



# Para Nordic Program Development Project

## Final Report

November, 2021  
Run Fast Consulting Inc.



Cross Country  
Ski Ontario

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Run Fast Consulting Inc. was contracted by Cross Country Ski Ontario (XCSO) to assist in developing a sustainable Para Nordic program. The Para Nordic Program Development Project was structured in three phases as follows:

### Phase 1—Environment Scan

Identify various organizational structures and HR models at use in other organizations and analyze their effectiveness and applicability to XCSO.

### Phase 2—Internal Review

Review existing XCSO staffing structures and job descriptions as they relate to para programming. Interview internal stakeholders to understand current XCSO environment, para program structures, real/perceived challenges, and system gaps.

### Phase 3—Program Model Development

Guide the development of a sustainable para-nordic program.

Phase 1 examined eight organizations that deliver para programming. These organizations had various models ranging from 100% volunteer to 100% staff/contractor. The pros and cons of each model was analyzed to determine the ideal model for XCSO. A mix of volunteers and paid staff is recommended for XCSO's Para Nordic program.

Phase 2 included interviews with eight stakeholders, reviews of all job descriptions, analysis of committee structures, a valuation of volunteer involvement, and a program priority survey. Phase 2 clarified the opportunities and challenges in developing a sustainable Para Nordic Program. It highlighted the need for a Para Nordic Lead, for greater club engagement in delivering Para Nordic programming, and the benefits of sensible integration in high performance programs. This identifies the need to clarify roles and responsibilities.

Phase 3 integrated the findings from the previous phases into a roles and responsibilities matrix. The recommended changes in roles and responsibilities describe the duties of a Para Nordic Lead (0.5FTE), focus on building club capacity to deliver first contact and grassroots Para Nordic programs, expand the role of District Development Coordinators to include some para functions, integrate Para Nordic within the Olympic Stream high performance programs, and focuses the Para Nordic Committee (PNC) on initiatives aimed at increasing participation.

## PHASE I Environment Scan

### Overview

The purpose of the Phase I Environment Scan is to identify various organizational structures and human resource models at use in other organizations, and to analyze their effectiveness and applicability to Cross Country Ski Ontario (XCSO). The intent of this environmental scan is to analyze a variety of ways that organizations use volunteers, contractors, and regular staff to develop and deliver programs.

The Project Steering Committee assisted in the selection of eight Para programs for inclusion in the Phase I Environment Scan. The organizations included a multi-sport Para club, four Provincial Sport Organizations (PSO), a National Sport Organization (NSO), and a Disability Sport Organization (DSO). The organizations selected:

- deliver Para programming with different mixes of staff vs. volunteers;
- demonstrate success in talent identification, grassroots development, club engagement, coach education, and/or the transition from first contact to the high performance pathway; and,
- represent a mix of different sports with similar Para programming needs.

The Project Steering Committee also tried to strategically leverage the Environment Scan to begin relationships with organizations that may contribute to future recruitment, talent ID, and sport transfer initiatives. The organizations interviewed include:

- Ontario Sledge Hockey Association (PSO),
- Cruisers Sports (multi-sport Para club),
- Cross Country Skiing BC (PSO),
- Ontario Cycling Association (PSO),
- SASKI Skiing for Disabled (PSO),
- Alpine Ontario Alpin (PSO),
- Ontario Cerebral Palsy Sport (DSO), and
- Hockey Canada (NSO).

### Methodology

Organizations were interviewed on a video call and asked a set of standard questions. The interviews lasted from 30-60 minutes, and most organizations were willing to share job descriptions for their key Para programming staff.

The primary focus was to obtain an understanding of the scope of each organization's Para programming and determine the mix of volunteers, contractors, and staff that are used to deliver these programs. The secondary focus was to understand the strengths and challenges of these program delivery models. Lastly, there was an effort to gather promising practices that could be adopted or modified to benefit the XCSO Para program.

## Findings

A summary of the organizations and their structures is found in Appendix A, and a detailed description and analysis are below. Note that the organizational profiles listed below are ordered by how each Para program is delivered, beginning with organizations that function with a full volunteer delivery, and proceeding to organizations that deliver using a fully professional team.

### Ontario Sledge Hockey Association

#### Organization Description

Ontario Sledge Hockey Association (OSHA) is the PSO funded to deliver sledge hockey programming in Ontario. It functions much like a league, the competition schedule, rules, appeals, and disciplinary actions for associated teams and individual players. OSHA is responsible for Sledge Team Ontario, and provides expense reimbursement for the team's coaches. Training camps are jointly funded by the athletes and provincial athlete support funding.

The OSHA reports to Hockey Canada through its relationship with the Ontario Hockey Federation. This relationship also provides OSHA with player insurance and coach education.

#### Program Delivery

All programs are run by volunteers and there are no paid staff within the organization.

#### Strengths/Weaknesses

There are few advantages strengths to this model. The PSO struggles to find volunteers, and, as one interviewee reported, "people stay in their positions until they are burned out." There is a lack of funding available to pay for staff (even part-time), and yet an absence of staff significantly limits OSHA's ability to submit funding requests. There is no capacity within the organization to develop strategic plans or accomplish organizational goals. The frustration is apparent and there is a constant need to recruit new volunteers.

The long-term health of the sport in Ontario is at risk with this model. The organization is now experiencing a decline in participation, and difficulties finding athletes who are willing to travel for the required five away games each season.

The delivery of coach education is also challenging. The ability to innovate and keep the sport thriving is very limited, as the volunteers are stretched too thin. In the words of the president, "The last eight years, the past executive didn't do much."

The organization supports two club-hosted tournaments a year, but it is unclear what role the OSHA plays in these events vis-à-vis the local host club.

#### Assessment

Operating a provincial program with no paid staff is difficult and unsustainable. When an organization like OSHA offers a thriving program, it is often the result of extensive commitments from a small number of individuals that quickly become burned out. This model is limited in its

capacity to attract new funding, develop provincial teams, expand membership, and recruit new athletes.

## **Cruisers Sports**

### Organization Description

Cruisers Sports (CS) is a multi-sport Para club based in Mississauga. The club offers programs in five sports (e.g., wheelchair basketball, sledge hockey, bocce, multi-sport, and athletics) to 100-120 participants from Peel Halton to Kingston. It is important to note that these programs are local in nature.

### Program Delivery

Programs are delivered by volunteers and the club has no paid staff. Each sport is governed by a committee led by a director of the board. The club board is comprised of 13 directors.

### Strengths/Weaknesses

CS is a successful club that delivers programs over an extensive geographic area. The club is effective at recruiting new athletes and introducing sports to their participants. By offering different sports, they can attract broad participation, and then assist participants in finding a sport/sports that fit their needs and abilities. The club is keen to work with new sports and would be a good partner for XCSO for first contact programs.

The club is participation-focused and places a heavy emphasis on social activities. This is attractive to participants and their families. While the focus is not necessarily on high performance programming, they do have coaches that coach elite athletes and regularly produce national team athletes in a variety of sports.

CS has a heavy reliance on parent volunteers, and their commitment is often limited to the amount of time their children devote to a program. This can challenge program delivery.

The club works with other partners and would be open to working with XCSO to co-deliver programming for its members.

### Assessment

Volunteers play a critical role in the Canadian sport system and annually contribute millions of dollars' worth of donated time and effort—the system could not exist without their efforts and contributions. Volunteers bring enthusiasm, expertise, and willingness to roll up their sleeves to get things done.

However, there is an inherent vulnerability when a program or organization operates entirely through volunteers. The nature of volunteerism is that those giving their time and effort are doing it as an addendum to their own professional and personal obligations and interests.

People generally volunteer to 'get things done', and to help participants. With that in mind, administrative tasks that are required to sustain provincial programs (i.e., grant applications, reporting, drafting policy, ensuring compliance requirements are met, and development of structures and processes for program scaling) can occupy a much lower priority for volunteers.



## Ontario Cerebral Palsy Sport Association

### Organizational Description

Ontario Cerebral Palsy Sport Association (OCPSA) is the DSO for those with cerebral palsy. The organization provides sport opportunities for bocca and athletics, but is only funded for bocca. Its delivery of athletics programs is done in collaboration with clubs such as Cruisers Sports. Not unlike many DSOs, the sports they are funded to provide are those that do not have other associated PSOs.

### Program Delivery

OCPSA's para programs are delivered by an Executive Director (1.0 FTE) and a Program Manager (1.0 FTE), in collaboration with other organizations. The Executive Director is responsible for administration, while the Program Manager works more directly with participants to deliver programs in treatment centres, and is a learning facilitator for coach education.

Volunteers assist in running the organization's sports programs. For bocca, volunteers primarily come from the medical/physical therapy community, and not from the sport community.

The sport committees for athletics and bocca are responsible for all aspects of their sport (e.g., the calendar of events, provincial athlete support funding criteria, team selection, etc.). Some members of the committees also sit on the Board.

### Strengths/Weaknesses

The organization is effective at engaging its community. They make good use of connections to the rehabilitation community, and have a strong network of families who have been affected by cerebral palsy. The organization's small size means that its staff are directly involved with all aspects of the program at an individual athlete level.

That said, the scale of program offerings is limited. Most of OCPSA's focus is on bocca, and the emphasis is predominantly on recreational programming.

OCPSA also relies heavily on volunteers. There is often a mismatch between coaches and athletes, which means that the organization often has, as stated by the Executive Director, "coaches with no athletes, and athletes with no coaches."

### Assessment

Although it is a small organization, OCPSA has a robust network and stable funding. They work closely with the rehabilitation/medical community, which helps in athlete recruitment. They also have accumulated expertise in disability sport.

