



# UPSLOPE

## Newsletter of the NORDIC Ski Touring Section of PATC



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October 2020

### UpComing Attractions In Winter UPSLOPE

- Ski Trips and Reports
- YOUR ski stories

### A Sisters Ski Trip

By Ralph Heimlich

With the continuing poor snow conditions in our usual eastern locations, I resolved to head West for the snow this season. After visiting the Bend/Sisters area in Oregon last summer, and consulting with my local friends Susanita Hicks and Al Larsen, I decided to organize a PATC-STS trip to this region in the 2019-20 season. Fourteen hardy STSers (and 3 "ghosts" who stayed at a different venue) agreed with my assessment. We descended on the regional airport at Redmond, OR, and made our way to the rental houses in Sisters.



Three "Ski Sisters" and the Three Sisters photo by Ralph Heimlich

Inside this issue:

(blue links are live)

<a href="#">Your STS Officer Contacts</a>	2
<a href="#">From the Slopes</a>	2
<a href="#">2020-21 Winter Outlook</a>	3
<a href="#">Sisters Ski Trip (cont)</a>	4
<a href="#">Sisters Ski Trip (cont)</a>	5
<a href="#">STS Ski Trip Guidelines</a>	6
<a href="#">STS Ski Trip Survey Results</a>	7
	8
<a href="#">Results (cont)</a>	9-10
<a href="#">Ski News</a>	10
<a href="#">Desperate Times...</a>	11

The Bend/Sisters area has some unique topographic features that bear explaining. Located just east of the Cascade mountains, Bend, Sisters and Redmond are technically in the snow shadow of the Cascades. The farther east you go from the crest of the Cascades, the less precipitation (and snow) you are likely to get. Thus, landing at Redmond we were confronted by High desert, and the short drive to Sisters revealed only traces on north-facing banks, and none in town at all. But looking west to Mount Jefferson, Mount Washington, Three-Fingered Jack, and the Three Sisters, we saw glistening white peaks, promising our long-sought snowy paradise.

After stocking up on groceries, finding out who amongst us could be relied upon in the kitchen (many thanks to Merlin Payne-Swayze, Fatima Argun, Diane Weil and Jan Tucker), and consulting our many maps, websites and books, we eagerly anticipated our first day on the slopes. There are two main roads to the snows: Directly up US 20 to Santiam Pass and the Hoo Doo ski area and associated Sno Parks, and down through Bend and out the Cascade Lakes National Scenic Byway to Mount Bachelor ski area and its Sno Parks. In order to get our feet firmly planted in the snow, we opted to ski the Nordic trails at Mount Bachelor on our first day. These were amply supplied with snow (about 4' on the ground), immaculately groomed for both classic and skate skiing, and very busy on a beauti-

(Continued on page 4)

### NO SKI FAIR THIS YEAR!



As you may have already figured out, the 2020 Ski Fair originally scheduled for November 7th will NOT take place. The PATC leaders determined that this well-attended event traditionally held on the ground floor of the Club headquarters in Vienna would not be appropriate this fall because of the COVID-19 pandemic. See Chairman Rob Swennes' "From the Slopes" column on the next page. However, once new ski trips are posted on the [web-page](#) listed above, you should have all the information you need to get in touch with the needed trip leaders. Con-

sider using some of these ground-breaking ideas for winter skiing as a fresh approach to find and enjoy great skiable snow!

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The COVID-19 pandemic has rattled the Ski Touring Section this year much as it has affected so many other groups, individuals, and businesses. However the Section is working to offer a range of ski trips for the coming winter. The total number of trips will depend on many factors, with public health concerns being the first. Some customary trip leaders may opt to take a pass this year. We fully understand that. Others are expected to offer a few ski trips, but under altered conditions. Having skiers stay in rented holiday homes or the like is out this year due to the virus risk. Use of motel rooms is OK, since it reduces the chances of virus transmission.

The STS leadership met in early September to outline the do's and don'ts for the coming ski season. Our ideas were passed along to the officers of the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club (PATC), and they were approved with minor adjustments.

