

SEELEY LAKE COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER



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World Class Cross Country trails
Photo by Kris Gullikson

Initial Seeley Lake Nordic Challenge; Trail System Assessment

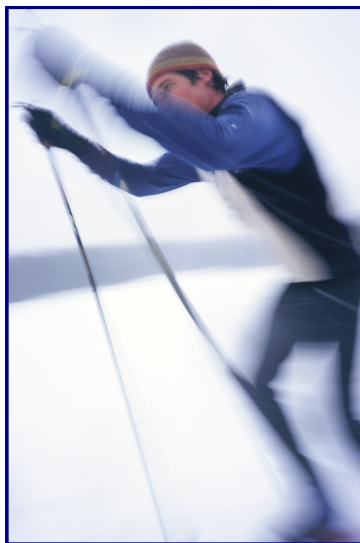
Olympian and Nordic ski trail designer John Morton of Morton Trails was recently in Seeley Lake to assess the potential of Seeley Lake's Nordic trails. Morton Trails teamed with local firm CTA Architects and Engineers and was selected through a competitive bidding process to perform a Nordic events and training center feasibility study for Seeley Lake.

The team was selected by Seeley Lake's Nordic Challenge Steering Committee, a group representing various interests in the community. The committee was very pleased with the Morton/CTA proposal and is excited to have the team on board.

The Nordic Challenge Steering Committee hosted introductions and a local tour of Nordic ski facilities for the project team. The principals of the company John Morton and David Lindahl (a former competitive masters cross country racer with a Ph.D. in economic geography) spent three days in the area evaluating the Seeley Lake ski trails, learning about the community and gathering economic data. Team member Jeff Crouch with CTA of Missoula was also in Seeley Lake for the tour. Mr. Crouch has played a significant role in developing sport events in the region.

The Nordic ski community has already proven its ability to host very successful winter events including the

Annual Ovando Seeley Citizens' Race (OSCR) cross country ski race and the Seeley Lake Biathlon. These events take place on an acclaimed Nordic trails system built and maintained through thousands of hours of community support. A portion of these trails are also incorporated in the Annual Race to the Sky sled dog event, a qualifier for the Iditarod.



The feasibility study will both assess Seeley Lake's ability to attract skiers and analyze the related benefits of a Nordic center on the local economy. The idea for the project arose from the reported success of similar rural communities in Maine and Washington, now supported by similar Nordic ski centers. The feasibility study will supply economic, market, technical, financial, and management analysis specific to

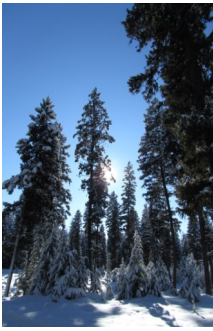
Seeley Lake.

Morton remarks, "The Seeley Lake Nordic trails have a great start toward a course that could attract national attention. National and international race venues can be built within very small areas." For instance, the Vancouver Olympic trails for Nordic skiing (10 km) and the Biathlon trail (5 km) were constructed within one square kilometer of hillside offering tremendous on-site spectator access, as well as spectacular television coverage. "The Seeley Creek Nordic Trails area is already large enough for the additional work required

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MC TREASURER TO OPEN SATELLITE OFFICE IN SEELEY LAKE

As of March 10, residents needing the services of the County Treasurer only need drive 2 miles north of town to local Fire Station #2 to receive them. The Clerk & Recorder and Motor Vehicles will have services available as well. These services will be available on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month. This has been a long time goal and Rural Initiatives reported this is just the beginning. Dog licenses, renewing motor vehicle registrations, paying your taxes, and obtaining moving permits along with death and birth certificates are on the list of available services. Contact Vickie Zeier for further information at 258-3234.



CONTINUED from Page 1....for an outstanding race venue,” Morton continued. “The Seeley Creek Trails are exceptional, having been originally designed by ex-Olympian Jon Elliott.” The Feasibility Study will be completed and presented to the Nordic Challenge Steering Committee this spring.

