

CROSS COUNTRY ALBERTA STRATEGIC PLAN 2019-2027



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Introduction

The Cross Country Alberta (CCA) Strategic Plan is aligned with Cross Country Canada's (CCC) "It's Our Time" Strategic Plan to 2018(+). CCC is the national sport governing body for the sport of cross-country skiing in Canada. As well, the Strategic Plan aligns with the recently published 10 year Alberta Sport Connection Vision. CCA is the provincial sport governing body for the sport of cross-country skiing in Alberta.

CCA's strategic plan delineates the specific focus and new initiatives of the association for the eight-year planning period and is directly linked to the annual operational plan and budget for the association. The plan has been developed from member club input at the 2010 – 2012 membership meetings and survey, which continues the member-based planning process initiated since 2002. Ongoing input from member clubs continued in 2013 and 2014. Further consultation with Ian Reade, University of Alberta Athletics (2017-2019) and the Alberta Sport Connection, has ensured that the CCA Strategic Plan is well aligned with all levels of the sporting community. This plan identifies and confirms the strategic direction, assessment of services and high priority challenges for clubs. Information collection has continued through ongoing consultation with members, coaches, athletes, Cross Country Canada and provincial divisions. In addition, a provincial coach has been hired to assist with consultation, direction, and development (club, athlete, and program)

We define events as "a broad continuum of opportunities from recreational activities at the local club level to competitive races which advance competitive skiing," and recognize club development opportunities occur along this continuum. This definition provided direction for the vision, mission, strategic goals and operation plan.

The strategic plan articulates CCA strategic focus for the planning period and is linked to the operational plan because it:

- Creates a clear connection from the core values and strategic vision/mission, themes and goals to annual operational activities, programs and services
- Provides a basis for discussing the priority of the activities planned for the year
- Acts as a filter for responding to opportunities that arise during a year: will they contribute to accomplishing long-term goals and outcomes, as well as annual goals and objectives?
- Establishes policy and operational responsibilities for annual planning
- Is organized around measurable outcomes that facilitates accountability because it:
 - translates into a work planning and monitoring tool for staff and committees
 - enables the board to monitor and evaluate the association's progress
 - requires management to establish measurable annual outcomes

The CCA Strategic Plan has the following elements:

- Vision and Mission reflects the aspiration of the association
- Core Values provide fundamental and consistent enduring direction
- *Strategic Themes* set out the target areas for growth and change over the next four years
- *Strategic Goals* set what needs to be accomplished to achieve the strategic themes
- *Strategic Outcomes* articulate the vision as measurable results. Outcomes provide an overall barometer of success.

<u>The CCA Operational Plan</u> is organized in an operational calendar of annual work, and identifies the specific activities to be done to achieve the annual objectives, including the:

- priority
- budget impact
- person/committee accountable to deliver the action

Vision

Cross Country Alberta is a strong network of cross-country ski clubs that serve and benefit the recreational, competitive and social needs of cross-country skiers to be *Active for Life*.

Mission

Cross Country Alberta coordinates and facilitates a province-wide network of clubs, which through collaborative leadership, provide a full calendar of events, programs, services and activities that contribute to club development and support the needs of our members, from recreational to competitive skiers. CCA and its member clubs will support official, coach, volunteer and facility development to enable all skiers to be active in cross country skiing for life.

Core Values

Cross Country Alberta values and believes:

- The roots of cross-country skiing founded in an inherent love of outdoor experiences in nature
- Participation in skiing contributing to a healthy lifestyle and feelings of well-being
- The value of sports and skier development as guided by the Canadian Sport for Life and Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD)
- All people having the right to equal opportunity to participate in cross-country skiing
- Sporting excellence achieved through fair play, ethical and moral behaviour
- Members being treated fairly, equitably and with respect
- Partners and sponsors that are valued, supported and endorsed
- Cost efficient and cost-effective delivery of services to our membership
- Operating with integrity, and in a fair, open and transparent manner
- Responsibility and accountability for our actions

Strategic Themes

1. Sport Excellence

Goal: Albertans value cross-country skiing and demonstrate best-in-class performance in all aspects of the sport. Results will be achieved at a level that reflects and justifies the resources invested.