Wintertime Nordic skiing is one of the healthiest forms of recreation, particularly so in the current pandemic environment. Cross country skiers regularly put significant distance between one another when out on the trail. The risk of infection is very low. The problem lies in the daily hours of not skiing when people tend to gather closer together. For this reason this winter's trip leaders will ease off on the organizing of things like car pools and group dinners. At this point in the coronavirus pandemic, everyone is quite aware of the public health safety precautions that should be taken. Thus each skier should make his/her own decision regarding such issues as whether to drive and lodge alone or share a car or room with another person you know well and are comfortable with. These are decisions that should not be made by the trip leader. The same goes for socializing and eating meals. The skiers on each trip should determine what their own comfort levels are as regards meals and contact with others. These are not matters the trip leader should dictate. We expect that trip participants will be and act as adults. Thus this winter we may find more skiers driving up solo in their own vehicles rather than with one or more other people. Some may avoid flying. That's the participant's call. The same is true as regards sharing a motel room with another. That's the skier's own decision, not the trip leader's.

Skiers who sign up for one or more Ski Touring Section trips this winter are obliged to sign a waiver of liability provision to protect the club and the trip leaders from risk. This year the waiver form includes a provision specifically acknowledging the pandemic situation and the participant's responsibility to follow public health guidance. A skier who decides to take part in a Section excursion trip outside the Mid-Atlantic region must also be a PATC member (not just a Ski Touring Section member). Those intending to ski outside the region on an STS ski trip must also sign a separate PATC waiver of liability form. These completed forms must be in the trip leader's hands before the applicant can be considered as a participant on the trip.

Some trip leaders may opt to propose a different type of ski trip this year that reflects both the COVID-19 situation and climate change. In past years many skiers have used our [groups.io](http://groups.io) bulletin board or our [MeetUp](http://MeetUp) site to help cobble up a ski group when snowy weather is predicted in Canaan Valley, WV or elsewhere in the region. Those have always been, in essence, private trips not organized by the club or Section. But this year some trip leaders may propose one or more STS ski trips where the dates for the trip will be within a range of days. Thus, for example, a recognized trip leader may propose a 3-day ski trip to Vermont sometime within February 1 to February 15. Interested skiers could contact the trip leader and indicate their general interest in participating in the trip within that window of opportunity. The trip leader and the others interested can then track the 10-day weather forecast of the ZIP Code for the skiing locale. If a significant snowstorm on an upcoming day becomes likely, the trip leader can declare the dates for the trip. Those initially signed up can then make their hard decision about whether to participate in the ski trip or pass. They would then be responsible for arranging their transportation, lodging and other details. The trip leader should only identify which motel is recommended to participants after the trip leader has received the signed waiver of liability form(s) from the interested party.

This kind of outside the box thinking may be a logical approach given the current changes in our environment that we are having to deal with.

*(Continued on page 6)*

### Winter Forecasts for Skiers

## FARMERS' ALMANAC 2020-21 WINTER OUTLOOK

Winter of the Great Divide



Remember last year's almost snow-free winter in the North-east? Well, this year the Farmers' Almanac prediction is very different, with the possibility of a blizzard hitting the Mid-Atlantic and Northeast states during the second week of February. This storm may bring up to 1-2 feet of snow to cities from Washington, D.C. to Boston, Massachusetts!

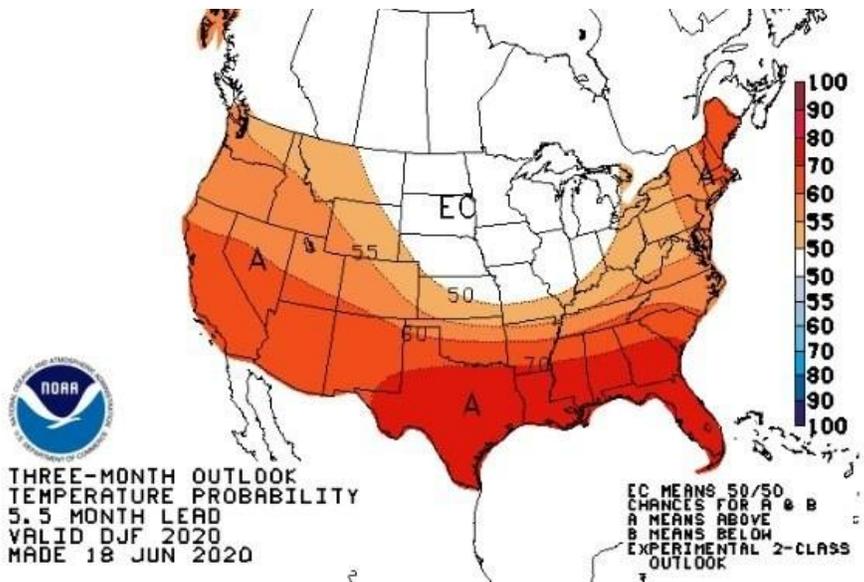
The Great Lakes region will get its fair share of snow but expect above-normal snowfall if you live in the western Dakotas, northern portions of Colorado and Utah, as well as Wyoming, Montana, Idaho, and central and eastern sections of Washington and Oregon.