There are several reasons why collaboration with OCPSA could be advantageous to XCSO. OCPSA has a network to find new athletes, which would be difficult to duplicate and expensive to obtain through programs that recruit Para athletes from rehabilitation centres such as Bridging the Gap. XCSO would also benefit from OCPSA's expertise, to assist clubs with cerebral palsy athletes.

## **SASKI Skiing for Disabled**

### Organizational Description

SASKI Skiing for Disabled is a volunteer-driven support network and provincial sport's governing body within SASKI, which manages the Saskatchewan Disabled Ski Program for Para Nordic, Para Biathlon, Para Alpine and Para Snowboarding. It is one of the sports bodies within SASKI.

### Program Delivery

SASKI Skiing for Disabled's para programs are delivered by a Para Development Coordinator (0.75 FTE) reporting to the President of SASKI Skiing for Disabled. The coordinator is responsible for equipment management, recruitment, talent identification, and coaching development. Their scope includes all SASKI Skiing for Disabled sports (i.e., cross country skiing, alpine skiing, and biathlon).

The position's primary responsibility is identification and recruitment of new athletes, with a focus on improving the quality of athletes graduating from SASKI's development system and entering the "Train to Compete" stage of athlete development. The coordinator's also ensures that athletes have coaching and competition support (i.e., club racing programs), and facilitates coach education for topics related to athletes with disabilities.

Serving all three ski sports stretches the coordinator's time. For example, equipment management across all three sports can take up to 30 per cent of the coordinator's time.

The SASKI Skiing for Disabled program is assisted by a volunteer Para Nordic Lead. Some training camps are also integrated with Cross Country Saskatchewan.

### Strengths/Weaknesses

The organization has a strong school outreach program, and collaborates with the with school system and wheelchair sports. The focus is on identifying new participants and ensuring that they have equipment.

Servicing a large population with many skiers in small northern communities is a challenge for the organization. There is a lot of skiing happening up north, and this complicates program delivery.

However, the largest challenge is coach recruitment. The organization has done its best to recruit those who are regularly working with the child to be the local coach. This could include the resource teacher, principal, or PE teacher.

### Assessment

The structure of skiing in Saskatchewan is unique, with SASKI receiving government funds and overseeing other provincial sports organizations. It is not the scope of this project to evaluate whether this is an effective model for cross country skiing, but the model does affect the nature of the position of the Para Development Coordinator within SASKI Skiing for Disabled. Since the role focuses on coordination and is not a head coach position, the responsibility for directly developing Para athletes rest with local clubs.



The Para Development Coordinator ensures that clubs and club coaches have athletes, training, competition, and support for needed for athletes to participate and develop. The coordinator must be “knowledgeable and up-to-date in respect of strategies, plans, programs, policies, and practices in high performance Para Nordic” (contract wording), but they are not responsible for coaching any athletes.

This is an interesting approach, in that it relies on the clubs to play a key role in athlete development.

## **Cross Country BC**

### Organizational Description

Cross Country BC (CCBC) is BC's PSO for cross country skiing. It delivers member services, provides coach education, oversees provincial teams, and provides various programs.

### Program Delivery

CCBC's Para program is delivered by the Para Nordic Lead, who reports to Executive Director. The Para Nordic Lead's primary responsibility is to recruit and prepare athletes for future Para Nordic events, with an emphasis on the BC Winter Games and the Canada Winter Games. This is an honorarium position (\$5k/year, matched by the coach's club).

Specific duties of the Para Nordic Lead include leading ski clinics, assisting Para athletes in finding qualified coaches in their area, and recruiting and training assistants to ski with and support Para athletes. The Coach organizes annual skill development/training camps (one dryland camp and two on-snow camps), arranges national classification opportunities, and assists with the development and application of selection criteria. The Coach also consults with race officials/directors, assists with grant submissions, liaises with Nordiq Canada, and acts as a learning facilitator for coach education.

The Coach works with clubs with Para Nordic programs, and is funded by Nordic Racers Ski Club in the Vancouver area.

### Strengths/Weaknesses

The program has a strong linkage to a large BC club (Nordic Racers). The club co-funds the provincial Para Nordic Lead, has a supply of equipment, and is the home club for most of the BC Para Nordic team athletes. The other strong club is Larch Hills Nordics based in Salmon Arm, which is particularly adept at recruiting younger competitive athletes.

Both the Nordic Racers and Cross Country BC can obtain funding from the provincial government's gaming grants. This allows each organization to fully fund try-it events, training camps, provincial races, and national races. The funding that the Nordic Racers Ski Club receives has enabled the organization to purchase equipment that can be used by club members, or loaned to other clubs.

Prince George hosted the 2020 World Para Nordic Championships, and this provided local legacy funds for the community. Unfortunately, COVID-19 has hindered the community's ability to leverage the Championship legacy according to plans.



The challenge that CCBC faces is largely out of their control. The largest population of potential Para program participants are based in the Greater Vancouver district; however, the region lacks consistent snow. Thus, athletes with a disability in that region lack the opportunities to train on snow, and are often recruited by other sports. Salmon Arm has snow, but has a much smaller population base.

Typically, other BC cross country ski clubs only take an interest in Para Nordic if they have an athlete who becomes a member and requires coaching and equipment. As a result, the number of clubs with Para Nordic programs and the number of athletes is low.

Despite these challenges, 30% of BC's medals at the 2019 Canada Winter Games came from cross country skiing and Para Nordic.

### Assessment

CCBC is a good example of how a provincial program can be integrated with a strong club program (<https://www.nordicracers.ca/paranordics>). The collaboration with Nordic Racers supports the club, and enables the provision of programming for the rest of the province. The Nordic Racers and Larch Hills Nordic also provide almost the entire BC Para Nordic team athletes.

The story behind Larch Hills Nordic's Para program also highlights how a club-based program can be established with minimal provincial support. An athlete in the club showed interest in Para Nordic after an accident, and CCBC sent a learning facilitator to conduct an athlete with a disability coaching session. Larch Hills Nordic was encouraged to find someone to teach sit skiing, which eventually introduced another athlete to Para Nordic. Today, the Para program is integrated with the club's development team.

## Ontario Cycling Association

### Organizational Description

The Ontario Cycling Association (OCA) is the PSO for cycling and provides member services, competitions, and high performance programs. Para cycling is included in their high performance programs.

### Program Delivery

The Para cycling program was developed by the High Performance Manager, and focuses on developing high performance athletes. It is situated in the high performance program as an equal partner with BMX, track cycling and road cycling.

OCA's programs are tiered by ability, and all athletes must apply. The tiers are: *Associate High Performance Athlete (working with Cycling Canada's NextGen program)*, *High Performance Athlete*, and *Development Athlete*.

Support levels vary for each tier. There are selection criteria, benefits, and opportunities associated with each level of support, which are outlined within the OCA Ontario High Performance System. There is a separate tier for those Para cyclists who are new to the sport, are developing their skills, or wish to ride recreationally. All details are posted at <https://ontariocycling.org/athlete-development/team-ontario-para-cycling-program/> and

<https://ontariocycling.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Ontario-High-Performance-System-May-2017.pdf>.

The program is delivered by a High Performance Director (1.0 FTE), an Event and Program Coordinator (1.0 FTE), a Para Provincial Coach (\$5-10K contract), additional contracted camp coaches, and volunteers (e.g., tandem pilots). Of these roles, the Para Provincial Coach is responsible for talent identification workshops, athlete recruitment, high performance coaching, planning, budgeting, program delivery, and reporting.

The OCA High Performance Committee and program staff guide the planning, evaluation, and establishment of standards for Team Ontario programming. The committee is responsible for unbiased selection of athletes to the programs and projects, and reports via measurable performance objectives. The Para Provincial Coach is included in the High Performance Committee.

OCA hosts high performance and development training camps. Often these are combined, with the first half of the camp being for high performance athletes and the second half for both development and high performance Para cyclists.

### Strengths/Weaknesses

Since Para cycling is part of the OCA High Performance System, similar program structures and rigours apply to Para athletes just as they do to the able body (AB) athletes.

Finding athletes is a challenge for all Para sports, but OCA has some different approaches. They offer bi-weekly winter programs to students from the W. Ross McDonald School for the Blind. Using the velodrome in Milton, they teach the students to use tandem bikes under the guidance of volunteer pilots. This program has not yet produced a high performance athlete, but it has identified one athlete who is tracking towards high performance. The challenge that they have had with the initiative is that the students return home during the summer, when the racing season happens.

OCA participates in the Bridging the Gap, a program that helps find appropriate sports for those receiving rehabilitation services after accidents. They do not feel that this rather expensive program has yielded a good return on investment. OCA also participates in the RBC Training Grounds program to identify a Para athletes.

Another identified challenge was the transition of Para athletes from their high performance programs to Cycling Canada's NextGen program. If this transition is rushed, the athlete can proceed to training that they are not yet prepared to handle. If the NSO then loses interest in the athlete, a return to provincial programming can be unappealing and the athlete may quit the sport entirely.

### Assessment

The OCA Para cycling program is well resourced, and offers a well-supported and clearly described pathway from introduction to the sport to NextGen programs. The Para program is an equal player within the high performance programs, and similar approaches, standards, and structures exist for both Para and AB athletes.



## Alpine Ontario Alpin

### Organizational Description

Alpine Ontario Alpin (AOA) is the PSO for alpine skiing in Ontario, and provides member services, competitions, and high performance programs. Para alpine is included in their high performance programs.

### Program Delivery

AOA's Para alpine program is structured around two significant partners: the Ontario chapter of Canadian Adaptive Snowsports (CADS) and the Canadian Para Alpine Ski Team (CPAST).

