

**Palouse Divide Nordic Ski Club  
General Meeting, Nov. 16, 2016  
Fisk Room, 1912 Building, Moscow  
7:30 – 8:30pm**

**Introduction:**

President Bill Thomson announced that this afternoon he and Pete Minard, trails manager, had moved the warming hut to its winter site at the junction of the Big Loop and Meadow Loop trails where there is a bit of snow. He then introduced the board and Shawn (??) and Adam McClory from the forest service. Bill explained the basics of the Club. It is a volunteer group that works with the Forest Service and Idaho Dept. of Parks and Recreation to provide about 20 miles of groomed Nordic skiing trails at the Palouse Divide. The area is complex, with land owned by the Forest Service, Potlatch Lumber, Idaho Dept. of Lands and the Palouse Divide Lodge. However, the roads are public. Bill urged everyone to get a Park and Ski pass and to designate Palouse Divide as their ski area as this directs money to us. We receive about \$3,000/year from this source.

**Trails:**

The East side trails are in excellent shape thanks to Shawn and Adam who arranged for two crews to cut brush on all three trails and improve the steep link between the two arms of Big Loop. Thanks also to the 13 people who came to the trail clearing day on Oct. 29 and finished removing brush, and to Bill and Tim who used Tim's mower to mow the Meadow Loop trail.

West side trails have not been used for two years because of logging on Idaho Dept. of Lands property near the East Dennis Trail. Shawn reported that he was able to contact the Dept. They do not know if logging will take place this winter but, if it does, they will work with the contractor to have parking plowed for the weekends at the junction of the Sampson Road and the East Dennis road. Skiers can then drive the one half mile of plowed road to the junction and the Sampson Road/Loggers Saddle trail can be groomed.

There were questions about snowmobiles and dog use. The trails are posted for no motorized use. Snowmobiles have rarely been a problem. Adam noted that if you do see a snowmobile do not confront the driver. Take a picture to get the license number and report it to the district office in Potlatch. Since the lodge dogs are always on the east side other dogs will be allowed unless problems develop. The last two years have had very few. Bill reminded people that dogs should not go into the warming hut and owners must pick up after them.

Pete and Shawn are putting together a signage plan to get a grant for better signs at all trail junctions and signs that also direct to the parking area. Signs should be up by the 2017-18 year. A new trailhead signboard has been received and will be put up the week of Dec. 5. Volunteers are needed.

**Finances:**

We currently have about \$5,000 in club funds and Adam reported that there is \$9,100 in our Idaho dept. of Parks and Recreation account. This money can be used for expenses but not for equipment. We will need a new snowmobile for grooming in the next 2-3 years at a cost of \$8,000-\$10,000 as these are broad track machines with a heavy duty 4 stroke motor. Technically, the Forest Service holds title to the snowmobiles used by the club. Adam reported that the Forest Service will work with the club to get the funds. Some funds from about \$4,000 in surplus equipment due to be sold will probably be applied to a new machine. He will also try to establish an equipment replacement fund for the club with the Forest Service so each replacement is not a crisis.

**Events:**

Bill thanked Alice and Teresa for manning a table at the Moscow Farmers' Market which gave out information and collected membership dues. The Board would like to hold a Community Ski Day on a day when no Park and Ski pass is required if there is enough interest. This would include information about the club, refreshments, a guided snow shoe tour, simple lessons and possibly a guided tour of the Big Loop trail. If weather conditions are adequate we will also sponsor an 18 mile round trip Loppett to the Bald Mountain Lookout on a different date. This means the trails will be groomed. There will be a sign-in/out table. There will be two or three stations on the loop to check skiers progress. The stations also will be equipped with emergency equipment and finally there will be a sweep of the trail to assure that all registered skiers have returned. There will also be hot drinks at the lookout. Pete Minard will be in charge of organizing the Loppett. Bill also suggested a fundraising event at Tapped, a pub in Moscow. On the arranged date Tapped will donate \$1.00 to the club from every designated "beer of the day" which is purchased during the 2 hour event. The general consensus of the meeting was that all three events would be worthwhile. (**Update:** A fundraiser at Tapped is now arranged for Thursday, Feb. 16.)

**Officers:**

To retain its Idaho non-profit status, the club must elect officers at a general meeting. The four officers have agreed to continue. They are President: Bill Thomson, Treasurer: Paul Hendrix, Secretary: Alice Schroeder and Trails Manager: Pete Minard. They were re-elected unanimously as no nominations from the floor were forthcoming. Bill also noted that we need more board members. (**Note:** after the meeting was adjourned Tonie Fitzgerald volunteered to join the board.)

**Groomers:**

We need more groomers. To groom one must be certified by the Forest Service and Pete, and agree to be available for at least two grooming days per month during the ski season—usually mid December to mid March. These days are usually each Thursday or Friday (sometimes both) so the area is ready for weekend skiers. Shawn is now a certified instructor for Forest Service Snowmobile certification. He explained that certification consists of a one day class which will be taught at the Divide. There can be up to 8 people in the class. After people are certified, Pete will

work with them on the special requirements of grooming, especially avoiding getting the machine stuck. Groomers will then assist Pete or another groomer until they are ready to work alone. Groomers must be recertified every 2-3 years. However, Shawn often helps with grooming so recertification is accomplished by working with him on a usual grooming day. Dennis Feeney and Matt Meyer volunteered to help with grooming. Both have groomed at other areas. The club is very thankful for their willingness to help.

**Palouse Divide Lodge:**

Shirley and Lane Hathaway of the Palouse Divide Lodge have provided enormous support to the Club and the ski area. Members were urged to support their business. One way is to attend the Fundraiser Dinner for the Fernwood Senior Center this Saturday, Nov. 19. Also consider them when looking for a place for group events. One possible way to support them is for the club to join the Pan Handle Nordic Club on their ski weekend at the Lodge, Jan. 20 and 21, 2017. There was some interest and Bill will contact the Pan Handle Club and the Lodge to see if this is possible.

**Question session:**

Is the Bald Mountain Lookout winter shelter available for rent? Adam replied that the shelter can be used in an emergency, it is not in adequate condition for rental. Paul Spencer requested that people visit the website and send him an e-mail if it needs additions or corrections.

Attendees were reminded that the Face Book page and the web cam provide information on current conditions.

**Slide Show:**

The meeting ended with a slide show by Bill and Teresa of a ski trip last winter to the Rossland, BC Nordic ski areas.

Respectfully submitted,

Alice Schroeder  
Secretary