




Cross Country NWT

Strategic Plan 2016-2020

One strong, inclusive and united Northern ski community





NWT Board of Directors

Angela Littlefair, President
Kevin Smith, Vice-President
Susie Boake, Treasurer
Shawne Kokelj, Secretary
Richard Daitch
John Stephenson

Members of the Strategic Planning Committee:

Angela Littlefair
Karen Johnson
Chris Joseph
Richard Daitch
Kevin Smith

The Cross Country NWT Board of Directors would like to thank the clubs, coaches, recreational skiers, athletes and volunteers who contributed to the development of this Plan. We believe this Plan reflects the deep pride of belonging in the North and the potential for cross country skiing to connect communities.



Table of Contents:

Message from our President.	??
Strategic Planning Process.	??
Mission, Vision and Values.	??
Goals and Objectives.	??
How we will monitor progress.	??
Conclusion and Acknowledgements.	??





Message from our President

As interest in cross country skiing is growing across Canada, Cross Country NWT is taking an active role in building and supporting cross country skiing opportunities in the Northwest Territories. We want to positively contribute to creating stories of the future while recognizing our history: the 50th anniversary of Inuvik's Top of the World Ski races/Loppet in 2018, Olympians Sharon and Shirley Firth and other skiers who were part of the Territorial Experimental Ski Training Program, NWT Sports Hall of Fame member Sarah Daitch and many other NWT skiers who competed and continue to compete in national and international races.

The Cross Country NWT Strategic Plan is the result of a collaboration of skiing enthusiasts of all levels of ability across the NWT. Over the next four years, we hope to increase participation and athletic talent, expand our capacity and improve our visibility. We want to take advantage of having the longest ski season in Canada. The strategy is our roadmap to **one strong, inclusive and united Northern ski community**.

Angela Littlefair
President of Cross Country Northwest Territories



Strategic Planning Process

Cross Country Northwest Territories (CCNWT)—formerly the NWT Ski Division—is the Territorial Sport Organization for cross country skiing in the NWT. CCNWT is a member of Sport North and Cross Country Canada. In spring 2015, the CCNWT Board decided to update the strategic plan as it would be an important tool to guide the organization’s future activities. The Board further agreed it would be important to have the assistance of a consultant with experience and expertise to guide the process. Dina Bell-Laroche, Partner with the Sport Law and Strategy Group, was hired to support the work of the Board on the strategic planning project. A strategic planning committee was created to help steward the process. Numerous conversations and conference calls were held to identify the best methods with which to engage cross country skiing stakeholders, review and renew the organization’s commitment to its mission, vision and values, and to organize a strategic planning workshop. CCNWT Board of Directors interviewed stakeholders involved in many aspects of skiing, from competing to coaching to volunteering, to gain insight into CCNWT and its work, and the needs of the ski clubs and community programs.

This information was compiled and used to guide a strategic planning workshop, held January 29-30, 2016 with 16 cross country skiing enthusiasts including coaches, staff, volunteer board members, community leaders, teachers, parents and athletes. The two-day workshop provided an opportunity to refine the foundational statements and identify the most important goals and objectives for CCNWT for the next five years, 2016-2020.

The goal of the planning process was to foster a spirit of collaboration among NWT cross country ski leaders and club volunteers, so that a growing number of ski enthusiasts would become involved in implementing strategies to support growth and strengthen the positive impact our sport can have in the North.





Who we serve

To further its mission to promote, coordinate, and support a lifetime of enjoyment and excellence in recreational and competitive cross country skiing for all Northerners, CCNWT serves a number of stakeholders including community ski program leaders, teachers, recreation leaders, coaches, officials, clubs, and recreational and competitive skiers.

The Ski North Program, initiated by the NWT Recreation and Parks Association on behalf of CCNWT, has been responsible for outreach conducted in NWT communities to establish ski programs through schools or recreation departments.

CCNWT makes sure club programs and coach training align with Cross Country Canada in order to deliver quality programs and services to recreational skiers, athletes, coaches and officials. The organization also works in cooperation with Sport North, the umbrella organization for all Territorial Sport Organizations.





Our current environment

An important consideration when developing the CCNWT Strategic Plan was to take into account the environment in which it operates. Similar to other not-for-profit sport organizations operating in the North, the organization relies almost exclusively on volunteer contributions to support the sustainability of cross country skiing. Conversations with stakeholders contributed to the collective understanding of the key factors affecting cross country skiing in the NWT such as climate, geography and volunteer engagement. The vast landscape of the NWT is both a challenge and an asset. While the ski season is one of the longest in Canada, the long distances between communities and the cost to travel to fly-in communities is expensive. It is clear that the organization will need to be open to doing business differently. The following insights were taken into account when considering the future of Cross Country NWT:

- There is confusion between the roles of CCNWT (formerly NWT Ski Division) and the Ski North program.
- Improving communications is a central area to focus on to address the lack of engagement and to increase awareness of the organization and who the organization serves.
- Stakeholders wish to build and strengthen NWT communities through the sport of cross country skiing.
- There is a need to pro-actively deal with the lack of volunteers including coaches, board of directors, officials and groomers.