First contact/grassroots programs are provided by the Ontario chapter of CADS through an memorandum of understanding. CADS operates programs out of eight Ontario ski hills, including a Learn to Race program. Promising athletes are passed along to the AOA high performance program.

AOA's high performance program is offered with the assistance of CPAST. AOA is moving in a direction of integration, where AB and Para athletes will train together. This shift is based on previous results where the most successful Para alpine athletes have come through AB training environments. It is acknowledged that integration can be challenging (especially for sit skiing), and that a separate Para coach is required to help with integration and Para alpine program specifics. Integration will mean that the athletes will train on the same hill and do similar training sessions when possible. These sessions will be led by the same head coach. When AB athletes depart for racing, the Para coach will then take the primary coaching responsibilities in a camp format, and grassroots athletes will be invited to participate.

The program is delivered by AOA's High Performance Director (1.0 FTE), CPAST NextGen Coach (1.0 FTE based in Collingwood assisting with the program), and a Para alpine coach (5-6 month contract).

### Strengths/Weaknesses

The collaborations with CPAST and CADS allow AOA to narrow its program focus. Recruitment and talent identification are essentially outsourced to CADS and its volunteer instructors, at the grassroots level. The fact that CADS delivers programs from eight facilities, in essence, establishes a regional recruitment strategy, funded by another organization.

The participation of CPAST enables a rapid transition for promising athletes to Alpine Canada's Para programs. It also provides funding for NextGen camps that will benefit all high performance athletes.

By integrating AB and Para programs, AOA is attempting to dismantle the perception that Para athletes are fragile.

Although the relationship with CADS benefits AOA, it is not without challenges. As an independent organization, CADS sets its own direction, based on its own best interests.

COVID-19 has been particularly hard on the Para alpine program. Participants in the high-performance-focused program have dropped from 14 to three.



### Assessment

Unlike the other organizations that were interviewed, AOA is fully committed to integration. Some of this is enabled by their narrow scope of high performance, and the fact that they are not responsible for recruiting athletes. The reliance on CADS to operate grassroots programs at local ski facilities provides Para programming close to the participants.

## Hockey Canada

### Organizational Description

Hockey Canada (HC) is the NSO for hockey that governs hockey in Canada. They are funded by Own the Podium, and operate the men's, women's, and Para national teams.

### Program Delivery

HC took over the national sledge hockey team in 2006, and has operated a full-time program ever since. As one of HC's two full-time national teams, the players are afforded every opportunity and benefit as the other HC national hockey teams.

The program is mostly decentralized, but will centralize in Calgary for camps seven to 10 days each month. On the other days of the month, training occurs at three regional hubs (Calgary, Toronto, and Montreal). The Calgary and Toronto hubs have three days of training per week, and are delivered by a contracted hockey skills company that also provides strength and conditioning programs. Montreal's hub trains once a week, and the training is overseen by the Assistant Coach. The Head Coach works with the hub coaches to develop and deliver the program. The objective is to keep all of the athletes on the ice year-round.

It is not uncommon for the athletes to centralize at one of the hubs for a few months before the Paralympics.

The HC program is fully staffed with a General Manager (1.0 FTE) who reports to the Senior Vice-President of Hockey Operations, a Head Coach (1.0 FTE), a coordinator (1.0 FTE), a part-time Assistant Coach, contracted skills development coaches at the hubs, and integrated support team (IST) staff from the Canadian Sports Institute Calgary.

### Strengths/Weaknesses

The HC sledge program is fully supported and professional. It is driven by high performance objectives and structured to ensure that athletes have the best possible training environments. They have successfully changed the team culture from a "beer league mentality", and have "pruned away the bad apples". It is now a program with high levels of athlete compliance, in spite of the need to rely on the honour system to do the training that is prescribed. The expectation is that the team members are "athletes first".

There is no connection between grassroots sledge hockey and high performance. Only four provinces have consistent programs year over year, and the provincial teams are not necessarily run by the PSO. While HC had the intention of unifying high performance development, COVID-19 interrupted the plans.

## Assessment

HC's sledge hockey program is fully resourced and professional, and exceeds the resources of most PSOs. As a well-funded NSO, they can provide a program that is comprehensive and distributed.

Despite the disparity in resources between HC and XCSO, there are still lessons to be learned. The change in culture from recreation to high performance can be made, but it does require a deliberate focus, adequate resources, and enabling structures.

## Analysis

The environment scan of these eight organizations highlights the pros and cons of various mixes of volunteers, contractors, and staff.

Program Delivery	Pros	Cons
Volunteer Led & Delivered  Ontario Sledge Hockey Association  Cruisers Sports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community engagement</li> <li>• Local expertise</li> <li>• Attracts volunteers who are motivated by action and helping athletes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to recruit volunteers</li> <li>• High burnout and turnover</li> <li>• Limited administrative capacity</li> <li>• Limited ability to attract sustainable funding</li> <li>• Not easy to scale provincially</li> <li>• Very limited capacity for continuous improvement initiatives</li> </ul>
F/T Administration & Volunteer Coach(es)  Ontario Cerebral Palsy Sports Association SASKI Skiing for Disabled	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administrative functions are led by professionals</li> <li>• Sustainable funding</li> <li>• Leverages volunteer expertise</li> <li>• Effective a local level (clubs)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Depends on committed volunteers</li> <li>• Difficulty for the organization to change direction without volunteer buy-in</li> <li>• Limited continuous improvement initiatives</li> </ul>
F/T Administration & P/T Coach(es)  Cross Country BC Ontario Cycling Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administrative functions are led by professionals</li> <li>• Sustainable funding</li> <li>• Expertise for Para program delivery</li> <li>• Can support continuous improvement</li> <li>• Sustainable Para programs, if supported by volunteers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can develop a heavy reliance on an individual</li> <li>• Can be difficult to recruit Para expertise</li> <li>• Can enforce siloed approach to Para programs</li> <li>• Requires clear roles and responsibilities</li> <li>• Capacity for continuous improvement often through additional contracts</li> </ul>



<p>F/T Administration &amp; Mix of F/T and P/T Coaches</p> <p>Alpine Ontario Alpin Hockey Canada</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administrative functions are led by professionals</li> <li>• Sustainable funding</li> <li>• Sustainable program delivery</li> <li>• Can fully support continuous improvement and organization led change</li> <li>• Supportive of high performance objectives and grassroots initiatives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Costly</li> <li>• Likely to require collaboration with other organizations</li> <li>• Requires effective overall program leadership and vision</li> </ul>
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The appropriateness of each model is, to an extent, determined by the organization's scope of services, program outcome priorities, and community expertise. For instance, if an organization is focused on providing recreational programs and local grassroots programs, then a volunteer-based model may be sufficient. Many local clubs are effective at operating with this model.

However, if the focus is on both finding and developing high performance Para athletes, then a more comprehensive mix of F/T and P/T staff, and volunteers is needed. Clearly stated program objectives direct the selection of the most appropriate program structure. Form follows function.

## Best Practices

During the course of the organizational interviews, several best practices were identified that could apply to XCSO:

- Treat your high performance athletes like pros. Provide them with access to the best supports you can afford. (Hockey Canada)
- Create regional hubs for Para training. (Hockey Canada)
- Integrate try-it days with local clubs, and ensure that club coaches are present. Combine coach education with try-it days. (Cross Country BC)
- Share provincial coaches with clubs through job-sharing arrangements. (Cross Country BC)
- Integrate Para and AB programs with the assistance of a Para coach. (Alpine Ontario Alpin)
- Use Para skill camps to prepare athletes for an integrated training environment. (Alpine Ontario Alpin)
- Build partnerships to deliver portions of the Para program. (Alpine Ontario Alpin)
- Support sport transfer initiatives. (Alpine Ontario Alpin)
- Develop school-age outreach programs to introduce skiing to young students with disabilities. (SASKI Skiing for Disabled)
- Work with W. Ross McDonald to offer programming for visually impaired students. (Ontario Cycling Association)
- Develop a clear performance pathway that tiers program by ability and articulates support levels for each tier. (Ontario Cycling Association)
- Collaborate with a DSO to assist in finding Para athletes and participants for try-it days. (Cruisers Sports)



## **Summary**

The environment scan highlights the struggles that are associated with an under-resourced program. An over-reliance on volunteers or under-compensated contractors increases the reliance and dependence on individuals. While these individuals can do exceptional work, there are inherent vulnerabilities such as burnout, limited knowledge transfer, disconnection with the organization, resistance to innovation or fresh ideas, lack of new Para coaches, and a siloed approach to Para programs.

## PHASE 2—INTERNAL REVIEW

### Overview

The internal review phase included eight stakeholder interviews, a board values survey, an extensive review of documents, and discussions with key staff. The review examined the staffing structure and estimated the contribution of key volunteers. It also identified a series of themes.

## XCSO STAFFING STRUCTURE

The following XCSO staffing positions contribute to the Para Nordic program.

### Para Nordic Lead and Supporting Coaches

Prior to Patti Kitler’s retirement, she was hired on contract to provide Para Nordic Leading, clinics, and administrative support. The value of the contract varied annually based on the priorities for the year. For example, the additional responsibilities associated with Canada Winter Games increased the value of her contract in 2018-19. Other supporting coaches were provided an honorarium. The chart below outlines payments over the past few years before COVID-19.