And for those living in the eastern half of the country, you may get clobbered during the final week of March, but what falls from the sky will depend on where you live—this storm will track from the nation's midsection to central New England and bring a significant late-season snowfall to the north of its track, and showers and thunderstorms to the south. See more from the Farmers' Almanac at <https://www.farmersalmanac.com/extended-forecast>.

On the other hand, The unfortunate news is that NOAA is projecting above average temperatures for most of the United States throughout the winter of 2020-2021. However, a chance for colder than normal temperatures could show up in the spring according to Climate Prediction Center models. Also, if La Niña shows up in force, expect these temperature outlooks to change drastically, with an opportunity for cold temps to cover the northern and central portions of the Rocky Mountains.

During June 2020, sea surface temperatures (SST) were near average in the east-central equatorial Pacific and below average in the eastern Pacific. Overall, the combined oceanic and atmospheric system is consistent with ENSO-neutral, meaning no La Niña in sight.

But, the models in the IRI/CPC plume are roughly split between La Niña and ENSO-neutral (Nino-3.4 index between -0.5°C and +0.5°C) during the fall and winter. Based largely on dynamical model guidance, the forecaster consensus slightly favors La Niña development during the August-October season, and then lasting through the remainder of 2020. In summary, ENSO-neutral is favored to continue through the summer, with a 50-55% chance of La Niña development during Northern Hemisphere fall 2020 and continuing through winter 2020-21 (~50% chance; click CPC/IRI consensus forecast for the chance of each outcome for each 3-month period).



All we really know for sure is that you ALL have to

THINK SNOW!!



(Continued from page 1)

ful, sunny Friday. We got to unkink our rusty ski muscles, rub shoulders with the locals and ask about good skiing in the area, and get tips from the friendly staff at the Nordic rental area and warming hut. We even skied amongst a lot of enthusiastic high-school ski racers competing in a regional race event.

Friday night was aglow with Pacific salmon baked in parchment, Basmati rice, and steamed veggies, while we compared notes on the day and plans for Saturday. After all our exertions, our wild and crazy crowd was mostly abed by 10 PM.

We split up Saturday, with some headed back toward Mount Bachelor to ski the Swampy Sno Park, and another group headed up toward Santiam Pass and Hoo Doo to ski the Ray Benson Sno Park. [Sno-Parks](#) are a uniquely Northwest phenomena, where the Oregon DMV, in cooperation with the Forest Service, plows parking areas at the trail heads of Forest Service recreation areas, and local skiing and snow mobile clubs maintain trails, warming huts and restroom facilities to accommodate winter sports enthusiasts. You must purchase a pass (seasonal, three-day or daily) to use the Sno Parks, but it supports the system and is a great amenity.



**Jan, Merlin and Diane working on dinner photo by Ralph Heimlich**

Al and Ann Larsen joined us at Ray Benson Sno Park. Al and Ann are from Arlington and PATC-STS members, but have lived and skied in the Northwest and were staying for the month in Sisters to test the waters for a retirement location. Ray Benson had plenty of base (about 4'), but was a bit icy after a sub-freezing night and starting out on the trails was a bit challenging since the ruts and tracks of the previous day

were frozen in place. As we got further from the trail head, however, the temperature climbed into the 40s and the icy snow thawed to a softer consistency, making skiing easy and pleasurable. We skied the North Loop, a 6-mile circuit with the Blow-Out warming hut about half way out. The Pacific Crest Trail (west coast sister to the AT) cut across the loop, and several of us were tempted to ski out on it, mostly to be able to say we'd skied it. While the ski trails were abundantly marked with bright blue plastic markers, the PCT was sketchier, and the open savanna had not been skied much, with ski tracks going hither and yon as would-be skiers searched for the actual trail. After a short detour, we got back on the ski trail and arrived at Blow-Out warming hut just at lunch time as the day warmed into the 50s. We sat outside the hut, stripping off layers, soaking up the sun and reveling in spectacular views to snow-capped peaks in all directions.