2. Program Development and Community Alignment (Leadership, Youth & Athletes, Events)

Goal: The cross-country skiing community collectively creates an environment that inspires athletes of all ages and abilities. The Alberta's cross-country skiing community (including CCC, divisions, clubs, training centers, and funding partners) actively collaborate to achieve progress on athlete performance, coaches & officials education, sport awareness which leads to sport for life participation.

3. Branding and Promotion

Goal: Albertans recognize cross-country skiing as a rewarding outdoor winter activity which provides health and fitness benefits and an encouraging social environment to stay active for life.

4. National Profile

Goal: The national ski community increasingly recognizes Alberta as a strong supporter of Nordic sports and as a Nordic destination.

5. Organization management

Goal: Cross Country Alberta is a strong organization with effective leadership, governance and organizational capacity to build on multiple funding sources to ensure sustainability of the organization and growth of the sport.

Sport Excellence

Goal: Albertans value cross-country skiing and demonstrate best-in-class performance in all aspects of the sport. Results will be achieved at a level that reflects and justifies the resources invested.

Objectives:

- High Performance Alberta is the top province in cross country skiing
 - o Consistently supporting athletes to enter into the National High-Performance pathway
 - Consistently supporting coaches to reach the highest level of certification and knowledge to support HP athlete development
 - Consistently supporting programs (like Alberta Ski Team and Alberta Developmental Team) to prepare athletes and coaches for the national high-performance level through appropriate educational, training and technique development opportunities
 Measurements:
 - By 2027 from year to year Alberta have athletes in the top 5 at National Level Competitions
 - Alberta will have podium finishes in every category at the Canada Winter Games
 - The Alberta Ski Team and Alberta Development Team will have members from all regions including first nations athletes
 - o By 2027 programs lead national level athletes into NextGen programs
- Inclusiveness:
 - Through Ski Fit North, Alberta will have a strong presence within First Nations communities, augmenting and enhancing the Spirit North Programs.
 - Start new initiatives to support Para-Nordic programming
 - Focusing on programs/club's expansion to all Zones within Alberta

Measurement:

- By 2027 Alberta has a strong presence in the Para-Nordic Stream with strong representation at the National Level
- \circ $\;$ By 2027 Ski Fit North will support athletes into Provincial HP pathway and programs
- By 2027 Alberta will have full teams at the Alberta Winter Games including first nation participants

• Competitive skier development

- Supporting province-wide growths in athlete's participation at races?
- Promoting Alberta Cups participation for all ages and abilities, through ski club's engagement
- Continue with the Alberta Ski Team (AST) and Alberta Development Team (ADT) and expand participation so it will have members from all regions including first nations athletes

Measurements:

- \circ $\,$ $\,$ Monitor and report a consistent growth in AB cups participation numbers $\,$
- o The AST, ADT programs feed national level athletes into NextGen programs
- \circ ~ Increase roller ski workshops and race participation numbers by 2027 ~

