



## ***MEDIA RELEASE***

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### ***Caledonia Nordic Ski Club is Building for 2005 and Beyond***

With less than six months to go until the start of the 2005 Cross Country Nationals in Prince George, the Caledonia Nordic Ski Club is wasting no time to make sure the site is race ready. Caledonia Nordic Ski Club President Tim Roots says work has already begun to upgrade the trails, spectator area and clubhouse. "We are building a national caliber cross-country ski and biathlon centre that will provide a lasting benefit to this community.

The project calls for upgraded trails and a lodge with timing facilities, rental shop, kitchen and concession, washrooms and change room, meeting hall, and an upgraded biathlon shooting area with targets. Roots says with the improvements, the ski club's facilities and trail system will be at a quality where the club can be a full participant in the provincial GamePlan Performance Centre for Cross Country Ski and Biathlon, building its competitive hosting capacity significantly.

The benefits of upgrading the Otway site extend far beyond the 2005 Nationals, says Roots. "Prince George will be well positioned as a training centre in BC and Canada and can attract national competitions and training events leading up to the 2010 Winter Olympics."

Caledonia Nordic Ski Club is working with a number of community and funding partners to make this \$370,000 project a reality. \$185,000 has been provided through Western Economic Diversification's SICEAI program (Softwood Industry Community Economic Adjustment Initiative). Don Zurowski, General Manager of Community Futures Development Corporation of Fraser Fort George, delivery agent for SICEAI program states "this initiative is going to provide opportunities for increased tourism through hosting tournaments and training camps. It also means local athletes can stay in the north, pursue post-secondary education and with further developments planned with the Northern Sport Centre and GamePlan, they can receive high caliber coaching."

\$70,000 was donated by the four Prince George Rotary Clubs. "Rotary has a proud reputation of supporting worthwhile community projects, and we are proud to be associated with the Caledonia Nordic Ski Club," says Gerry Knechtel of the Prince George Rotary Club.

The City of Prince contributed \$20,000. "With expanded Nordic facilities in Prince George, our community can continue to grow its reputation as an excellent host community for high profile Nordic championships. Prince George can also position itself to take advantage of other sport hosting and training opportunities that the 2010 Olympics may bring. This is a big step towards positioning Prince George to become the centre for cross country and biathlon training in BC, and as a major player on the national level," says Prince George Mayor Colin Kinsley, who also chairs the SICEAI Ministerial Advisory Group.

The Caledonia Nordic Ski Club is hosting the 2005 Canadian Cross Country Championships February 27 – March 6. In April of 2004, Prince George was named the provincial Game Plan Performance Centre for Cross Country and Biathlon. An agreement in principle to support the GamePlan designation was signed by numerous stakeholders including Cross Country BC and Biathlon BC.

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