After two great days in the snow, we were not too dismayed when the weather turned against us. Sunday was colder, blustery with winds in the 20's gusting to 30 mph. A few of the hardier ventured forth to snow shoe in a more protected Sno Park near Mount Bachelor, while a group of us played tourist. We drove down south of Bend to a lesser-known gem, the [High Desert Museum](#).



**The High Desert Museum photo by Ralph Heimlich**

We spent a long day at the museum imbibing the special ecology, history and cultural heritage (both Native American and pioneer) of this extensive ecotone that stretches from Canada to the Mexican border along the east side of the Cascades and Sierras.

Sunday night was our "night on the town", and we were well-hosted at the Three Creeks Brewing Company, a brew pub in Sisters with a great selection of micro-brews and solid western fare. Our only injury occurred in the parking lot as Rob tripped over a parking barrier (BEFORE he had a beer in the pub), injuring his shoulder.

Monday and Tuesday, we were back on the slopes as the wind backed off. Some went back to Mount Bachelor, some to other Sno Parks, and many of us returned to Ray Benson to ski the southern loops. Conditions were similar to Saturday, with icy trails in the morning, warming to softer, more-easily skied

trails by mid-day. With the many miles of skiable trails in more than a dozen Sno Parks, there was an abundance of skiing that we could not exhaust in our five day trip. At Al's suggestion, we also stopped on the drive back to Sisters at the Metolius headwaters, a Forest Service recreation area where the mysteri-



**Mt. Bachelor Nordic Trails photo by Ralph Heimlich**



**The Pacific Crest Trail and Three-Fingered Jack photo by Al Larsen**



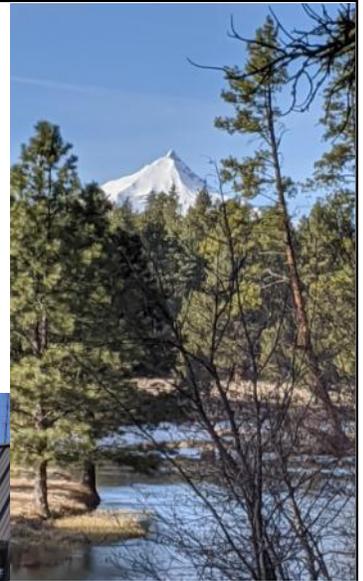
**Yvonne, Jan, Ralph and Ann photo by Al Larsen**

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ous Metolius River springs full-blown from under a rocky bank to flow down through the mountains in the shadow of Mount Jefferson. A rewarding sight, for just a few minutes walk from the parking area.

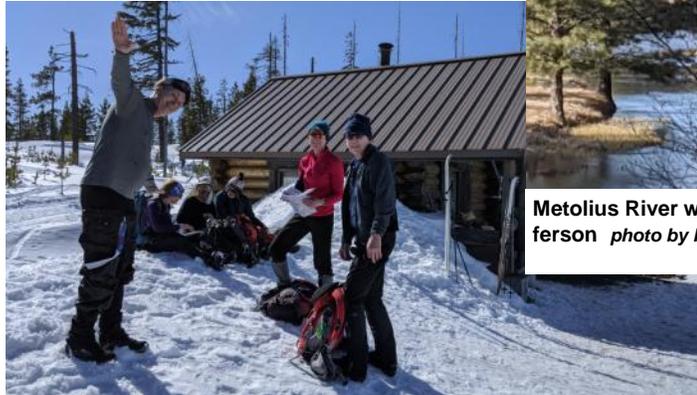
One drawback to our Sisters sojourn was the necessity to rise very early (3:30 AM) in order to get packed, make the drive down to Redmond and turn in the rental car and catch our 6 AM flights out. This is probably a result of the feeder-hub airline system, but resulted in a bunch of sleepy-eyed skiers clogging the halls of the Junior Miss airport at Redmond in the wee hours. We all made it to our planes on time. I consider my first foray into Northwest skiing a great success. As we told the local skiers as they moaned about what a poor snow year it was, we had skied on more snow this trip than we had seen on the ground back home in the last four years...combined!