Para Nordic Program	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Lead	\$3,900	\$14,100	\$7,500
Coaching Support	\$2,400	\$3,050	\$2,500

### Executive Director

The Executive Director is tasked with the administrative functions critical to obtaining the funding, insurance, materials, and equipment for operation of both Para Nordic and Olympic Stream programs. In addition, the Executive Director is responsible for:

- Canadian Paralympic Committee grant applications
- Work closely with XCSO Technical Director
- Assist in the planning of OST and OJST team trips, travel, accommodation and coaches’ needs.

It is estimated that Para Nordic occupies 10% of the Executive Director’s time.

### Technical Director

The Technical Director contributes directly to Para Nordic in the following ways:

- Reviewing Ontario PN Team Programming Q4G ON Athlete Assistance criteria annually and evaluate program effectiveness relative to goals
- Lead Ontario PN Team selection with the guidance of the PN Coordinator
- Liaise with race organizers for the inclusion of PN athletes at identified competitions
- Engage in the planning calendar of camps in coordination with Olympic Stream program
- Liaise with Para Nordic Coordinator in the development of para partners including ON Blind Sports Association, Para Sport Collective, CSIO etc.

It is estimated that Para Nordic occupies 10% of the Technical Director's job.

### **Coaching Development Coordinator**

The Coaching Development Coordinator facilitates the educational and professional development of coaches in Ontario. The courses coordinated would include the NCCP Athletes with a Disability (AWAD) course.

### **District Development Coordinators**

The District Development Coordinators have minimal Para Nordic duties outlined within their contracts. XCSO was set to hire District Para Nordic Coordinators, but the PNC recommended against this due to COVID-19 precautions. The existing District Development Coordinators will feature in the recommended plan.

## **Volunteers**

The entire sport system operates on the generous contributions of an army of volunteers. For this report, we will define the scope of volunteers to be those working on the Para Nordic Committee and providing coaching services. To be clear, there are many more people contributing significant amounts of volunteer time, but they are not included in this definition.

For the purpose of this review, we will examine the volunteer contribution of the major Para Nordic contributors: Patti Kitler, Ken Norris, and the PNC during the 2018-19 year. The hourly calculations are based on a description of each activity and include travel time. The contract hours reflect the number of hours estimated for the activity. The Conference Board of Canada estimates the value of volunteering at an hourly rate of \$27/hour<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://charityvillage.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Value\\_Volunteering\\_Slides.pdf](https://charityvillage.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Value_Volunteering_Slides.pdf)

	XCSO Contract Hours	XCSO Volunteer Hours	Club Volunteer Hours	XCSO Volunteer Value	Total Volunteer Value Including Coaching
Patti Kitler	349	191	795	\$5,157	\$26,622
Ken Norris	96	80	80	\$2,160	\$4,320
Para Nordic Committee	N/A	120		\$3,240	\$3,240
<b>Total</b>				<b>\$10,557</b>	<b>\$34,182</b>

## Resource Summary

XCSO uses a mix of staff, contractors, and volunteers to support the Para Nordic program. XCSO has benefited significantly from the generosity of volunteers, and in many instances, these volunteers are the same people who are also on contract. It appears that the contract does not include many necessary tasks, and as a result, these tasks were performed by volunteers.

If the objective is to build a sustainable Para Nordic program, then a more consistent and fair approach to remuneration is required. To attract and retain the level of expertise required to deliver and grow the program, a reasonable salary is advised.

If the PN Lead is also expected to coach athletes, then a cost-share agreement could be negotiated with a local club. In the case of Patti Kitler, her club contributes towards her coaching, but the amount does not accurately reflect the hours spent coaching (i.e., ~\$3/hour). XCSO benefits from her coaching, as many of the athletes on the provincial team are coached by Patti. If the provincial program includes coaching for Para Nordic athletes, then this part of the role should be funded.

Based on the work described further in the report, the position should range from 0.3 to 0.7 FTE depending on the amount of coaching required.

## THEMES AND FINDINGS

### Equity and Inclusion

The Phase 2 interviews and board survey highlighted the overall willingness to see Para Nordic grow and thrive. There was a desire to be inclusive and a willingness to make changes to advance Para Nordic. The value of this should not be overlooked.

That said, there is a narrative that has developed based on reported events that can be interpreted as marginalization of para athletes. The Consultant heard stories of how Para Nordic races were conducted with different treatment including awards, results locations, inaccessible podiums, and unsafe courses. Whether completely accurate or not, each of these stories adds to the narrative that para athletes are not treated with as

much respect as the Olympic Stream athletes. These enforce the views that Para Nordic is marginalized within XCSO programs and the broader cross country skiing community.

Without discounting the impact of these incidents, it would seem they were caused not by a deliberate attempt to slight Para Nordic athletes, but by a lack of consideration and understanding. Overall, it would appear that there is a commitment to equity and inclusion but a lack of understanding as to how this commitment is to be actioned.

### Para Advocacy

A culture shift to greater integration would have significant merit (see below); however, until this shift is complete there is an ongoing need to advocate for Para Nordic and to work with race directors and clubs to explain the technical needs of Para Nordic racers.

As this need was highlighted in all the interviews with Para Nordic Committee members, it should be included in the Terms of Reference for the committee. The committee should also be tasked with overseeing the development of a document that outlines the technical requirements for Para Nordic races including course specifications, considerations for different disabilities, safety requirements, and equity considerations.

### Integration

Currently, Para Nordic is mostly siloed from the rest of XCSO. Despite some efforts to include Para Nordic at the occasional camp, it has mostly operated on its own and is separate from the rest of XCSO's programs. All those interviewed seem to be very grateful for the success of Patti Kitler's work in building a program and the good work she continues to do in Sudbury. XCSO has been pleased to allow her great autonomy to run the program as she sees fit; however, this model has some inherent flaws, as other sports have come to realize.

The greater the isolation of para programming from the rest of the organization, the greater the marginalization of the para program. As one interviewee said, "Para Nordic is sitting out there on its own." This segregation often results in less collaboration, fewer opportunities, and a lack of appreciation for the efforts of para athletes and coaches. There is an "us against the world" perspective that can easily develop, and valuable time and energy are spent fighting for appreciation, funding, and recognition.

The alternative approach suggested begins with an approach that an "athlete is an athlete", and some athletes require different amounts or types of support. This approach typically leads to higher quality programs for para athletes and greater support for coaches working with those with disabilities.

Grappling with what integration looks like is neither easy nor unique to Para Nordic, and includes both a philosophic and practical element. To be clear, full integration does not work for all athletes, in all instances/environments, or without adequate support.

However, the tendency can be to focus on why this approach “wouldn’t work”, and not how it could. There is a need to understand the challenges, analyze whether it is best to overcome the challenge (and how), and discern when it makes the most sense to integrate. However, integration should be the default and not the exception. This is the direction that many sports are going and is aligned with the philosophy that Nordiq Canada now embraces.

An integrated camp would have the same lodging, food, integrated support teams, athlete education, social activities, and leadership, but could have different training based on the athletes’ needs. This would be provided by coaches with specific para expertise. For instance, a sit skier could do roller skiing on a flatter course, or another athlete might do a shorter session. In all instances, capable coaches would consistently make adaptations for their athletes; in essence, such adaptations should not necessitate a separate camp for para athletes.

At the time of this report, Nordiq Canada’s Olympic Stream and Para Nordic athletes are training at altitude in an integrated camp in Mammoth, CA. This approach is working well for everyone and is likely to be the norm going forward. Interestingly, the camp is funded through the Paralympic preparation budget, and the Olympic Stream athletes are the ones being integrated into the para camp.

XCSO has taken some steps towards integration in hiring a performance coach that worked 70% Olympic Stream and 30% Para Nordic. This was a positive step towards breaking down the silos between the two programs.

Greater integration is also important at the club level. The board survey highlights that although the majority of respondents felt that XCSO should not be the primary provider of Para Nordic instruction, most participants felt that their clubs lacked the expertise to take on the task. In many clubs, there appears to be a lack of experience, equipment, and coaching. However, to develop a sustainable Para Nordic program, the clubs and ski facilities must take a larger role in providing local para programming and their capacity to do so must be increased.

There are many benefits to integrating Para Nordic into club programs. This shift would enable more skiers with a disability to access programming close to home and to be part of their local clubs. Greater integration at the club and ski facility level would also increase the number of people recruiting new athletes, making regular first contact and grassroots programs available to youth that may be considering Para Nordic as their sport of choice. This will require a deliberate effort, as Phase 2 has highlighted the following challenges that have been encountered with integration attempts to date:

- Para Nordic Leading is a challenge due to the specific knowledge and shortage of coaches trained to work with para athletes.



- Para participants often require greater support than can be given in a mixed group of para and Olympic Stream athletes. In other words, additional volunteers or coaches are required to make integration work.
- There are technical considerations for Para Nordic that many coaches who work predominantly with Olympic Stream athletes may not yet know.
- And, not to be downplayed, many para athletes need more social/emotional support from their coach.

However, these challenges are not insurmountable, and clever coaches and clubs can find practical solutions to include skiers with disabilities in their programs. This has happened in the past. For example:

- An athlete with a disability was fully integrated as a sit skier in her club in Revelstoke, BC. The coach found innovative ways to include her in all the regular training sessions with her Olympic Stream clubmates.
- Mark Arendz began his Para Nordic skiing and biathlon with the Cadets program, later progressing to Paralympic gold. From the start, he was in an integrated program.

In these and other examples, coaches found ways to adapt so that the athlete trained with Olympic Stream athletes. This has increasingly become the norm for many sports.

It may prove that some of the loudest opponents for greater integration of Para Nordic are the para athletes. Past efforts to integrate training camps were not successful and they were perceived by some as infringing on the sense of community that has developed among the para athletes. While some will see the benefit and will enjoy learning from Olympic Stream coaches and athletes, others will find the change challenging and be resistant to having input from coaches who they believe do not understand their needs. Further, some may find that high performance expectations put on Olympic Stream athletes will require them to have a greater commitment to their sport.