Sport Excellence	Now (2018-2019)	2019 - 2023	2023-2027
High Performance Alberta is the top province in cross country skiing.	 Going into the season we are the 4th province of the "big 4" (BC, Ontario, Quebec, Alberta) 	 Top 3 province in Canada Consistently feed athletes into the National High- Performance Pathway 	 Top province in Canada Consistently have athletes in the top 5 at National Level Competitions Feed athletes into NextGEN Pathway
Spirit North Alberta will have a strong presence within First Nations communities, enhancing the S.N program and XC skiing.	 Provide access to coaching courses Community event partnership 	 Develop connections and support progression from Spirit North programs to CCA programs and events. Invite athletes to AB cups 	 Presence at AWG Feed into Provincial HP pathway and programs
Para-Nordic Alberta will have strong representation in the para-Nordic stream	 Little to no presence Currently limited programs 	 Seasonal part-time Para-Nordic coach Increase number of clubs with para Nordic programs Rocky Mountain Adaptive Sports partnerships 	 Feed athletes into HP Pathway Full-time Para- Nordic coach
Expansion to all Zones within Alberta	 Currently, we do not have a team in Zone 1 	 Have full teams at the Alberta Winter Games from all Zones More focus on Outreach programs (rollerski programs) 	 Increase support for outreach areas where no strong clubs exist.
Alberta will have podium finishes in every category at the Canada Winter Games and hold the division banner at Nationals	 Haven't achieved this goal yet at CWG or Nationals 	 ADT and AST Programs will have more financial support for coaches' development and athlete development 	 Continue to support provincial programs, coach and club development

The Alberta Ski	Maintain and	• Have a full-time	Programs raise
Team and Alberta	support existing	Provincial Coach	National level
Development Team	programs	 Programs develop 	athletes and stream
will have members	 Support athletes 	athletes to National	into NextGen
from all regions	to exceed IPB	level competitors	programs
	standards	and programs	

2. Community Alignment and Program Development (Leadership, Youth & Athletes, Events)

Goal: The cross-country skiing community collectively creates an environment that inspires athletes of all ages and abilities. The Alberta's cross-country skiing community (including CCC, divisions, clubs, training centers, and funding partners) actively collaborate to achieve progress on athlete performance, coaches & officials' education, sport awareness which leads to sport for life participation.

Objectives:

- Individuals of all skill level access the resources they need to learn to ski and continue their development in Alberta.
 - Develop new communication lines with athletes, parents and non-racing skiers to provide resources to their unique needs.
 - Support new club/program establishment by developing resources on how to start a new xc ski club.
 - Continue the support and promotion of the national grassroots-Jackrabbit program. <u>Measurement</u>
 - By 2027 there is a 15% growth in new club numbers or programs that serve new communities in AB.
- Coaches, technicians and officials have access to professional development opportunities at all levels within Alberta.
 - Provide professional support to coaches, officials, technicians education and certification system by championing the role of liaison with NSO and CAC.
 - Seek opportunities for feedback and conversations with clubs and continue providing advice on best practices regarding certification courses.
 - Keep abreast of new information and changes to programs at national, provincial levels and communicate it in a timely manner.

Measurements

- By 2027 the number of certified coaches and officials will grow in proportion to the growth in membership.
- By 2027 increase the number of coach developers/facilitators/evaluators to reflect the growing need of the courses and workshop organized.
- Increase the retention rates for athletes after the Learn to Train stage of the LTAD.
 - Analyze athlete drop out reasons and find a solution to retain more athletes after Learn to Train stages.

<u>Measurements</u>

- By 2027 the number of race licence holders in Learn to train and above improves by 15% from the 2018-2019 season.
- Clubs continue to thrive, realize the benefits/value of associating with CCA and feel connected to the ski community.
 - Improve communication of CCA value proposition with our clubs by:
 - Increasing Club visits/outreach projects and asking for feedback on CCA work.
 - Content management of the website, social media, Nordic news etc.
 - Improve clubs' engagements with creating common goals and sharing knowledge and resources.

Measurements:

- More clubs' representatives being part of CCA committees and support the CCA Board work.
- Alberta clubs and the Training Centre (World Cup Society) help to increase the depth and variety of domestic competitions and overall program innovation
 - Maintain the success of the AB cups and participation numbers.
 - Find new host clubs or events.
 - Collaborate with hosts and help with promotion loppets and of recreational events.

Measurements:

- Monitor and report how many AB cups are organized and how many Zones are involved.
- o Monitor and report loppets numbers and participation numbers.

• Engagement of non-club member, recreational skiers.

