

Newsletter



**The Season That
(Almost) Wasn't**

Trails Cleared

A hard-working crew of volunteers donned gloves and put snippers and weed-whackers to work clearing trails to get ready for the season. Thank you all for spending a Saturday for the greater good!

New Trail News

We are working to get permission from the USFS to create a snowshoe trail at Meacham Divide for next season. Stay tuned!



Have Nordic gear to sell?

Have something that you want to lend out or borrow? We have the solution for you! Check out our webpage (<http://onc.org/bmnc/>) and scroll down to the links for the "Lending Library" and "Equipment for Sale" spreadsheets. You can post information there, too, and you'll find contact info for lenders and sellers as well.

It was predicted to be an "El Niño" year, and that turned out to be true. The snow fell, then melted, then fell, then melted. You get the picture! We only groomed three times, to the disappointment of all. Suitable snow conditions (about 12") are needed for the first grooming of winter, and we did not receive that amount until the end of the first week in January. By late January, it rained instead of snowed, and the two feet of snow was reduced to very little in spots when we quit grooming for the winter. We didn't spend down our funds for grooming like we usually do, so we are in good financial shape this season. Let's hope the La Nina winter arrives!

Youth Ski Program

We are starting our third season of our youth skiing program, and it's going strong. A generous donation from a BMNC member helped us to purchase nordic ski gear last year and provide it for students who needed gear, free of charge. Additionally, equipment was donated by members, which we very much appreciate. The group met twice on Wednesday afternoons at Meacham Divide (skiing with headlamps!) and several Saturdays at Anthony Lakes, where conditions were better.

Twenty-three young skiers, with a range of abilities, learned and practiced classic skiing techniques, enjoyed fun in the snow, and participated in a race at the end of the season. After the race, everyone enjoyed a potluck meal in the new Nordic yurt at Anthony Lakes.

The cost of lessons from our club is just \$20 for 8 classes at Meacham Divide. Proceeds will go to BMNC to offset costs for volunteer instructors and to organize another race and BBQ at Meacham Divide at the end of the season.

To register, volunteer, borrow ski packages, or ask questions, please contact BMNC Youth Ski Coordinator Andy Baltensperger (abaltensperger@eou.edu; 907-347-0175). We also have a lending library for our young skiers, so check out what's there by [clicking on this link](#) and/or contacting Andy.


Adult Ski Lessons

Andy Baltensperger will once again offer free skate and classic lessons in 2025. Watch your email inbox for information about this excellent opportunity to improve your skills.



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After last season's non-season, we hope to be back in business and need several grooming helpers. If you would like to help groom this season and haven't already let us know, please contact Bruce Johnson at (803) 729-7352. He'll be organizing a training day (or two) for those interested as soon as snow conditions are right. During the summer, our grooming equipment underwent routine maintenance, and we're ready for the snow to fall!

Remember: 100% of donations and member dues go towards keeping the Meacham Divide Nordic ski area open and supporting our youth skiing program. We hope to groom every time that it snows this year.....if we have the funds. Please spread the word about our club, and forward this newsletter to any skiers that you know. Thank you for your support!

Our membership form is attached, or you can download it from our website (<http://onc.org/bmnc/>). PLUS - we now have a secure way that you can join with a credit or debit card. Information about that will be sent by email. And don't forget, we maintain TWO Facebook pages: Blue Mountain Nordic Club (for club news) and the Northeast Oregon Nordic Snow and Road Reports (for regional information about ski and travel conditions in Union, Baker, Wallowa, and Umatilla counties).



Sno-Park permits are required at the parking lot at Meacham Divide Nordic Ski Area. The Oregon Department of Transportation provides funds from the Sno-Park permits to keep the road and parking lot cleared. Mark Hodgson and Sons, Inc. has provided the equipment and skilled drivers needed to plow the road and parking lot since the trails were developed 20 years ago. Remember to check out the club website (<https://onc.org/bmnc/>) once the snow starts falling for current road and trail conditions at Meacham.

For our snowshoeing friends: When possible, diagonal ski tracks will only be set on one side of the trails at Meacham Divide, leaving the middle area for skaters and the other side for snowshoeing. No walkers/runners/sled-haulers/bikers on the trails, please!

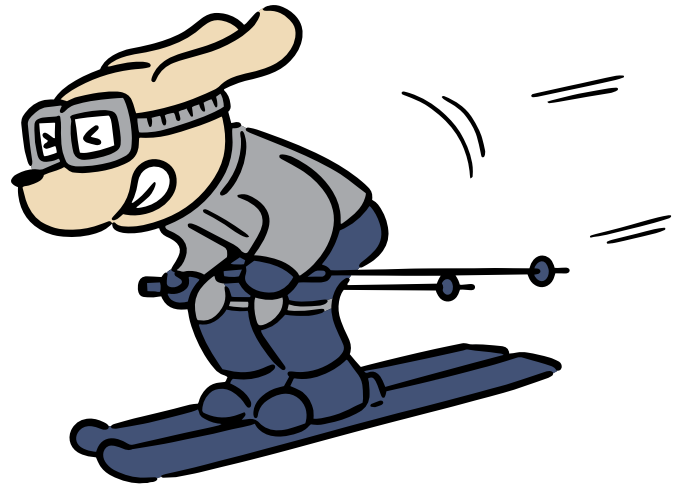


CONDITIONS: Check the BMNC website at <http://onc.org/bmnc/> for current snow and road conditions of the FS Road 31 into the ski parking lot and ODOT's TRIPCHECK (<https://www.tripcheck.com>) for I-84 road conditions. If you are a current member you will receive email updates about trail and road conditions. Be sure to check your spam folder if you don't hear from us after you become a member. AND we won't share your email address with anyone.

Meacham Divide Nordic Ski Area is located 1.7 miles northeast of Interstate 84 on Forest Service Road 31 (Mount Emily, Exit 243) between Pendleton and La Grande in the Blue Mountains. The Blue Mountain Nordic Club (BMNC) offers 18 kilometers (about 10 miles) of groomed ski trails at Meacham, with varying levels of difficulty. At 4,100 feet in elevation and with expansive views of the 1,400-foot deep Meacham Canyon and Spout Springs Ridgeline, Meacham Divide offers great skiing - both classic and freestyle - and snowshoeing for all ages and abilities. There's no better ski area when conditions are good in the Blue Mountains!

Dogs on Trails

Dogs are allowed on all trails below Moose Huff Hill (Lower Loppet, Kansas, I Scream, Roller Coaster, Whitman Whip and Pendleton Plunge), providing a diverse set of trail conditions to enjoy with your canine friends. However, all trails above Moose Huff Hill have a "no dog" policy. These conditions arose from a landowner request on our outer loop trails, and the fact that many of our members would like to ski (and skate) in a dog-free zone. (For skate skiing in particular, dog tracks can ruin a carefully groomed trail). If you encounter skiers with dogs above Moose Huff, please politely inform them about the rules; there are plenty of trails available for canids lower down!



Your membership pays for our Oregon Nordic Club affiliation, which provides liability insurance for our ski area and the groomer and hosts the website. We would not exist without it! Additionally, your dues enable us to plan ahead for grooming opportunities. We have many other expenses beyond insurance, such as a La Grande P.O. box, property taxes and insurance on the pole barn where the grooming machine and club supplies are stored, stamps for our newsletter, and fuel and parts for the groomer.

Our "pay as you go" dropbox (suggested donation of \$7 per day) at Meacham Divide is useful for many, but if you want to see this club continue to thrive, please consider becoming a member. We run our club solely on volunteer time, including the many hours spent grooming trails, so all funds go into keeping the ski area in business.

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