### Role of Ski Clubs

Many of the interviewees recognized that there was a need for clubs to be more involved with Para Nordic. Apparently, there are plans in preparation to help each district establish its own club and facility-level programs, train more coaches, and recruit more participants. All of these steps would be very positive.

Laurentian Nordic is an example of a strong local program. Under Patti Kitler's coaching, they provide a caring and socially cohesive environment where local para skiers can learn to ski and race. Similar situations are the backbone of BC's Para Nordic programs, with most activity happening in two clubs.



In the case of younger athletes with a disability, the parents are often involved in helping find suitable sports and activities. The further they have to travel to obtain para programming, the more likely they are to find another sport. Therefore, growing participation in Para Nordic requires that local clubs, parks, and ski facilities have the capacity to offer programs. The first step is recruiting and training coaches. Without coaches, there are not viable programs to teach and develop skiing skills.

## Recruitment

All successful para programs have a focus on recruitment. Sports use a variety of approaches to find athletes including Try It Days, RBC Training Ground, COC/CPC talent search programs, Bridging the Gap or other rehabilitation facility recruitment approaches, sport transfer initiatives, school outreach programs, or paid recruiters.

Patti Kitler has been effective at finding athletes through her network; this is no different from many para coaches in other sports. A personal network, though somewhat informal, often yields the best results. More formal outreaches to schools, OFSAA, or the W. Ross Macdonald School for the Blind and Deafblind have been successful for other sports and were mentioned during the interviews.

The Consultant conducted a thorough review of Athletics Canada's para recruiting program. The findings were that most new athletes were the result of club-based recruitment, and that Try It Days were more successful if linked to a club. This does not mean that the other methods did not find some athletes (and some eventual Paralympic medalists), but the linkage to a club was a critical element of recruiting.

SASKI Skiing for Disabled focuses its recruitment on younger children. There is some merit to this approach, as the children could be integrated into Jackrabbit programs at an early age. However, some para athletes become disabled later in life, and this makes it difficult to apply an Olympic Stream long-term athlete development model.

## High Performance Athlete Development

XCSO's high performance structures and plans are predominantly focused on developing Olympic Stream athletes, and there is limited mention of Para Nordic. High performance decisions for Para Nordic are not made by the High Performance Committee (HPC), but rather by the Para Nordic Committee (PNC) instead team selection. Quest for Gold nominations are made by the Para Nordic Committee. Reasonable high performance expectations such as a Year Training Plan (YTP), training goals, and submitted training logs do not apply to subsidized Para Nordic athletes.

## Para Nordic Staffing Needs

It was commonly agreed that XCSO will require a paid part-time position to lead Para Nordic. While there were small differences in the opinions as to what the person should



do, it was generally agreed that the position should include both coaching and administration. The role was to include recruitment of volunteers, coordination of programs, and management of logistics. The percentage of full-time equivalent (FTE) required will depend on the position duties.

## **PHASE 2 SUMMARY**

Phase 2 clarified the opportunities and challenges in developing a sustainable Para Nordic Program. It highlighted the need for a Para Nordic Lead, for greater club engagement in delivering Para Nordic programming, and the benefits of sensible integration in high performance programs. This identifies the need to clarify roles and responsibilities.

## PHASE 3—PROGRAM MODEL DEVELOPMENT

### ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A RACI matrix is often used in project management to assign types of task responsibilities. This is a useful approach when identifying how various Para Nordic tasks might be organized to provide greater program sustainability.

R (responsible) identifies the person who is charged with task responsibility. A (accountable) is the person who is responsible for its completion; this is often a supervisor. C (consulted) are those who provide advice and perspective to ensure the success of a task; often, the people consulted represent valued stakeholders. I (informed) are those who, though not directly involved in the task, will want to be kept in the loop.

Ideally, there is a single person for both R and C, though sometimes it may make sense to have more than one. In most instances below, a single person or committee is responsible, and another is accountable. This attempts to avoid a lack of clarity on responsibilities and an “I thought it was your job” response when things are not completed.

The Consultant recommends the allocations of responsibilities described below. This is based on the interviews, Phase 1 environment scans, and best practices in other organizations. For clarity, PNC refers to the Para Nordic Committee and HPC is the High Performance Committee.

PARA NORDIC ADMINISTRATION				
	Responsible	Accountable	Consulted	Informed
Para Nordic Program Budgeting	Technical Director	Executive Director	PN Lead, PNC, HPC	XCSO Board
Para Nordic Grant Applications	PN Lead	Executive Director	Tech Director, PNC, Dist. Coords.	XCSO Board
Reporting	PN Lead	Technical Director	PNC, HPC, Dist. Coords., Coach Education	XCSO Board, Membership, Funders
Para Nordic Communications	PN Lead	Technical Director	PNC, Dist. Coords.	HPC, XCSO Board
Para Nordic Promotions	PN Lead	Technical Director	PNC, Dist. Coords.	XCSO Board

This recommended model has the Para Nordic Lead (PN Lead) responsible for most program administration functions and has them reporting to the Technical Director for most tasks. The exception would be for grant applications, as this function would typically be led by the Executive Director.

A good example of how this would function is in reporting. The Technical Director is accountable for the development, tracking, and reporting of key performance indicators (KPIs) for Para Nordic, but they do not do the work. The PN Lead consults with the PNC, HPC, District Coordinators, and Coach Education lead to develop and track KPIs. The Technical Director then includes those KPIs in regular or annual reports submitted to the XCSO Board, membership, and funding agencies. If this does not happen, it is the Technical Director that is held accountable as they supervise the PN Lead.

<b>CAPACITY BUILDING</b>				
	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Accountable</b>	<b>Consulted</b>	<b>Informed</b>
Equipment Acquisition and Management	Dist. Coords.	PN Lead	Ski Clubs/ Facilities	Technical Director
Recruit and Train Guides	Ski Clubs/ Facilities	PN Lead	PNC, Coach Education, Technical Director	Technical Director
Recruit Coaches	Ski Clubs/ Facilities	PN Lead	Dist. Coords, PNC, Coach Education	Tech Director
Para Coach Education/ Pro-D	Coach Education	PN Lead	Dist. Coords, PNC, Technical Director	Tech Director, XCSO Executive
Para Nordic Club Support	Dist. Coords.	PN Lead	PNC, Coach Education, Technical Director	Executive Director, XCSO Board

A critical part of building Para Nordic sustainability is the increase of club and ski facility capacity to offer para programming. This includes ensuring that there are training and certified coaches, trained guides for visually impaired athletes, professional development opportunities for coaches and volunteers, equipment, and club support. While many of these tasks will be done by others, the PN Lead must be the champion of these initiatives and must be the one casting the vision, managing the initiatives, and ensuring that the right people and committees are consulted.

Note that there are tasks for the District Coordinators that are not currently in their contracts. There was discussion of potentially hiring Para Nordic District Coordinators;

however, this would continue to segregate Para Nordic from the rest of the organization and run counter to the recommendation of working towards integration.

<b>TALENT IDENTIFICATION &amp; GRASSROOTS</b>				
	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Accountable</b>	<b>Consulted</b>	<b>Informed</b>
First Contact Programs	Dist. Coords.	PN Lead	Ski Clubs/ Facilities, PNC	Technical Director
Provincial Talent Identification Events	PN Lead	Technical Director	PNC, Ski Clubs/ Facilities, Dist. Coords.	Executive Director
Regional Talent Identification/ Recruitment	Dist. Coords.	PN Lead	Ski Clubs/ Facilities, PNC	Technical Director
Integration Resources	PN Lead	Technical Director	PNC, Ski Club/ Facilities, Dist. Coords.	Technical Director, Executive Director
Grassroots Para Nordic programs	Ski Clubs/ Facilities	PN Lead	Dist. Coords., PNC	Technical Director

The Consultant recommends that first contact programs (i.e., Try It Days) are operated by the District Development Coordinators. There are three reasons for this recommendation:

- 1) District Development Coordinators have the relationships with club coaches needed to encourage them to integrate training groups and take the NCCP AWAD coaching module.
- 2) The mandate of District Development Coordinators in developing local capacity should include both Olympic Stream and Para Nordic athletes and coaches.
- 3) To avoid burn-out and maximize impact, XCSO should find ways to minimize PN Lead travel during the winter months.

The PN Lead should work with the District Development Coordinators to provide them with the expertise and resources needed to recruit athletes and build club support. That should not mean that the PN Lead has to attend every first contact session.

The intent of capacity building at a club or facility is to increasingly shift the delivery of grassroots, Learn to Train, and Train to Train Para Nordic programs to clubs. It is to help them to integrate athletes with disabilities into existing programs where feasible, and to assist club coaches. The PN Lead would be responsible for developing and

promoting specific resources (e.g., instructional booklets, videos, Q&A one-pagers, etc.). These could be as simple as articles in newsletters or videos on how to include a sit skier in a Jackrabbit program.

<b>COMPETITIONS</b>				
	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Accountable</b>	<b>Consulted</b>	<b>Informed</b>
Para Nordic Race Schedule	PN Lead	Tech Director	PNC, Ski Clubs/ Facilities, HPC, Dist. Coords.	PNC, Ski Clubs/ Facilities, HPC, Dist. Coords.
Para Nordic Competition Consulting	PNC	PN Lead	Ski Clubs/Facilities	Dist. Coords. Technical Director
Para Nordic Equity and Inclusion	PNC, PN Lead	Executive Director	Tech Director, HPC, PN Lead, Dist. Coords	XCSO Board

The PN Lead is responsible for setting the annual competition schedule, in consultation with the race directors (ski clubs and facilities), PNC, HPC, and District Coordinators.

