Sovereign Lake Nordic Club
2024-28 Strategic Plan – Mid-Term Update

Revision: October 29, 2025

1. 2025 MID-TERM UPDATE

The Board conducted a review of the strategic plan two years into its implementation. While there are many accomplishments so far under the plan, it was concluded that there were two challenges that needed to be addressed: (1) the number of committees and scope of work described in the plan exceeded committee member resources available, and (2) the breadth and scope of activities placed undue burden on the General Manager. For this reason, the Board is focussing on a subset of the original strategic objectives. Effort on the original thirteen priorities will be concentrated on seven "High Focus Priorities", as described below. The remaining status and plans for the six "Secondary Strategic Objectives" are described in Appendix A.

2. BACKGROUND

Sovereign Lake Nordic Club (SLNC, or Club) is one of the largest Nordic ski clubs in North America. Like most clubs, operating conditions have evolved significantly over the past 5 years. SLNC's 2024-28 strategic plan reflected feedback obtained from a member survey and in-person focus groups and board experience. This update to members on the strategic plan reflects progress made over the past two years and redoubles the focus of resources on the growth, objectives, and anticipated needs of the Club for the next three years.

SLNC operates under certain fundamental principles and beliefs, or values, that serve as implicit criteria guiding all actions and decision-making. The Club is community-driven, collaborative, inclusive, accountable, and promotes accessibility, affordability, wellness, and regional benefit. Information on the Club's values can be found on the SLNC website (www.sovereignlake.com).

SLNC enjoyed a strong and steady count of about 1,700 annual memberships between 2014 and 2018. Thereafter, membership leapt to 3,200 during COVID but has since dropped to about 2,000. The Club has seen approximately 50,000 visits per season over the past three years, with high snow months seeing about 400 visits per day, representing significant demand on resources and infrastructure. In parallel, SLNC pursued significant growth in its program offerings to provide a wide variety of opportunities to all members. Total (youth and adult) seasonal program registrations grew from 137 in 2013-14 to 430 in 2023-24, driving further demand for staff, coaches, volunteers, and facilities.

3. VISION STATEMENT

A world-class centre for Nordic sport and recreation.

4. MISSION STATEMENT

In cooperation with BC Parks, we provide outstanding Nordic experiences that are inclusive and accessible, in an environmentally responsible manner.

5. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES

SLNC's strategic priorities span from the user experience to the importance of internal operations, and involve both short and long timeframes. Our strategic objectives fall into the following three categories and are supported by seven priorities.

1. Improve club infrastructure (lodge renewal),
2. Strengthen operations (Programs, financial stability, fundraising, volunteerism, event planning), and
3. Optimize third-party relationships (BC Parks, sponsors and partners, community, indigenous groups, etc.).

The High Focus Priorities are described below, while the status and plans for the Secondary Strategic Objectives are described in Appendix A.

5.1. Infrastructure

SLNC maintains significant physical infrastructure that is required to support operations. Machinery, equipment and facilities need to be maintained, replaced and even upgraded over time to keep up with the growing needs of the Club and members. On-site physical infrastructure includes the day lodge, tech building, maintenance shed, old lodge, biathlon hut, race office and other ancillary buildings and is supported by roads and parking lots, as well as electrical, water, and sewage infrastructure.

As a matter of priority, and recognizing the importance to the community and significant effort involved, the overarching infrastructure priority is:

Priority #1: Renovate or replace the existing lodge to ensure it meets the needs of all members and visitors to SLNC by 2027.

At the time of writing nearly $1 million has been raised towards executing this priority. The project timeline has been extended by a year as fund raising is taking longer than originally anticipated.

5.2. Programming Excellence

A priority of the SLNC Board has been to grow recreational and competitive Nordic programming since 2022. To meet the challenges of the expanded Programs offerings, the Club's overarching priority in this area is to:

Priority #2: Advance a range of Programs that encourage children, youth and adults to increase their skills and enjoy outdoor recreation for life. This entails the following:

- Restructure Program committee membership to enhance engagement and planning between coaches, volunteers, parents, and athletes.
- Enhance the stability and quality of Programs, and pursue enrolment growth.
- Advance programming through coach and volunteer development and enhanced program infrastructure.
- Measure the quality of programming through annual surveys and modify Program offerings to meet the needs of members while ensuring the successful long-term growth of the Club.