- By 2027 Establish Recreational- no club affiliated membership category to be able to join CCA.
- Establish projects to engage and attract recreational skiers to join CCA and provide common goals which support their interest.
- Establish communication lines with recreational skiers who don't race.
- Albertans can find places to ski close to home no matter where they live: urban, rural or reserve.
 - Establish a new /better communication channel about where to ski.
 - Start new initiatives and collaborate with local municipalities/organizations to help build more trails for skiing.
 - Working with the appropriate organizations in major Albertan cities to make them accessible for skiing in the winter (e.g. track setting and lighting will be expanded throughout these urban centers).

Measurements:

- By 2027 increase trail numbers and accessibility in both urban and rural areas.
- By 2027 increase total trail distance in existing cities by 30%.

Community Alignment	Now (2018-2019)	2019-2023	2023-2027
Access to resources at all levels and across Alberta	 Pockets of strong clubs No resources delegated for new club development 	 Adding the HP director's role will increase the club activates 15% more across AB communities. 	 By 2027 there is a 30% growth in new club numbers or programs that serve new communities in AB.
Increasing retention of athletes after the Learn to Train stage of the LTAD.	 Losing athletes by grade 12 	 The total number of race licence holders improves by 15% from the 2018-season. 	 The number of race licence holders improves by 30% from 2018 season. The number of race licence holders in Learn to Train and above improves by 15%.
Coaches, technicians and officials have access to professional development opportunities at all levels within Alberta.	 Courses are offered but lack of facilitators and evaluators for high level 	 25% of the coaches are certified at the Train to Train level. Increase the number of coach developers/facilitat ors/evaluators Increase retention of community coaches 	 50% of the coaches are certified at the Train to Train level. – is this realistic? The number of certifications completed grows in proportion to the growth in membership. Increase the number of high performance coaches i.e., learn to compete, train to compete
Clubs continue to thrive and realize the benefits/value of associating with CCA and feel connected to the ski community.	 An area that needs significant work 	 Improve communication of value proposition for membership with CCA by: Club visits/outreach Content management Improve club engagement 	 New collaboration projects established yearly for common goal sharing and working together. More clubs' representatives being part of CCA committees and support the CCA Board work

Albertans can find places to ski close to home no matter where they live:	 We are in the proposal stage to collaborate with Calgary Nordic Alliance City of Calgary and 	 Partner with other organizations and municipalities to support trails and volunteers 	 Multi-use trails in major Albertan cities will be accessible for skiing in the winter. Working with the appropriate organizations, track setting and lighting will
where they live:	• City of		track setting and lighting will
urban, rural or	Calgary, and		be expanded throughout
reserve.	Trail Net		these urban centers.

3. Branding and Promotion

Goal: Albertans recognize cross-country skiing as a rewarding outdoor winter activity which provides health and fitness benefits and an encouraging social environment to stay active for life.

Objectives:

- Cross-country skiing is promoted to all demographics, including the following: kids, youth, parents & caregivers, schools & after-school programs, university students, professionals and active for life participants.
 - \circ $\;$ Continue with CCA newsletters, focusing on expanding its reach to more people.
 - Try new initiatives targeting universities, schools, recreational skiers and Tourists (skill-travel, race travel, tourism vacations).

<u>Measurements</u>

- By 2027 an increase of sponsorship will allow for membership discounts.
- Monitor and measure participation numbers (e.g. Schools, universities loppets, etc.).

• Increased recognition of the CCA Membership benefits

- Establish yearly project which helps to create common goals for the whole Alberta XC community.
- Improve social media and mainstream media presence by frequently communicating about goals reached; athletes result and success stories.

Measurements

• By 2027 increase CCA membership by 50%.

• Collaboration and multi-sport awareness

- Explore and establish new marketing opportunities building on the xc ski clubs and other cross-country sport organization PSOs and NSO.
- Network and establish relationships with other sport (non-skier) organizations for cross promotion and supporting the multi-sport concept.

