

2015 DRXC Survey

Detailed Results

78 people participated.

Section A) Who are they?

1. Age: <18 8%, 18-29 5%, 30-54 38%, 55-70 36%, >70 13%. Mostly older people, and very few young people.
2. Years skiing: 1-2 12%, 3-5 12%, 6-10 9%, >10 67%. Mostly people who have skied for quite a few years.
3. Preferred style of skiing: classic 69%, skating 1%, both 30%. Most like classic only, and very few skating only.
4. Preferred type of trail: machine groomed 71%, ungroomed 3%, some of both 26%. Most like machine groomed trails and very few prefer only ungroomed.
5. Days of skiing per week: <1 7%, 1 23%, 2 26%, 3+ 44%. Most ski 1-3 days per week.
6. Ski distance: don't log 50%, <100 9%, 100-199 5%, 200-500 21%, >500 15%. Most are recreational skiers, but there are some avid skiers.
7. Days of week: Weekends 36%, weekdays 1%, any day 62%.
8. Other trails: about 35% use other trails in a given season, with reasonably even distribution among the nearby trail systems.

The typical survey participant is an older person who has skied many years, and prefers to use classic technique on a machine groomed trail. They ski 1 to 3 days per week, more often on the weekend, and likely ski on average a few hundred kilometers per season. About a third regularly ski on other trail systems.

Section B) What is their experience with the DRXC and the Silver Spoon trails?

9. Members: yes 91%, No 8%, No but make donation 1%.
10. Welcoming place: yes 96%, no 4%.
11. Suggested improvements:
 - a. Welcoming means manned. Maps, etc. Fees collected. It is very welcoming to residents who know how it operates.
 - b. Needs better wash room.
 - c. Signage outside of club house with info on payment, trails, weather etc. Signage on trails. It is a bit ambiguous for the newcomer, especially D Trail map.
12. Days per week using the SS trails: <1 12%, 1 28%, 2 25%, 3+ 36%.
13. SS trails that you ski most often (70 of 78 respondents reported on this):
 - a. Top priority (the frequency with which a given trail was ranked first): M 42%, R 29%, D 9%
 - b. Top 4 priority (the frequency with which a given trail appeared among the top 4 trails): M 75%, R 68%, X 61%, D 41%, C 39%, S 32%
14. SS trails never used or infrequently used (34 of 78 respondents reported on this): P 41%, H 38%, B 29%, K 26%, C 21%, S 18%, M extension 18%, F 15%.
15. Are the trails adequately groomed: Yes 65%, No 35%.
16. Suggestions for improving the grooming (the 25 detailed responses received are listed verbatim in Appendix 1): of the 25 suggestions, 14 related to grooming more often, 4 were about smoothing or widening the trails, 2 were about certain trails being groomed more. Other suggestions include: double tracking R, making deeper tracks, and including the planned grooming in the blog.
17. If limited grooming, priority of grooming (53 of 78 respondents reported on this):
 - a. Top priority: M 53%, R 32%, D 11%
 - b. Top 4 priority: M 79%, R 62%, X 51%, D 43%, S 28%, C 23%

18. For ski-skaters, priority for grooming:
- a. Top priority: M 100%
 - b. Top 4 priority: M 100%, S 53%, H 53%, B37%, K 26%

Section C) Which potential DRXC functions are important (Question 19)

Function	Important	Less Important	Not Important
More racing opportunities	4%	38%	58%
Widening existing trails	21%	34%	45%
Levelling/smoothing trails	42%	31%	27%
Outdoor picnic tables	9%	49%	42%
Family or group ski events	33%	32%	35%
Off-snow social events	7%	42%	51%

20. Suggested additional functions (the 11 detailed responses received are listed in Appendix 2): a) night skiing (2), b) more lessons for new skiers (2), c) skijoring, d) introduce new skiers to non-groomed trails, e) add picnic shelter, f) orienteering, g) double tracks for social skiing..

Section D) Final thoughts and input

21. Suggested changes to the DRXC and the SS trails (the 36 detailed responses received are listed in Appendix 3).

Summary below, with comment number in Appendix 3 shown in brackets.

- Grooming changes:
 - more frequent grooming (7,8,13,14,16,21,27,29,31,36)
 - regular/frequent grooming of K (25)
 - improve grooming (8,21)
 - recruit additional groomers (10)
 - smooth/widen trails (3,13,14,26)
 - groom trail from hospital parking lot to R (17)
 - double tracks on R (and X, C) (20,23,33)
 - widen D (5)
- improve communication about grooming (7,15,28)
- improve signage:
 - trail signs (1,17)
 - clarify snow shoe trails (6)
 - better signage for no dogs or walking on ski trails (8,24)
- Include trail distances on the DRXC website (35)
- chalet open longer (e.g., 7:00 AM) (15,19)
- picnic table (e.g., at Top) (4)
- upgrade washroom (5)
- chalet gatherings (6)
- responsible dog use (9)
- parking lot across from chalet (11)
- expand children's playground near chalet (11)
- Attract more young people (12)
- DRXC donation box on outside wall of Chalet (21)
- keep membership rates low, and offer special rates for retired couples (32)
- Vending machines in chalet with chestnuts for roasting (34)
- arrange for longer winter season (18)

22. What would entice former members to rejoin: a) Better grooming of trails and better signage, b) Improve trails and grooming. "I would be willing to pay more for the membership fee for this."
23. Comments passed on directly to the executive: Paper forms submitted directly to the executive were submitted electronically, and are included in the above reported data.