The PNC should be charged with developing a technical specifications document to assist race directors in ensuring a safe, accessible, and respectful racing experience for Para Nordic athletes. This document should be updated annually to include learnings from the previous season. The PNC should nominate a member to be the technical consultant to assist Ontario Cup and OFSAA race directors in applying the technical specifications. This position should be remunerated with an honorarium and reimbursement for expenses

The PNC and PN Lead would be responsible for all initiatives that increase equity and inclusion. This could include outreach to schools through OFSAA or the W. Ross Macdonald School for the Blind and Deafblind.

<b>HIGH PERFORMANCE ATHLETE DEVELOPMENT</b>				
	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Accountable</b>	<b>Consulted</b>	<b>Informed</b>
Athlete Development Oversight	PN Lead	Technical Director	HPC, PNC	Ski Clubs/ Facilities, Athletes, Coaches

HP Pathway	Technical Director	Executive Director	PN Lead, PNC, HPC	Ski Clubs/ Facilities, Athletes, Coaches
Para Nordic Policy	PN Lead	Technical Director	PNC, HPC, Dist. Coords., Executive Director	Ski Clubs/ Facilities, Athletes, Coaches
Training Camp Coordination	PN Lead	Technical Director	PNC, HPC, Dist. Coords.	Ski Clubs/ Facilities, Athletes, Coaches
Training Camp Delivery	PN Lead	Technical Director	PNC, HPC, Dist. Coords.	Ski Clubs/ Facilities, Athletes, Coaches
Training Camp Wrap Up	PN Lead	Technical Director	PNC, HPC, Dist. Coords.	Ski Clubs/ Facilities, Athletes, Coaches
Liaison with Nordiq Canada (Para Nordic)	PN Lead	Technical Director	HPC	PNC
Provincial Teams Selection	HPC	Technical Director	PN Lead	Executive Director, XCSO Board
Provincial Athlete Assistance Selection	HPC	Technical Director	PNC	Executive Director, XCSO Board
Provincial Para Nordic Team Leadership/ Coaching	PN Lead	Tech Director	HPC, PNC	Executive Director, XCSO Board

The PN Lead will be responsible for the oversight of provincial team athletes and those tracking towards this level of competition. Some of these athletes may be coached by the PN Lead, but it is assumed that not all athletes will be part of the PN Lead's daily training environment. For these athletes, the PN Lead will be a resource for them and their personal coaches.

The PN Lead will ensure that funded Para Nordic athletes have a personal coach, year training plan (YTP), access to integrated support teams (IST), and race support while competing at races where they are on the provincial team.

A high performance pathway provides athletes and coaches with clear expectations for different levels of support. It articulates the support available to those who are willing to invest their time and effort in the sport. A pathway helps frame annual or long-term goals and provides an incentive to train harder. Lastly, if it aligns similarly with the Olympic Stream pathway, the pathway demonstrates a commitment to para athletes and dispels the notion that para athletes are not a full participant in high performance programming. The Technical Director should work with the PN Lead, PNC and HPC to develop a Para Nordic high performance pathway.

The PN Lead would be responsible for the development of Para Nordic policies. These could include support requirements for camps, equipment loan policies, parent inclusion, travel policies, Para Nordic team policies, and other policies affecting athlete development.

The PN Lead would be responsible for coordinating and delivering training camps; however, in the majority of instances, these would be integrated with Olympic Stream camps. Adaptations to training to accommodate the individual needs of athletes would be the responsibility of the PN Lead. The selection of suitable venues for integrated camps would be guided by the PNC, HPC, and District Coordinators. Considerations should be given to accessibility and a variety of training requirements.

Since team and provincial athlete support selection are high performance decisions, they should rest with the HPC. The HPC Terms of Reference should be modified to include a Para Nordic decision and appropriate representation. The PN Lead should attend all HPC meetings (non-voting).

## **SUMMARY**

Creating a sustainable Para Nordic program requires clear roles and responsibilities. The RACI matrix assists in clarifying this and serves as an important framework for program development.



## PARA NORDIC ACTION PLAN

A sustainable Para Nordic program has:

1. Sufficient professional leadership and clear roles and responsibilities for all staff, contractors, and committees;
2. Greater capacity at the ski club/facility level to provide Para Nordic programs locally;
3. Integration of high performance programs with Olympic Stream programs and the accompanying cultural shift towards a philosophy that “an athlete is an athlete” regardless of their abilities or disabilities; and,
4. Inclusion of Para Nordic into administrative systems, technical leadership, and plans (strategic, operational, high performance).

The following four priorities and steps outline an action plan to establish a sustainable Para Nordic program. Please see the accompanying appendices for more detail.

### **1) Implement staffing and job description changes.**

- a. Hire a 0.5 FTE Para Nordic Lead as per draft Job Description.
  - b. Revise District Development Coordinators contracts as proposed.
  - c. Revise Technical Director’s job description as proposed.
- See Appendix A for proposed revisions.

### **2) Revise the terms of reference to align committees with new model.**

- a. Integrate Para Nordic high performance with Olympic Stream.
  - b. Focus Para Nordic Committee on building system capacity.
  - c. Revise the High Performance Committee and Para Nordic Committee terms of reference as per proposed revisions.
- See Appendix B for proposed revisions.

### **3) Focus on increasing ski club/facility capacity to better serve athletes with a disability at a local level.**

- a. Train District Development Coordinators to deliver first contact programs (i.e., Try-It Days) and to assist in recruiting coaches willing to work with Para Nordic athletes.

- b. Develop club and coach resources to provide practical advice on how to integrate Para Nordic participants in Jack Rabbit and other grassroots and developmental programming.
- c. Increase NCCP AWAD coaching clinics and professional development.
- d. Develop a pilot project with a selected club to demonstrate Para Nordic integration and identify required support and resources for targeted expansion. See Appendix C for proposed project overview.
- e. Assign the Para Nordic Committee the task of developing and maintaining a technical document to support event hosts to deliver quality Para Nordic races. Nominate a member to serve as the technical consultant to Ontario Cup/OFSAA race directors.

#### **4) Integrate high performance.**

- a. Align Para Nordic high performance expectations with Olympic Stream. This includes requirements to have a coach, a year training plan, and participate in a monitoring program. Adapt reporting/monitoring methods to accommodate disabilities as required, but maintain the same expectations.
- b. Develop a Para Nordic high performance pathway that aligns with a similar Olympic Stream pathway.
- c. When feasible, XCSO training camps should be integrated to include both Para Nordic and Olympic Stream athletes. Adapt training sessions as needed, but include Para Nordic athletes and coaches in all other activities.
- d. Assign the Para Nordic Lead to oversee identified athletes, monitor their progress, support their coaches, and provide coaching if needed.
- e. Expand high performance Para Nordic athletes access to services offered through the Affiliated Support Team model, Canadian Sport Institute Ontario, and the Nordiq Canada National Training Centre.

## **APPENDIX A—STAFFING CHANGES**

### **PROPOSED PARA NORDIC LEAD JOB DESCRIPTION**

**Job Title: Para Nordic Lead**

**Reports To:**

The Para Nordic Lead will report to Executive Director & Technical Director

**Job Overview**

The Para Nordic Lead oversees the Para Nordic program to achieve the goals and objectives of the organization. The Para Nordic Lead provides leadership to coaches, clubs, and athletes through programs and initiatives intended to increase participation and support the development of high performance athletes.

**Qualifications**

1. University degree in Kinesiology/Physical Education, Education, Business Administration or other related disciplines
2. NCCP minimum Level 3 or Competitive Development or realistic ability to obtain certification within one year
3. Experience as an athlete/coach/support in training camps and/or competitions
4. Knowledge and experience in the cross country skiing and coach program planning
5. Strong communications skills
6. Demonstrated organizational skills and planning abilities
7. Demonstrated leadership in team building
8. Working knowledge of standard office software

**Primary Responsibilities**

**Administration**

- Develop an annual Para Nordic Operations Plan to align with the XCSO Strategic Plan
- Assist with Para Nordic grant submissions and budget development
- Administer the AWAD Program budget
- Report on Para Nordic key performance indicators
- Publish regular communications to athletes, coaches, and clubs
- Liaison with Cross Country Canada
- Serve as secretariate for the Para Nordic Committee

**Capacity Building**

- Facilitate NCCP AWAD coaching clinics and coordinate professional development opportunities for coaches and clubs
- Provide coach leadership including mentoring new AWAD coaches

- Oversee equipment acquisition and management
- Oversee and assist with the recruitment of coaches
- Develop and deliver programs to increase club Para Nordic programs
- Assist ski clubs/facilities in recruiting and training guide skiers
- Develop resources to assist clubs in providing Para Nordic programs and integrating AWAD into club development programs where feasible
- Champion integration and inclusion of Para Nordic athletes

### **Talent Identification and Grassroots**

- Partner with other para specific organizations in hosting recruitment initiatives and talent identification session
- Oversee the delivery of regional first contact programs

### **Athlete Development**

- Monitor identified athletes. Ensure that identified athletes have a personal coach, a year training plan (YTP), access to Integrated Support Teams, and race support while competing at races where they are on the provincial team.
- Conduct gap-analysis on identified athletes and implement strategic and efficient resources to address athlete needs
- Assist in the development and implementation of the Para Nordic High Performance Pathway
- Develop Para Nordic policy in consultation with the Technical Director and appropriate committees
- Plan, coordinate, and deliver all Para Nordic training camps in consultation with the Technical Director and High Performance Committee
- Assist with the drafting and development of selection documents, high performance plans, and monitoring mechanisms
- Coach Para Nordic athletes as requested and serve as Para Nordic provincial coach
- Attend key competitions, training camps, and provincial talent identification events

### **Competition**

- Develop and promote a Para Nordic race schedule
- Oversee the development of Para Nordic technical guides for race directors
- Organize and lead team trips to Ontario Cup race, the provincial championships, regional and national championships
- Lead the Para Nordic team at Canada Winter Games.