The project concept developed out of a need to create year round economic stability for the Seeley Lake community and is supported by a group of representatives from the Missoula Area Economic Development Corporation, the Bitter Root Economic Development District, Inc., Missoula County Rural Initiatives, and the State Department of Commerce. For more information on the

Seeley Lake Nordic trail project, contact Marcy Allen, Bitter Root Economic Development District Executive Director.

Press Release submitted by MAEDC., written by Marcy Allen. Reprinted in Seeley Swan Pathfinder.

SLCC February Meeting Recap

The February meeting presented an agenda that was a challenge to complete, although accomplished. Members of the Drifriders Snowmobile Club spoke up on the issue of signage problems on a trail north of town. Residents voiced concerns on their behalf.

Sherriff Dept. representatives, Brad Giffin and Robert Parcell, presented news on the new compliance system for DUI's that has been set up at the county building north of Seeley Lake. Immediate blood tests will be available contrary to what was done in the past. The new testing is being done county wide in hopes of reducing the number of situations and accidents that are alcohol related.



The Council voted to support HB268 (Senator Tester's *Forest Jobs and Restoration Act* re-introduced) by writing a letter of support and following the County's requested channels of sending to the BCC for approval and forwarding to the Legislative Session now in progress.

Pat O'Herren, Rural Initiatives, explained how the Land Use Plan adopted by the County Commissioners will be implemented by highlighting the 21 pages of "Other Ways of Implementation" included in the Plan. He mentioned he had not heard from the local infrastructure boards on the new maps recently provided by his office and would appreciate knowing if they were acceptable and if they meet the

needs locally. He also noted that the County may be of some help in funding the Communications Project which has up to now been funded by the Seeley Lake Community Foundation. **Also noted: The BCC will be in attendance at the Seeley Lake Sewer Board meeting on Feb. 17 at 5:15 at the Barn to hopefully assist in finding ways to fund the project.** The Nordic Challenge has been a recent focus with MAEDC and other organizations. Results from a feasibility study are due out in mid-March. The County has supported the Air Quality Committee in finding solutions for a woodstove change-out program. A new project; Public Safety Mapping. These are just some of the highlights O'Herren mentioned.

Animal control was requested by residents present. Council heard testimony and voted to have O'Herren represent the need to the BCC in requesting a manned vehicle be present in our area as often as possible for the control/capture of loose dogs.

The Air Quality committee reported they are working with a group of students to build wood shelters for local residents. Designs are needed before work can commence, but should be available soon.

A proposal from last month to bring in an expert on Biochar to make an educational presentation was discussed. After consideration, the council determined that local sources will be pursued as necessary at a meeting in the near future. More will be announced as is scheduled. ∞



UPCOMING MEETINGS:

- **Seeley Lake Community Council** -1st Monday; March 7, 6 pm at The Barn
- **Seeley Lake Cemetery District** 1st Thurs., March 3, at 12:00 pm, DARLOA office
- **Seeley Swan Hospital District** 2nd Monday; March 14, 5 pm at the Clinic Conf. Room
- **Seeley Lake Rural Fire District** Third Tues., Feb. 15, 6 pm, SL Fire Station
- **Seeley Lake Sewer District**—3rd Thurs., Feb. 17, 5:15 pm at Barn. BCC in attendance.
- **Seeley Lake Refuse District**—4th Monday, Feb. 21, 7 pm at the SL Transfer Station
- **Seeley Lake Water District**—4th Th., Feb.24, 5:30 pm, Water District Office
- **Economic Development committee;** Guest Speaker from Mt. Dept. of Tourism at March 10 meeting to further discuss area branding.

BRANDING THE SEELEY SWAN

Approximately 30 folks shared their ideas on *Who We Are* in the Seeley Swan Valley at Feb.10 Econ. Dev. meeting. The consensus is that we are appealing to a worldwide market as websites and social networking sites have made the world a very accessible place. Information will be compiled to add to the result that will end up as the brand for the Seeley-Swan Valley, Montana. In order to better understand how we can gain from the current advertising by the State of MT. Next month's agenda includes a visit by Katy Peterson, Consumer Marketing Manager for Montana Office of Tourism. A Facebook page has been set up for gathering and sharing ideas at: <http://www.facebook.com/friends/edit/#!/pages/Seeley-Swan-Valley-Montana-Branding/182232988478778>

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