



# Norpine News

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**Norpine News**  
is the official Newsletter of the  
**Norpine Trail Association**



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## Ski Passes - Now Even Easier to Get

A ski pass is required for anyone 16 years of age or older on all Norpine trails. Passes are for sale at Cascade Lodge, Solbakken Resort and Cascade State Park. Daily passes are \$6 each. An individual statewide pass is \$20 annual or \$55 for 3 years. The year is effective from July 1 to June 30th. Ski passes are also available on-line at the MN DNR website or from any local business that sells DNR licenses. Norpine gets money for trail grooming from the DNR which comes from the sale of XC ski passes.

## New Board Members and Volunteers Needed

The ongoing success and operation of the Norpine Trail System depends upon you, and your willingness to contribute time and energy. We are always looking for new members, and welcome Board additions. If you love to ski/hike, we'd love to have your help. We need help brushing and maintaining trails as well as office type help such as sending out letters, writing articles for the newsletter, soliciting funds to support the trail maintenance. Currently, we have board members who have served a long time and we would really appreciate some fresh blood to continue our efforts. We appreciate whatever time you can afford to help us. The Board meets quarterly with an annual general membership meeting in the fall. Contact us at [info@norpinetrails.org](mailto:info@norpinetrails.org)

**Norpine Trail Association** was formed in March 2009. We are registered with the State of Minnesota as a non-profit organization and approved by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) organization so that your donations are tax deductible contributions. The purpose of the organization is to become responsible for the maintenance and grooming of 57 K of cross country ski trails that had been maintained by the owner of Cascade Lodge, LLC and Solbakken Resort. Norpine has fully accepted the responsibility for managing the maintenance and grooming of the entire trail system.

The club has done a lot in a short period of time. The trails have been im-

proved and widened, bridges repaired, signs and maps replaced, trailhead parking lots built or improved and with the help of grants have acquired equipment to keep the trails groomed and maintained. Our most recent grant application for a backhoe was approved and the equipment will be in use in 2018. In 2016 the O'Phelan's, owners of Cascade Lodge, donated their Pisten Bully to Norpine. In 2016 Norpine built a 36' x 30' Equipment Storage Building to store our grooming equipment in. An important financial donation to the building project was a grant from the North Star Ski Touring Club.

## Fall Trail Preparation

Norpine volunteers have gone over the entire trail system removing limbs and trees that have fallen across the trails prior to their being mowed before the snow falls. In addition, "leaners" that are over the trail have been removed so that if they come down on the trail this winter the groomers will not have to contend with clearing them. Some mowing has been completed but we have had a very wet fall and some of the trails are too wet to mow at this time. When the ground freezes or dries out before the snow falls mowing will be completed.

In addition, a group of volunteers from the North Star Ski Touring Club (NSSTC) will again be coming to our area in late October to work with the Sugarbush Trail Association and Norpine to help with the never ending job of clearing encroach-



ing overhanging brush from the trails. The North Star Ski Touring Club celebrated their 50th Anniversary during the 2016-17 season. If you live in the Twin Cities metro area, we would like to recommend that you also consider joining this active group. To learn more about them visit their website: [www.north-stars.org](http://www.north-stars.org).

We are fortunate to have the NSSTC volunteers help each year with the job of preparing the trails for winter. Cascade Lodge and Solbakken provide lodging for the North Stars that work on the Norpine trails and Cascade Lodge feeds breakfast and lunch to the crews. A buffet provided by resorts and businesses in the area is hosted by Solbakken Saturday evening for everyone that helps on the Sugarbush and Norpine trails.



## Norpine Fat Tire Bike Race Event January 6, 2018 in Lutsen, MN

More information about this exciting new race and to register for it can be found at [www.norpinefatbikeclassic.com](http://www.norpinefatbikeclassic.com). Last winter in January 85 bikers completed the 24 mile race and 45 bikers rode the 16 mile course. The weather was cold but the racers appreciated the challenges that the course presented. The groomed track was perfect for the event. Within 2 hours after the last racer was off the course the trail had been regroomed for classic and skate cross country skiers.

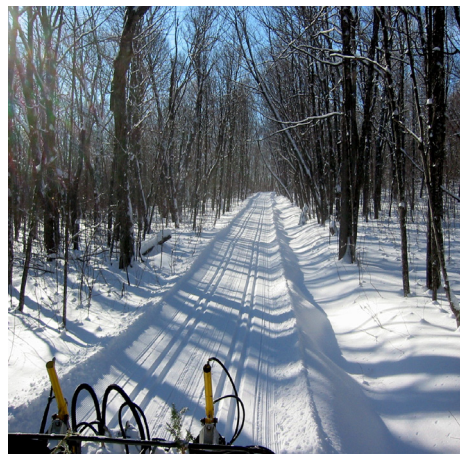


## Fat Tire Bike Trial This Winter on the Connector Trail between the Ski Hill Road and the Cascade State Park Snow-

The Norpine Board has agreed to a trial this winter allowing fat tire bikes to use the skating lane on the connector trail **when trail conditions allow bike use without damage to the groomed trail**. Bikers will have to scan a QR code with their cell phones that will take them to a web page with current trail conditions that will indicate if the trail is open or closed to bike use. If bikers do not respect staying off of the trail when it is closed the trial will be terminated. If the trial is successful it will allow bikers another place to share a safe winter experience with cross country skiers. Norpine gets a significant contribution of money for grooming from resorts and businesses in our area. Allowing fat tire bikes on the trail will provide another opportunity for their guests to experience the outdoors. We also hope that bikers will become Norpine members and purchase MN DNR Ski Passes when on the trails.

## Fall Trail Mowing & Winter Grooming

We have contracted again with Mark D Consulting, LLC to mow and groom the trails in the west half of the system from the Cascade River State Park Snowmobile Parking lot to the Ski Hill Road in Lutsen, including the Hall/Massie loops and the trails between Jonvick Creek and the Highway across from Solbakken Resort. We have also contracted with Cascade Lodge to mow and groom the trails north of the lodge including the historic Pioneer loop and the Deer Yard loops. We are fortunate to have these folks grooming our trails again this winter.



Last December we were again “blessed” with a storm that caused serious damage due to wet heavy and frozen snow bending brush and breaking tree trunks onto the trails. It was a nightmare to go back and clear the trails to get them ready for skiing again. Two years in a row of this kind of storm is enough. Let’s hope that this doesn’t happen again this winter!



## Cascade Lodge and Restaurant is Under New Ownership



In June Thomas and Jelena McAleer purchased the business from the O’Phelan’s. Thom has many years of resort experience, his most recent being the VP of a large operation near Denali in Alaska where they have been living for the last several years. Jelena has about 15 years of restaurant experience. They have two children ages 2 and 5. They are fully supportive of Norpine and the importance of the cross country ski trails to their business. Thom has already spent a lot of time clearing and mowing the trails as part of the work needed to get them ready for skiing. Please give them a warm welcome and your support.

We would also like to thank Michael O’Phelan for his years of leadership in helping to make Norpine the organization that it is today.

## Now it is Possible to Become a Member or Donate using PayPal or a credit card

We have added a link on our website so that you can either donate to Norpine or pay for your membership using PayPal or your credit card through PayPal. Our cost to keep Norpine Trails open include not only grooming but also trail maintenance, Equipment maintenance, insurance and heating for the new equipment storage facility. We depend not only on the money we get from the DNR which covers the grooming, but also from donations and memberships from those skiers that use our trails. Please help if you are able. We are trying to make donating more convenient and user friendly. If you have any suggestions please let us know.