## PROPOSED REVISIONS TO TECHNICAL DIRECTOR JOB DESCRIPTION

### Job Title: Technical Director

### Reports To:

The Technical Director will report to Executive Director

### Job Overview

The Technical Director oversees the management of XCSO performance programming within the goals and objectives of the organization. The Technical Director will facilitate open, effective communication and dialogue to ensure a strong, integrated community of coaches driven by a focused and shared vision.

### Qualifications

- a. University degree in Kinesiology/Physical Education, Business Administration or other related disciplines.
- b. Minimum NCCP Train to Train, Competition Development preferred
- c. Experience with Sport/Recreation Management, human resources and/or nonprofit organizations is an asset.
- d. Knowledge and experience in the areas of cross country skiing and high performance program planning
- e. Strong technical knowledge of cross country skiing and related competition environment in Canada
- f. Demonstrated expertise in wax room management and race day management
- g. Demonstrated leadership in team building
- h. Superior verbal and written communication skills with a focus on customer service and dealing effectively with a diverse group of stakeholders/members
- i. Working knowledge of standard office software.

### Responsibilities and Duties

#### 1. Ontario Programming & Criteria (AB & PN)

##### Able Bodied

- Review Ontario Team Programming, Q4G ON Athlete Assistance criteria annually and evaluate program effectiveness relative to goals
- Lead Ontario Junior Ski Team, Ontario Ski Team, and Ontario District Team selection including appeals and coach recommendations
- Manage and maintain OST/OJST/ON Bib Points for publication
- Engage in the planning calendar of camps in coordination with PN program

##### Para-Nordic

- Review Ontario PN Team Programming Q4G ON Athlete Assistance criteria annually and evaluate program effectiveness relative to goals

~~Lead Ontario PN Team selection with the guidance of the PN Coordinator~~

~~Liaise with race organizers for the inclusion of PN athletes at identified competitions~~

Engage in the planning calendar of camps in coordination with AB program

## 2. Partnerships

National Team Development Centre – Thunder Bay

- Evaluate & recommend opportunities for NTDC integration into XCSO high performance pathway

Canadian Sport Institute Ontario

- Work with NTDC Head Coach to develop priorities for OHPSI program
- Identify and prioritize KPI's relative to OHPSI program KPIs
- Provide content and attend CSIO review meetings

Other partners (SFQ, Nordiq Canada, Universities)

- Lead the Ontario development and implementation of the HP pathway with Nordiq Canada
- Continue to build on relationships with SFQ and identify means by which collaboration can be beneficial
- Explore opportunities to support varsity skiing at the OUA and CCUNC level

Para Sport Partners

- Work Liaise with Para Nordic Lead ~~Coordinator~~ to build partnerships with key para partners in the development of para partners including the Canadian Paralympic Committee, ON Blind Sports Association, Para Sport Collective, CSIO, etc.

## 3. Community

- Provide guidance and leadership in the development of club racing programs
- Plan and lead ON Super Camps
- Lead the recruitment of provincial coach experience candidates and assist in the development of goals
- Review and re-design Coach Mentorship program with Coaching Development Coordinator
- Contribute to and attend XCSO AGM &/or Coach Seminar

## 4. Other

- Roller ski fleet management and maintenance
- Contribute to grant applications and reporting as necessary
- Contribute to social media content as appropriate
- Update and maintain xcskiontario.ca as needed and where appropriate

## PROPOSED REVISIONS TO DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR CONTRACTS

### Primary Responsibilities:

1. Provide leadership and guidance within the [DISTRICT] coaching community;
  2. Liaise and collaborate with [DISTRICT] Development Co-Coordinator
  3. Plan and coordinate of training opportunities within the district in consultation with club coaches and club leaders
  4. Attend monthly XCSO Team Meetings with the XCSO Technical Director.
  5. Attend Team Ontario fall/summer camps (when/if possible due to COVID-19 public health guidelines and restrictions).
  6. Adhere to Ethical Coaching Practices and [XCSO Responsible Coaching Guidelines](#)
- Specific responsibilities within the following deliverables will be evaluated monthly and be adapted to the demands of the district as they evolve:

### XCSO Super Camps:

1. Along with the XCSO Technical Director, engage in the planning, management and delivery of [DISTRICT] Super Camps; 1 dryland and 1 early on snow camp. Including the following specific tasks:
  - a. Consider creative strategies to address athlete and coach collaboration and to promote Para Nordic integration (age specific camps vs. "all-together camps") and collaborate with coaches on training plan design and implementation.
  - b. Prepare a written report for the XCSO High Performance Committee (HPC) which includes a summary of each camp with an analysis from your perspective of areas of strength and areas of improvement in the camp(s).
  - c. If no Super Camps, support talented athletes and coaches outside of major clubs in finding development and growth opportunities.
2. Attend out of district Super Camps to support other districts or Development Coordinators in the delivery of their district's camps if available and necessary.

### Greater [DISTRICT] Outreach:

1. Identify, connect and establish relationships with clubs in the district
2. In consultation with the club, identify areas for growth.
3. Arrange for visits to clubs, with their needs in mind, considering coach, parent, athlete and community development objectives.
4. Host first contact Para Nordic sessions as required.
5. Support initiatives to increase club capacity to provide local Para Nordic programs.

### Greater Ontario Club and Community Outreach:

1. In consultation with the Technical Director and other Development Coordinator Staff, work to connect with clubs in the other districts in-person or virtually as needed and deemed appropriate.

## APPENDIX B—GOVERNANCE CHANGES

### PROPOSED REVISIONS TO HIGH PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

#### 1. Overview:

A core component of the activities led by Cross Country Ski Ontario (XCSO) is the shaping, development and delivery of a high performance system. High performance skiing is important to XCSO as it helps to elevate the profile of the sport locally and across the Province and inspire individuals and families to support the sport and embrace winter. An effective high performance system creates an environment that attracts and retains athletes across all skill levels as well as providing experiences that propels athletes to national and international success. In order to create this environment XCSO requires direction and advice.

#### 2. Purpose:

The High Performance Committee (HPC) is an operational committee of Cross Country Ski Ontario (XCSO). The HPC facilitates the development and successful operation of XCSO's high performance system and the Ontario Ski Team (OST), the Ontario Para Nordic Team (OPNT) and Ontario Talent Squad (OTS) programs. Consistent with the XCSO mission, the HPC is guided by the commitment to create the environment and programs that support all Ontario skiers and help them to achieve national and international excellence.

***NOTE: We can accomplish integration this way or by defining OST to include both Olympic Stream and Para Nordic teams. Since Para Nordic has not previously been included, it is recommended that there is an overt inclusion and not an implied implication.***

#### 3. Accountability:

Reports to the XCSO Board of Directors, does not have authority to make decisions on behalf of the Board or to bind XCSO in any way, unless specifically authorized to do so by the Board. The HPC Chair is elected annually at the XCSO Annual General Meeting.

The Chairperson of the HPC is authorized to:

- a. Act as the spokesperson for the HPC within XCSO; and,
- b. Speak externally on behalf of XCSO, within the HPC mandate.

#### 4. Mandate:

In accordance with the XCSO governance model, the mandate of the HPC is to:

- a. Shape and develop the operational programs, plans, and policies governing the operation of the OST, OPNT and OTS programs;



- b. Establish the principles, concepts and strategies that encompass the high performance environment and system in Ontario; and,
- c. Facilitate coordination of the components of the high performance system including relationships with CCC High Performance, CCC Coach and Athlete Development, NTDC Thunder Bay, Ontario Districts, Clubs and alignment with the Ontario Cup series, Ontario Midget Championships and NorAm races.

## 5. Membership:

- a. The HPC shall have two types of members, voting members and advisory members
- b. The voting members of the HPC shall be made up of the following representatives:
  - i. District representatives (4) with minimum 2-year appointments. District HPC representatives are recommended by their respective District. Specifically:
    - 1. 1 representing Lake Superior Ski District;
    - 2. 1 representing Northern Ontario District;
    - 3. 1 representing Southern Ontario District;
    - 4. 1 representing National Capital District.
  - ii. Olympic Stream Athlete representative (1) and Para Nordic Athlete representative (1)
  - iii. University representative (1)
  - iv. HPC Chair
- c. Remaining members are non-voting advisory members, as follows:
  - i. the Ontario Provincial Coach or designate;
  - ii. the XCSO Para Nordic Lead;
  - iii. the NDC Head Coach or Assistant Coach;
  - iv. the CCC High Performance Coordinator;
  - v. the XCSO Coaching Development Coordinator;
  - vi. the XCSO, CCC HP Rep if not the HPC Chair;
  - vii. the XCSO Executive Director/Administrator;
  - viii. the XCSO Chair or designated member of the XCSO Board; the role of this member is to provide the HPC with a strategic perspective on issues under consideration.