- The absence of a full-time paid coach is negatively impacting all youth programming, including the high performance opportunities for athletes and the support provided to volunteer coaches.
- Coordination between community partners (schools, clubs, recreation centres) and the territorial sport organization (TSO) is lacking.
- CCNWT needs to leverage what makes cross country skiing in the North distinct and unique, including the northern climate, a sense of community across the Territory, the NWT's historic Territorial Experimental Ski Training (TEST) program, connection to Indigenous communities, the availability of ski equipment and skiing's ability to instill pride of belonging.
- There is an opportunity to provide services to athletes with a disability.
- There is an opportunity to coordinate our efforts with other sports to create a Centre of Excellence.
- Increased and broader fundraising is needed.
- There is a need to get the CCNWT house in order by making sure it has a solid structure in place, its governance model supports the achievement of its mission, and its bylaws are reviewed to ensure minimum compliance with legal standards.
- The Ski North Program could be taken over fully by CCNWT to allow for more visibility and credibility.



Mission, Vision, Values

VISION

One strong, inclusive and united Northern skiing community.

MISSION

Cross Country NWT promotes, coordinates, and supports a lifetime of enjoyment and excellence in recreational and competitive cross country skiing for all Northerners.

VALUES

Our values reflect our desire to build stronger communities through our sport.

- **Pride of Belonging:** We celebrate the unique northern skiing experience and recognize all champions past, present and future.
- **Culture of Excellence:** We are committed to fostering a culture of excellence so that participants enjoy a quality skiing experience for life.
- **Together, We're Better:** We engage and connect communities by supporting and encouraging people of all ages and abilities to participate and compete in cross country skiing.
- **Embrace Winter:** We foster a rewarding and enjoyable environment for people to participate.



Goals and Objectives to 2020

CCNWT stakeholders came together over various timeframes during the strategic planning process to determine what the organization will focus on over the next four years to achieve its vision and fulfill its mission to 2020. The following goals and objectives reflect what the Northwest Territories skiing community strongly believes is required for success, providing a clear direction of where the organization is headed over the next four years.



Goal 1: Active Communications

Objectives

- 1.1 Ensure CCNWT remains the information hub for cross country skiing.
- 1.2 Increase the awareness and understanding of CCNWT's role and responsibilities.
- 1.3 Maintain one brand to communicate who we are.
- 1.4 Strengthen our connections with Indigenous communities.
- 1.5 Promote local, territorial, national and international ski events.
- 1.6 Ensure our online presence reflects our history and legacy.

Goal 2: Stronger Partnerships

Objectives

- 2.1 Develop and maintain a skills development network to benefit all NWT communities.
- 2.2 Increase the number of ski officials.
- 2.3 Pursue partnerships with other sport organizations.
- 2.4 Develop and implement a trails strategy.



Goal 3: Improve Technical Leadership

Objectives

- 3.1 Support the development of community coaching.
- 3.2 Establish a Territorial Head Coach position to support the development of the High Performance Program.
- 3.3 Ensure succession planning for coaches at all levels, including national level for Canada Winter Games.
- 3.4 Encourage and support succession planning for leaders and volunteers in the ski community.

Goal 4: Increase Capacity

Objectives

- 4.1 Update and maintain our governing policies.
- 4.2 Update by-laws to meet legal expectations and established standards.
- 4.3 Ensure the annual budget reflects the vision and goals of the Strategic Plan.
- 4.4 Develop and implement a fundraising and sponsorship strategy.
- 4.5 Encourage and support new and existing ski clubs.
- 4.6 Monitor and evaluate the implementation of the Strategic Plan.

Monitoring our Progress

CCNWT will focus on monitoring and measuring progress in the following five key areas, as we believe these are the most important milestones to achieve to 2020. These key areas are:

Communications

We have defined our brand and our stakeholders understand who we are and what we do through active promotional programs.

Financial Stability

We have diversified our revenues and have the resources required to hire a full-time head coach and an executive director.

Participation

We have increased our participation in both recreational and competitive programs and have active clubs across the Territory.

Performance

We have sent full teams that are competitive in results to Nationals, the 2018 Arctic Winter Games and 2019 Canada Winter Games.

Governance

We have ensured that the organization has the structure it needs to meet legal expectations, and develop community ski leadership to support future growth.



Conclusion and Acknowledgements

We are most grateful to our stakeholders for playing an important role in the development of the CCNWT Strategic Plan to 2020.

While many people consider cross country skiing an individual sport, it requires teamwork. As the athletes support each other, so do the volunteers. Club members cut and clear trails, groomers set tracks, Board members guide their club operations and officials put on races, all to support both recreational and competitive skiers. We collectively set the trail to determine the future direction of CCNWT to serve skiing enthusiasts of the NWT.

CCNWT heartily thanks our funders and partners in programming:

- Municipal and Community Affairs , Government of the Northwest Territories, for its financial support through the Territorial Sport Organization (TSO) Support Program.
- Sport North Federation for its financial support and continued dedication to providing games opportunities to our athletes.
- NWT Recreation and Parks Association for its significant role with the Ski North Program since 2004, including supervision, provision of office space, accounting services and so much more.

CCNWT heartily thanks the Strategic Planning Workshop participants:

- | | |
|------------------|---------------------|
| • Mike Argue | • Angela Littlefair |
| • Susie Boake | • Greg Reardon |
| • Alex Bond | • Kevin Smith |
| • Richard Daitch | • John Stephenson |
| • Thomsen D'Hont | • John Stortz |
| • Sharon Firth | • Sheena Tremblay |
| • Karen Johnson | • Pierre LaFontaine |
| • Chris Joseph | |
| • Shawne Kokelj | |

Photo credits to:

Peter Curran, Shawne Kokelj, Karen Johnson, Lynn Hanthorn, Jess Dunkin, Mindy Willett

great slave graphics



FINISH

Aber
HUMPHREYS LTD.

ROYAL
CANADIAN
MOUNTAIN
RESEARCH