5.3. Enhanced Financial Positioning

The Club will ensure careful budget monitoring to ensure that it meets its financial goals and maintains an appropriate reserve for contingencies to ensure long-term viability, while retaining a balance between affordability and the needs of the membership. In addition to annual budgeting and related controls, the Club will:

Priority #3: Implement a 3-year financial planning cycle to identify and fulfill longer term capital, operational, and programming financial needs.

The Club envisions a greater and more structured role for fundraising to allow the Club to grow. The Club will:

Priority #4: Establish fundraising priorities and centrally coordinate fundraising activities for annual and long-term strategic needs.

5.4. Volunteers

Volunteers perform critical roles at SLNC. Volunteers are involved in every aspect of the club's operations, from board members, program coaches, events, charity initiatives, and site maintenance.

Priority #5: Establish a volunteers committee and a formal volunteer recruitment, retention, and reward program.

5.5. Events

SLNC will host events at a variety of levels that provide opportunities for the SLNC membership to participate or compete, have a positive experience, provide revenue/financial gain, while raising the profile of SLNC. Events will span high profile races, local and participant-oriented races and activities (skiing, biathlon, snowshoeing, skijoring, etc.) aimed at engaging community, and other social events.

Priority #6: Establish a multi-year plan for anticipated Provincial, National and International events. This entails the following:

- Maintain a current officials database, and grow the skillset of officials and key volunteers as necessary to ensure officials succession for future competition hosting.
- Ensure critical officials' positions (e.g., Chief of Race, Chief of Competition and Chief of Timing) are in place prior to setting of the schedule.
- Ensure events are planned in a cost-positive way, unless otherwise approved by the Board.

5.6. Partner, Stakeholder, and Indigenous Consultation

The Club can benefit from interfaces with a multitude of external organizations, such as government organizations (e.g., BC Parks, City of Vernon), sponsors, partners, sports organizations (e.g., Nordiq Canada, local ski clubs, local event organizers), commercially-oriented organizations (Chamber of Commerce, Silver Star Mountain, Destination Silver Star), First Nations, and community groups (school programs, Spirit North). To enhance these benefits, the Club will:

Priority #7: Establish a committee that formalizes collaborative strategic partnerships with organizations and companies for the net benefit of members and SLNC.

6. IMPLEMENTATION

The Board of Directors will assign responsibility to committees (or smaller task forces for shorter-term needs) to advance each of the strategic priorities. Each committee/task force shall include a member of the Board of Directors and shall prepare a Terms of Reference and its own strategic plan detailing the tasks to be undertaken by the committee/task force in the upcoming operating year. The most recent Terms of Reference, committee/task force strategic plans, and progress reports will be available on the SLNC website (www.sovereignlake.com).

APPENDIX A – SECONDARY STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

This appendix lists the former priorities that are not presently considered "High Focus Priorities". In some cases the priority has been achieved, whereas in others a temporary pause is warranted before the work can continue. In one case the priority has been folded into another highly-related priority.

A.1 Former Priority #2 (Status: Sequenced for follow up after Lodge Legacy Project completion)

Develop a paved multi-use trail to support the off-season needs of ski programs and to expand park accessibility to the community.

Considerable effort was put into reviewing the route options and implications of opening a paved trail loop at SLNC. A detailed plan was developed that captured the various benefits and implications arising from a paved trail system. This plan was intended to be a starting point to describe context and opportunity, and develop a roadmap with BC Parks towards its development. At present there are three factors that impede advancement of the building the paved trail: (1) BC Parks' focus at Sovereign Lake is on the lodge renewal project (which is also the Club's highest priority), (2) BC Parks' has indicated that they are not keen on having such a trail system installed, and (3) club fundraising is presently focused on lodge renewal, and launching a parallel fundraising campaign for a paved trail would be challenging. For these reasons, this strategic priority has been parked and will be restarted once the lodge renewal project is complete.