## 6. Responsibilities:

Committee:

The HPC is responsible for assisting the Board in building and managing the operation of a cohesive and effective high performance system of provincial scope within the national high performance framework. The specific responsibilities of the HPC include:

- a. Providing input for the strategic direction of the able-bodied high performance system including the OST program philosophy, structure and operating principles;
- b. Creating an operating framework for the High Performance system;
- c. Developing an annual plan for the OST, OPNT and OTS;

NO proposed changes further in the Terms of Reference.

## PROPOSED REVISIONS TO PARA NORDIC COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

### Introduction:

Cross Country Ski Ontario supports and promotes para-nordic skiing at all levels consistent with Cross Country Ski Ontario's overall mission. We promote participation, accessibility, skills development and lifetime enjoyment of the sport of Cross Country Skiing. As such, the Board of Directors (the "Board") forms the Para-Nordic Committee (the "Committee") as an operational committee of Cross Country Ski Ontario.

### Purpose

The Committee provides advice and operational support to the Board of Directors in the development and delivery of programs designed for Para Nordic~~para-nordic skiing~~. The work of the committee will be fully aligned with initiatives, goals and objectives of Cross Country Ski Ontario as identified in Cross Country Ski Ontario's Strategic Plan.

The Committee will advise on strategies to grow Para Nordic participation and increase the capacity of ski clubs and districts to deliver locally-based Para Nordic programs. ~~recruitment strategies through partnerships, community outreach, and other program opportunities.~~

### Accountability

The Committee reports to the Board of Directors through the Chair of the Para-Nordic Committee (the "Committee Chair"). The Committee does not have authority to make decisions on behalf of the Board or to bind Cross Country Ski Ontario in any way, unless specifically authorized to do so by the Board.

### Mandate

Guided by the Committee Chair, the Committee will contribute expertise and district perspectives to the development and successful operation of Cross Country Ski Ontario's Para-Nordic programs in effecting the purpose of the Committee.

In general, the Committee will:

- Help develop strategic direction and plans for Cross Country Ski Ontario's Para Nordic~~para-nordic~~ programs with the goal of developing opportunities for new, developing and non-competitive participants.
- ~~Help develop strategic direction and plans for Cross Country Ski Ontario's para-nordic programs with the goal of providing sustainable achievement of high performance in national competition.~~

**NOTE: High performance Para Nordic programs would be integrated into the High Performance Committee.**

- Fulfill strategies and key performance indicators identified in the annual Para-Nordic Operational Plan.

- Contribute to an annual program reporting by reviewing and developing key performance indicators and assisting in gathering related data. ~~evaluation to confirm that objectives are being met and are achieving the desired results.~~

**NOTE: PNC shifts its role towards supporting reporting of agreed upon key performance indicators. It should be noted that the Technical Director's job description includes an annual evaluation of the Para Nordic programs. It is advised that this remains a responsibility of the Technical Director (staff) and not a volunteer committee. It is recommended that an external review of all programs (Olympic Stream and Para Nordic) should be conducted every quadrennial.**

- Facilitate communication, cooperation and coordination between the different levels (i.e., ~~National,~~ Provincial, District and clubs) and components of para-nordic programs.

**NOTE: PNC is not charged with national level communications.**

- Provide advice and assistance to other operational committees of Cross Country Ski Ontario as required.
- Deliver guidance and help related to other aspects of Para Nordic~~para-nordic~~ programs in Ontario wherever and whenever possible.
- Provide Para Nordic technical advice to race directors.
- ~~Act as a para-nordic specific High Performance Committee to p~~Provide advice to the High Performance Committee and Para Nordic Lead with regards to and support in developing high performance plans, policies and selection criteria.

**NOTE: While the PNC's advice on high performance should be sought, the responsibility for Para Nordic high performance would rest with the High Performance Committee.**

Committees and Staff of Cross Country Ski Ontario will have areas of shared mandate, such as the Para Nordic Committee, the High Performance Committee and the Cross Country Ski Ontario Coach and Athlete Development Program. In these areas, consultation between committees and staff is expected. The Committee will work to support the decisions and directions from other committees as applicable to Para Nordic programs in alignment with Cross Country Ski Ontario values.

## Membership

The Committee shall be composed of, when reasonably possible:

- Chair of the Para-Nordic Committee (the "Committee Chair")
  - Providing leadership
  - Conducting meetings
  - Act as spokesperson to the XCSO Board of Directors
- ~~An athlete representative from the Ontario Para-Nordic Ski Team~~

**NOTE: The Athlete Rep would sit on the High Performance Committee.**

- ~~Providing representation of athlete voices~~
- ~~Act as an information conduit to and from program participants and athletes~~
- ~~Liaise with able-bodied High Performance Committee athlete representative~~

- The Para-~~\_Nordic~~ ~~CoachSki Team coaching representative~~ (ex officio) ~~, where identified by the Board~~
  - ~~Serving as Para Nordic Committee secretariat~~
    - Providing knowledge of the program and participants
- District representatives, at the discretion of the District Board
- Technical Director (ex-officio)
  - Providing information regarding high performance programming in both the context of ~~Para Nordic~~~~para-nordic sport~~ and ~~Olympic Stream sportable-bodied sport~~.
  - Liaise with High-Performance Committee
  - Liaise with Nordiq Canada Para-Nordic Committee(s)

**NOTE: As these relate to high performance, the relevance of these functions to the PNC will be much lower.**

- Staff persons may be assigned by the Executive Director to support the activities of the Committee (ex-officio)

**NOTE: It is recommended that this support is from the Para Nordic Lead who would serve as a secretariat for the PNC. Specifically, this would include working with the Chair to draft and circulating agendas, keeping records/minutes, providing background research for agenda topics, and reporting out on Para Nordic programs as a standing item at all meetings.**

- Chair of the Board of Directors (ex-officio)
  - Coordinate with the XCSO Board of Directors
  - Provide liaison with Nordiq Canada Division Chairs' Committee
- Such other members as may be identified by the Committee Chair as beneficial to the Committee

The XCSO Board of Directors will appoint members.

The district members of the Committee shall be appointed by the Board in consultation with the Para Nordic Committee Chair and District chairs in the affected regions. When a district is not represented, the Executive Director, in consultation with the Committee Chair~~person~~ and the ~~d~~District chair~~person~~, shall determine whether to recommended an individual who will facilitate the communication of the purposes, goals and objectives of the Committee to the District chairperson.

~~The athlete representative will be recommended by fellow Ontario Para-Nordic Ski Team athletes in consultation with the Committee Chairperson.~~

The membership term is typically one year expiring at the first Board of Directors' meeting following the Cross Country Ski Ontario (XCSO) Annual General Meeting.

**NOTE: This is a very short term. Consider changing this to two years. Since the PNC averages 3-4 meetings per year, this is asking for a 6-8 meeting commitment.**

### Chairperson

The Chair~~person~~ of the Para-~~\_Nordic~~ Committee is responsible for providing leadership to the Committee (e.g., convening meetings; developing agendas; assigning, supervising and coordinating the Committee work) and representing the Committee in communication.

## Decision-Making

The Committee's role is to provide advice and support to the Cross Country Ski Ontario Board of Directors.

***NOTE: XCSO must determine the relation between the PNC and staff as it relates to the Para Nordic program. Specifically, to whom is the PNC advice directed? Is it provided to the Board who is removed from most program decisions or is it provided to XCSO staff who is charged with leading the program. To an extent, it depends on how involved the board wants to be in program decisions.***

For greater clarity, the Board shall not be bound by advice from the Committee. The Committee shall endeavour to make recommendations by consensus.

## Meetings

The Committee shall determine a meeting schedule that facilitates achievement of the Committee's ongoing work and will meet at least four times per year.

Meetings may be by phone, in person, or by any other means that facilitates simultaneous communication of attending Committee members.

Directors and committee chair ~~persons~~ of other Cross Country Ski Ontario programs will be invited to attend meeting that may have implications for their program areas or where their advice is indicated.

The Committee will keep a record of recommendations ~~and decisions~~ and provide this record to the Cross Country Ski Ontario ~~Secretary or~~ Executive Director.

***NOTE: It is recommended that decisions is removed to align with the fact that this is not a decision making body. It is assumed that the recommendations are decisions of the committee.***

## APPENDIX C—CLUB PARA NORDIC PILOT

### Para Nordic Club Development Pilot

#### Objectives:

- Build club capacity to deliver local Para Nordic programs;
- Integrate Para Nordic athletes into regular club programming where feasible;
- Gather practical tips, success stories, and understandings that can be used by other clubs;
- Develop a replicable model that can establish new Para Nordic programs across the province; and,
- Leverage the expertise and club relationships of District Development Coordinators to address challenges to expanding Para Nordic programs.

#### Overview:

XCSO would work with a club partner to develop a Para Nordic program that is integrated with existing club programs. XCSO would provide equipment subsidies, coach education and grants, first contact programs, and administrative support. The pilot would last two years.

#### Project Selection Criteria:

Clubs should have the opportunity to apply for participation. Proposed criteria are:

1. Population >500,000 within 40km to ensure adequate pool of potential Para participants and to reduce transportation barriers;
2. Ability to fund >\$1,000 towards participating club coach(es);
3. Willingness to host NCCP AWAD coaching clinics and Try-It Days;
4. Commitment to use Para Nordic Lead to assist in integration with other club programs;
5. Commitment to develop plans to sustain the program beyond two years; and,
6. Agreement to meet reporting, communications, and promotions requirements.

#### Project Funding

Grants should be sought to support the program. It is suggested that a \$7,500 budget would include:

Club Coach Subsidy	\$3,500
Coach Education	\$ 500
Coach Travel/Expenses	\$ 750
District Development Coordinator (hours)	\$ 750
District Development Coordinator (travel)	\$ 250
Project Administration (Club)	\$1,750