Measurements

• Monitor and report on collaboration projects with clubs, NSO, PSO's and other sport organizations.

Branding &	Now (2018-2019)	2019-2023	2023-2027
Promotion			

Increase recognition of the CCA Membership	 Individuals do not see value in membership Currently, have 5852 members 	 Develop new Membership drive strategies Promote value proposition to existing clubs Draw in a new audience to reach 8000 members 	 Double membership in CCA 10,000 members
Cross-country skiing is promoted to all Albertans and out of province for tourism	Club ProgramsUniversity Series	 Ties into the value proposition, develop new ways of communications Increase membership discounts from sponsors 	 Increase membership discounts from sponsors by 20%
Collaboration and multi-sport awareness	• We rely a lot on the NSO for making the sport well known	 Develop partnerships and build networking with other sport organizations who support multi-sport concept(summer/winte r sports) 	 Establish multi-sport program offerings and track participation

4. National Profile

Goal: The national ski community increasingly recognizes Alberta as a strong supporter of nordic sports and as a nordic destination.

Objectives:

- Alberta clubs and the Training Centre (World Cup Society) help to increase the depth and variety of domestic competitions and overall program innovation
 - \circ $\,$ $\,$ Maintain the success of the AB cups and participation numbers.
 - Collaborate with hosts and help with the promotion of loppets and other recreational events.
 - Opportunities for our athletes to have high quality competition training nationally to better prepare them for international competitions.

Measurements

- Monitor and report how many AB cups are organized and how many zones are involved.
- Monitor and report loppets numbers and participation.
- Monitor and report number of athletes attending international competition and training camps.
- The World Cup continues to be hosted in Canmore (World Cup Society) at least once every four

years.

Measurements

- By 2027 AB has multiple FIS level officials to be used for National and International events.
- International cross-country skiers at all levels come to Alberta for training and events of various types, including loppets, at various times throughout the year.
 - Increase promotion is targeting out of province clubs and cross-country ski communities inviting them to come to Alberta.
 - Look for cross-promotion activities with municipalities.

Measurements

Find a way of measuring or referencing this number from tourism, chamber of commerce sites.

- Alberta is a leader for the ski community who collaborates within the province, and with other ski communities across Canada and North America.
 - Community engagement through clubs.
 - Build / Improve memberships value.
 - Work with other provinces as well as the United States.

Measurements

Success stories and projects in the next eight years.

• Alberta is recognized as a leader in Para-Nordic program development and trail accessibility

• By 2027 hire a full-time Para-Nordic coach

	Now (2018-2019)	2019-2023	2023-2027
The World Cup continues to be hosted in Canmore (World Cup Society) at least once every four years.	 This happens CCA should support W.C.S 	 Officials training courses (partnering) 	 AB has multiples FIS level officials to be used for National and International events
Alberta clubs and the (World Cup Society) help to increase the variety of domestic competitions	World MastersWorld Cup	 Promote low key domestic ski race circuit and rollerski circuit. 	Continue developing racing opportunities.
Alberta is a collaborative leader province within the xc community nationally and in North America	 Rebuild CCA's image 	 Community engagement through clubs Common goals to engage with National programs Improve communication for national scope Partnering with other provinces and 	 Improve communication for international scope Showcase Alberta for international destination for races

		the United States for training camps and competitions	 Become a leader in partnerships
Alberta is recognized as a leader in para-nordic development and trail accessibility.	 Little to no presence Currently limited programs 	 Dedicated seasonal Para Nordic coach Strong development program Increase number of club with para Nordic programs Rocky Mountain Adaptive Sports partnerships 	 Full time Para- Nordic coach Feed athletes into HP Pathway

5. Organization management

Goal: Cross Country Alberta is a strong organization with effective leadership, governance and organizational capacity to build on multiple funding sources to ensure the sustainability of the organization and growth of the sport.