Appendix 1. Q16: Suggestions for improved grooming.

1. I like to see a classic track on all the downhills. I believe there was a policy not to do this last year, but they seemed to be well groomed this year.
2. The long H and B were usually not groomed. I would have used them if they were groomed; however, because they were not for most of the season, I stuck to the MH(short H)S trails.
3. not always though
4. More grooming more often find out what other clubs are grooming. Find reasons to groom!
5. But, track is always very shallow and was particularly noticeable for Silver Spoon race even though there was lots of snow
6. When groomed, trails are generally good. But would like trails groomed more often, especially skating trails where new snow, ruts, etc. can build up and make it hard to ski.
7. I think grooming could be improved in the early season if the trail smoothing is continued.
8. The main limitation to grooming is the roughness of the trails, especially the skate loops. This is probably too big a project for the present membership and demographic. There are very few skate skiers and I have canvassed many of them personally, with consistent refusals to help. In addition, the skate trails have been allowed to grow in seriously for decades so the project is even larger than it ought to be.
9. more often clear the tails during off season so the groomer can get through
10. Groom after a snowfall. Only some trails are groomed.
11. In general, groom more often. It would be great if "little M" was groomed for skating early in the season. Grooming M and the 1 km SH shortly after every snowfall of >8 cm would allow the high school team to train, and make the trails more enjoyable for the younger crowd that likes to skate. Grooming the "old D" (2.1 km) for classic early in the season, and after every snowfall of >8 cm would be very desirable.
12. The first grooming is often delayed because of insufficient snow cover. It would help to level out the trails.
13. Should be done not less than twice a week.
14. Groom more often.
15. More frequent grooming of at least some of the more frequently skied trails, especially for skate skiing. More frequent blog updates, with predicted grooming for next 1 to 2 days.
16. I often find that trails are not groomed following a snow fall. This makes it very difficult for the younger members of my family.
17. It sounds like the trails should be cleared to a more precise degree and, widened to allow a bigger, faster groomer that doesn't break down. Hire a groomer. I'd gladly pay more membership for a guaranteed, groomed and tracked trail.
18. Years ago 'R' was groomed as a "social" loop with two tracks beside each other. I often used them to go with friends and I really miss that!
19. Groom at least twice/week
20. answer is actually sometimes, or most time, not always, skate skiers wipe them out..
21. Groom more often.
22. While recognizing a lack of snow early in 2015, subsequent falls didn't seem to elicit as quick a response as they might have done. I'd really like to see the D hill closest to the Chalet groomed. It is substantially used, unlike the more westerly hill superseded by the Cooper property.
23. I think that you need a "Sometimes" option here.
24. Do it more often
25. H was only fully groomed very late in the season and similarly parts of D were often ignored. Neither of these would add much extra time if the groomer is out there anyway.

Suggested improvements summary (out of 25)

- More often = 14/25 (2,4,6,9,10,11,13,14,15,16,17,19,21,24)
- smooth/widen trails (off season) = 4/25
- groom more trails = 2/25
- make tracks deeper = 1
- double tracks on R = 1/25
- blog improvements = 1 (more often and advanced planning)

Appendix 2. Q20: Suggestions for potential functions or activities.

1. Make night skiing more popular advertised. Have "cosmic chalet" ski night event. Days are so short. Working stiffs can't get out till dark. It can be lonely out there. But it's beautiful
2. Skijor session on a piece of trail somewhere to let people try it out. I was thinking post-Silverspoon perhaps the golf-course and DRXC would allow unlimited dog use on the golf club trails perhaps just the for the day after the racing?
3. There probably is a need to introduce or encourage new skiers to ski on non-groomed trails. This will open up the forestry, Bass Lake & P trails to other people.
4. Add another picnic shelter somewhere on the trail system.
5. D should be widened - in some conditions it is quite hazardous being so close to the trees
6. orienteering days
7. Liked the introductory ski lessons. Refreshers and getting ready for ski season warm up lessons / exercises would be great , too. For functions, & news send out emails to all registered members, not just one per household. (unless directed otherwise)
8. More encouragement and engagement of new skiers, especially skiers under the age of 35. Perhaps in addition to the 2 lessons offered per year, several "novice skier" group skis could be arranged.
9. Grooming of 'R' as 'social' loop where friends can enjoy a slow ski while talking to each other. I know quite a few people who have not come out for the past few winters, but likely would again, if this was offered again.
10. More lessons for adults. Not for me - I just hear a lot of people asking about lessons. Or maybe a designated day and time (Sunday late afternoon?) for guided tours of the trails for beginners. Experienced DRXC skiers would volunteer as guides.
11. Ooh, I love the idea of moonlight skis!

