours or until morning after an evening pack before tracksetting. Tracksetting

much better when snow hardens up. However, we often will set a track in freshly packed snow so that we have some tracksetting available. For [more details](#) about tracksetting guidelines at specific points.

Equipment

Pisten Bully 100 Snowcat

WCCSC owns one PB100. Most of the Pisten Bully work is done at night, so many club members have never seen it. Rudy Sudrich and Jan Polivka are the operators. Grooming is done between 11:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m. so that trails have enough time to harden up. The harder the trail surface the longer it will stand up to heavy use. A new PB was purchased this year (2012) and the old one shipped south for resale. The purchase was funded by Lotteries Yukon, Community Development Fun, and many ski club donors. Thanks to all. For more information and photos of the [Pisten Bully](#).

Alpina Sherpa (2)

Our first Alpina Sherpa was purchased in 2010 at a cost of \$40,000. It is a double track, four-stroke machine that is made in Italy. The second Sherpa was purchased fall of 2015, thanks to a CDF grant from Yukon Government for the 2016 Haywood Nationals. Many clubs now own a Sherpa to do the work of the old Skidoo Alpines. The Sherpa is capable of pulling heavy loads such as the Tidd Tech Groomer. It requires specialized training and meticulous preventative maintenance. Currently, the two machines are maintained with some volunteer time and some paid mechanic time.

Alpine II Double Track (3)

There are three of the old two stroke snowmachines still in our fleet. They have been the workhorses for most clubs across Canada since the 80's. Our three machines are at least 22 years old. The three remaining machines will be retired over the next 5 years. The cost of maintenance is increasing each year. The old 'double-tracks' tend to leave a trail of exhaust fumes and are quite noisy.

Arctic Bearcat (2)

This machine is a single track, four stroke snow machine. Similar machines are now becoming the workhorses for most clubs, as the old two-stroke machines are retired. The single track snow machines are not capable of packing the snow into a usable surface, so they require enough power to tow a roller or grading implement.

Implements

Tidd Tech snow groomer (2) - a large, factory built groomer that can dig up hardened snow, churn and mix new snow, set a classic track, finish a skate lane and level the snow in one pass. This implement is valued at \$8,000 and requires several hours of hands on training.

Jaca tracksetter - two similar tracksetters that are pulled with a snowmobile, preferably a 4 stroke machine. The Jaca tracksetters are operated with an electronic piston that can raise and lower the tracksetter while moving along the trail. This enables the operators to break the tracks at junctions, sharp turns and steep downhill. These implements cost about \$4,000 each and require several hours of training and years of experience in order to produce good, consistent tracks.

Grader/Renovators - There are 3 implements that were built and modified by Duncan's over the last 10 to 15 years. The graders are used to churn up old snow, mix in new snow, level the trail surface and to prepare a skate lane. The graders are about 41/2' wide and tend to leave ridges and furrows in the trail surface. They are mostly used in early season and on narrow trails throughout the season. They do a

good job in most conditions but are less effective in low snow or in very hard packed snow.

Roller - The roller is used mostly in the early season, before the Pisten Bully is in operation. The roller is 6' wide and does a good job of packing significant snowfalls. A second roller will be added to the equipment inventory, so that single track snow machines can be used for all packing. In previous years, the Alpine II snowmachines have been used for packing, but they are near the end of their useful life. Single track snowmachines do not pack snow, so we will become more dependent on rollers.

Graders - There are two locally made graders that are useful for narrow trails and for levelling the Ascent Trail.

Courses for Volunteers

If you are interested in learning about trail grooming, sign up for the [Basic Grooming Course](#). The course is held in late November. There are also opportunities for learning 'on the job'. Groomers must be willing to volunteer during late evening or early morning hours.

Annual Record of Grooming

2010/2011 - First grooming November 18,

2011/2012 -

2012/2013 - First grooming October 20, Last grooming April 20

2013/2014 - First grooming November 7. Last grooming April 12. (Fraser Loop - same)

2014/2015 - First grooming November 1. Last grooming April 3. Skiing until April 18. (Fraser Loop packed Oct 24, tracked Nov 1)

2015/2016 - First grooming November 1. (very little snow through Nov and Dec) Pisten Bully used in late December. (Fraser Loop packed early December)

2016/2017 – First grooming October 23. Pisten Bully used mid December. Low snowconditions till March