Objectives:

- Financial Sustainability
 - Outlook projection on finances or financial performance of the organization.
 - Diversify grants portfolio.

Measurements:

- Further, increase revenue by 10%.
- By 2027 CCA increases its overall funding by 30%.
- By 2027 CCA increases its funding from non-governmental sources by at least 50%.

Board development and human resources

- Develop and maintain CCA Board of directors' skills.
- o Establish process and preparation for succession planning.
- Maintain up-to-date policies and bylaws, operational plans etc. to support effective and efficient operation.

Measurements

- How many board, and staff development opportunities exits and monitor yearly attendance.
- o Organizational documents (policies, bylaws, etc.) are up to date.
- \circ $\;$ Maintain good board and staff communication lines with regular meetings.
- Ensure CCA's current sponsorships continue
 - Target Event Sponsors

- Recruit two long term sponsors
- o Retain Fountain Tire sponsor

Measurements

- By 2027 CCA recruit 5 long term sponsors
- By 2027 CCA retains current sponsors

• Apply for grant funding

- \circ ~ Apply for the CIP grant funding
- Apply for the OIP grant funding
- Apply for the STEP grant funding
- **Measurements**
 - o BY 2027 CCA will increase application of grants to 6

• Donations and Hosting a fundraising event

- Host one fundraiser a year
- Develop peer to peer fundraising
- Initiate and perform charity auctions
- Develop online donations
- Create CCA custom items

Measurements

- By 2027 CCA will host two fundraisers per year
- o By 2027 CCA will acquire new recurring donors
- By 2027 CCA will raise 5% in total donations

• Capturing value from using data

- Create a database of individuals that are connected in the organization or in the Cross Country Industry
- o Identify or recruit CCA athlete alumni's
- Develop social analytics

Measurements

- o By 2027 CCA will form a CCA alumni association
- o By 2027 CCA database list is increased to 10 individuals

	Now (2018-2019)	2019-2023	2023-2027
Financial Sustainability	 Dependent on government grants No excess \$. Need to start with clear monthly financial reporting 	 Diversify portfolio Increase membership revenue by 10% Much stronger financial planning in place 	 Outlook projection on finances or financial performance of the organization By 2027 CCA increases its overall funding by 50%.
Board development and human resources	 Not very well planned Reactive approach 	 Yearly plan and attendance for PD events 	 Monitor yearly attendance for PD Have a good support system for

		 Information sharing about free seminars Up to date policies & bylaw. 	new board members and succession planning
Ensure CCA's current sponsorships continue	 Completed the year two term with Fountain Tire 	 Retain Fountain Tire sponsorship to 3 year term Recruit 2 long term sponsors Target event sponsors 	 Recruit 5 long term sponsors Retain our current sponsors
Apply for grant funding	 Reactive Approach CIP Grant 	 CIP Grant OIP Grant Student employment 	 Increase application of grants to 6
Donations and Hosting a fundraising event	 Donations are received and distributed to athletes Casino is only fundraising event 	 Host one fundraiser a year Peer to peer fundraising Charity auctions Online donations Create CCA custom items 	 Host two fundraisers per year Acquire new recurring donors Raise 5% in total donations
Capturing value from using data	 Currently nothing is in place Reactive approach The only true data collected is what is required for the Alberta Sport Connection to ensure stable funding levels 	 Create a database of individuals that are connected in the organization or in the Cross Country Industry Identify or recruit CCA athlete alumni's Social analytics 	 Database list is increased to 10 individuals Form a CCA alumni association

6. New initiatives for 2019-2020

- Plan and implement 40-year anniversary to create excitement.
- Bring together Calgary ski community to develop a plan to maintain Confederation Park until a

permanent solution can be established.

- Work on large grants with trail net, CCC and local Calgary Clubs to develop permanent crosscountry skiing in Calgary.
- Obtain a roller ski fleet.