A.2 Former Priority #3 (Status: Captured under High Focus Priority #3)

Purchase a new (or near-new) trail groomer by 2028.

The recent focus of the financial committee has been on developing a detailed financial business model to allow statistical analysis of the impact of certain decisions on the club's bottom line. This has been critically important in the ability to return the operating surplus towards long term sustaining levels. In addition, the committee has successfully moved to using a more modern accounting software package; this change improves efficiency and analytical capability. These actions provide much more comprehensive, accurate, and detailed budgeting, reporting, and analysis capabilities than in the past

As described in High Focus Priority #3, the finance committee is developing a 3-year planning cycle that will include long-term planning for capital needs. This, by definition, includes planning for acquisition of a replacement groomer. The club has obviously not abandoned the need to acquire a new groomer in the future. Instead, the club has been spending more on groomer maintenance which should lead to lifespans of this critical infrastructure extending beyond 2028. The timing for acquiring a new groomer will depend on life extension from proactive maintenance and be reflected in the forward-looking financial plan being developed under High Focus Priority #3.

A.3 Former Priority #9 (Status: Complete)

Establish a calendar to capture recurring activities designed to engage with the community.

This committee, sometimes referred to as the Fun Committee, established events throughout the season aimed at raising awareness and overall club member well being. Examples include Women's Day and Cookie Day. As these have been operating successfully for several years now, the event and related

support will be programmed into the GM's annual calendar, and a committee is no longer required to support them.

A.4 Former Priority #10 (Status: Complete)

Excellence in internal and external communications, and community-driven outreach.

At the time the strategic plan was developed, communication to members was inconsistent. The GM has successfully implemented a bi-weekly in-season (and monthly summer) newsletter that captures a wide variety of information. Social media content has also been considerably enhanced. These community communications shall continue going forward.

A.5 Former Priority #11 (Status: Complete)

Commit to excellence in organizational advancement through continuous improvement and best practices in governance, planning, and evaluation.

The Policies and Procedures manual was completely updated in 2025. In addition, annual general member surveys, as well as Program surveys, are now the norm, with analysis of survey feedback actioned by committees.

A.6 Former Priority #13 (Status: To be Summarized in Long-Term Plan Sustainability Plan, and Pursued when Board Resources Permit)

Become an industry leader in continual reduction of resource consumption and environmental emissions on the path of becoming a zero emissions operation, while preparing for anticipated threats to operations.

The committee completed a wide set of initiatives, including developing an understanding of sources of emissions, creating a first-of-a-kind emissions report, initiating carpool parking arrangements with the City of Vernon, and a performing a variety of analyses and estimates allowing further reduction of emissions. It is fair to say that there is now a sound understanding of how our operations and visitors influence emissions. In general, SLNC's environmental practices are sound and are continuously improving due to efforts from the committee.

The committee now has three years of annual emissions reports, and the data show that further reductions to emissions are increasingly (a) dependent on upgrades to grooming equipment, and (b) dependent on capital funding to replace gasoline powered equipment. Through those three years, the committee and other volunteers have developed a comprehensive set up information that can be used to plan future upgrades (and reduce emissions). The committee will compile information from the following sources into a long-term sustainability plan that can be used by the General Manager:

- Five-year capital plan to replace all trail-based gasoline equipment with battery powered equivalents.
- Upgrades to firewood processing and management protocols for better drying (and more heat output (and thus lower consumption) per chord).
- The recommendations report for electrical upgrades throughout the site (as prepared by a team of member volunteers).

- Quotes from a solar panel company on installing panels to offset annual power use.

It is expected that committee work will recommence once board resources become available, and use the long-term plan as a guide book for future upgrades. In the interim, the committee will continue to provide support and advice to the Lodge Renewal Committee, so that the new lodge features environmentally-friendly design options and equipment.