Appendix 3. Q21: Suggest one or two changes to improve the DRXC or the SS trails.

1. Better signs on the trails
2. The competence of skiers who use MSHB is very poor and descending. It is almost useless to set a track on the hills, where it is most essential, because most skiers now snowplow and destroy sections of the track. In addition, the "skate" snow is left in irregular ridges that are hazardous to descend at speed and these ridges freeze in place overnight. These people are no doubt seeking variety in their outings, which is perfectly understandable. With our climate and low snowfall, it is a fantasy to think that "more grooming" can fix these issues. I have no solution.
3. Continue to smoothen trails so they can be groomed without worrying about inadequate snow cover or water. Make sure that skating trails are brushed to an agreed width. Some tend to grow narrower over time.
4. I'd like to see either a picnic table or a large bench at the Top (SHB junction).
5. upgrade washroom; widen D before there is a significant accident
6. Really like the Chalet gatherings.... hope they grow in popularity and attendance. Snowshoe trails sometimes confusing.... found ourselves walking/ crossing ski trails, trying to find pick up point for continuing on snowshoe trail.
7. More frequent grooming and communications about grooming.
8. Better (i.e. more and larger) signage for No Dogs and No Walking on Ski Trails 2. Better and more frequent grooming - I don't mind paying a bit more, but I expect it to be done.

9. I know it's difficult, but I'm sure there's a way to develop a means for responsible dog use on the trails. Allowing dogs on any trail any time is not acceptable, but some trails and certain conditions (i.e., the dog is not punching through the trail or leaving poop) should be ok.
10. Proactively try to secure new volunteer groomers
11. A parking lot across from the chalet? Expand the kids' ski playground behind the chalet (would need careful design).
12. Need to figure out a way to bring more 'younger' people into X-C skiing so as to provide a future for the club.
13. Grooming more often. Widening and levelling trails so this can happen.
14. More grooming. Do what ever it takes in the off season to prepare the trails so the groomer can do it's job. If it means widening the trails then widen the trails. Keep the P so you can always have the ungroomed experience. For those of us who like the groomed trails please improve those trails so they can be groomed - do it. If this means an increase in fees go ahead because right now I don't feel my membership fees are doing much.
15. Ensuring the chalet is open early in the morning (7:00). This would allow for early morning ski trips with the ability to change/warm up. Better communication in regards to trail conditions/grooming.
16. More frequent grooming.
17. I'd like it if you groomed the trail from the hospital parking lot to the opening of the "R" trail. I also think that the maps are a bit confusing (though they're better now that someone put the "you are here" dot on them). ***I took friends snowshoeing and we tried to get to the bird observatory... and we got lost. That was the third time I got lost going there... there's a weird fork in the trail that isn't well marked.
18. Longer winter season for skiing.
19. have the chalet open more often.
20. I recall R having 2 side-by-side set tracks, this was nice, and I would love to be able to ski alongside my son.
21. More grooming, and subtle improvements to the actual grooming. For example, the sharp corners on the M extension should not have tracks, as they make step turns through these corners awkward. 2. There should be a DRXC guest fee donation box with a suggested donation. As someone who skies regularly at other venues, I know that other clubs do this. I'm happy to contribute at other venues as I know that grooming and maintaining trails costs money. Why not do the same at the DRXC
22. No changes. just hope that the current level of grooming (especially track setting) can be maintained
23. Grooming of 'R' as 'social' loop where friends can enjoy a slow ski while talking to each other. I know quite a few people who have not come out for the past few winters, but likely would again, if this was offered again.
24. Much bigger signage to keep dogs, walkers and snowshoers off the groomed trails.
25. regular (frequent) grooming of K
26. Tree cover and number of rocks and roots
27. More grooming
28. Make it easy to see the trail condition /when it was last groomed
29. From comments that I've heard, it sounds like we've been somewhat deficient in grooming this past winter. Otherwise, I'm pretty happy and am looking forward to having more time on the trails next season. Thanks!
30. The only thing I would change is my inability to ski :-).
31. Most things are very good. More frequent grooming would be great, but probably not affordable.
32. Keep membership rates low -- offer special rates for retired couples
33. If we had the resources, it would be nice to have multiple tracks on RXC which can get crowded on weekends
34. Put some vending machines in the chalet for snacks and hot drinks. Have a chestnut dispenser so you can roast some up on the stove. mmmm
35. Would it be possible to include the distances for each trail on the DRXC web site?
36. My only feedback would be to groom more often. When in doubt, groom.