Metolius River with Mount Jefferson photo by Ralph Heimlich



Ann and Al Larsen at Ray Benson photo by Al Larsen



Steve, Diane, Jack, Al, Jan, Ron, and Yvonne at Blow Out Shelter photo by Ralph Heimlich



Catherine and John with Three-Fingered Jack photo by Ralph Heimlich



Mount Washington from Ray Benson Sno Park photo by Ralph Heimlich

**STS Declares Membership Dues Holiday**

Covid-19 pandemic fallout is greatly restricting usual STS trips activity for the winter of 2020-2021. Pre-scheduled trips have been foregone and ad hoc arrangements will be the norm. Accordingly, STS leadership has concluded that collecting membership dues for the 2020-2021 cycle is unwarranted, with the exception of new members enrolling as complete newcomers or returning expirees from past years.

All persons on paid-up STS membership rolls as of 23 October 2020 will have their memberships extended for another year. For example, people whose membership expires at end of 2020 will advance to end of 2021, expirees for end of 2021 will advance to 2022, etc. Finally, new and lapsed members from past years enrolled or re-enrolled between October 23 and the end of the 2020-2021 season will also be awarded a year beyond their requested membership term.

Thanks to supporting members who have helped to keep the STS treasury in good enough shape so that this measure can be afforded.

Doug Lesar  
STS membership coordinator

**From the Slopes (cont.)**

*(Continued from page 2)*

Unlike previous years, there is no trip listing in this issue of UPSLOPE. I recommend you check the STS trip schedule page (<http://www.patc.us/chapters/ski/trips.htm>) periodically as the fall season progresses. The Section will post trip opportunities there as they are announced. Trip leaders may well then post on [groups.io](https://groups.io) or [MeetUp](https://www.meetup.com) to alert subscribers about a new trip that's available.

Finally, as you may have already figured out, the 2020 Ski Fair originally scheduled for November 7th will not take place. The PATC leaders determined that this well-attended event traditionally held on the ground floor of the Club headquarters in Vienna would not be appropriate this fall. However, once new ski trips are posted on the [webpage](#), you should have all the information you need to get in touch with the needed trip leaders. Consider using some of these ground-breaking ideas for winter skiing as a fresh approach to find and enjoy great skiable snow!

Rob Swennes, Chair  
PATC Ski Touring Section

**PATC-ST\$ Ski Trip Guidelines for 2020-21 Season**

The Ski Touring Section's leadership met in September to discuss plans for this coming winter season. After some back and forth, the group endorsed the guidelines below. We are referring to this winter's ski trips as "winter lite" in that several of the responsibilities that would normally be arranged by the STS's trip leader will devolve to the individual trip participants so that the adult participants can make their own public health decisions. The main elements are:

**Waivers:**

- \* This year the waiver form includes a provision specifically acknowledging the pandemic situation and the participant's responsibility to follow public health guidance.
- \* Those intending to ski outside the region on an STS ski trip must also sign a separate PATC waiver of liability form.
- \* These completed forms must be in the trip leader's hands before the applicant can be considered as a participant on the trip.

**Lodging:**

- \* Trip participants may stay overnight in motel rooms but not in cabins or cottage/house rentals, arranged by the trip leader, to be shared by multiple individuals.
- \* Participants are presumed to be intending to overnight one individual per motel room unless the trip leader is notified by particular participants that they intend to room together.
- \* The trip leader will recommend a motel to the trip participants, but participants may overnight at a different motel if they so choose and identify their intention to the trip leader accordingly.
- \* It was suggested at our meeting that the trip leader should direct the planned participants to call the motel themselves to reserve their own desired rooms, rather than having the trip leader assume that responsibility (again, winter lite). Alternatively the trip leader can reserve a group of rooms and ask the participants to make their reservations through the motel based on this group of rooms. If a participant does not make a reservation prior to the cut off date for reserving a spot in the group of rooms, the participant will be responsible for making his reservation at that motel or some other motel.
- \* Trip participants are expected to adhere to current social distancing and facemask requirements when inside any building or other structure.

**Transportation and Meals:**

- \* Trip participants are expected to arrange their own transportation from home to the skiing area and also around the skiing venue. The trip leader may offer suggestions to aid the participant, but he cannot mandate that a trip participant use a particular mode of travel.
- \* The presumption will be that the individual skier will use his own vehicle on the trip. The trip leader will ask to be informed of what transportation means the participant will use so that the leader has that information. The trip leader will also ask to be informed if a participant decides to travel with another participant.
- \* Skiers who are signed up for the STS ski trip will make their own meal arrangements. Historically STS skiers have made lunches in the morning to eat while on the ski trails that day, so many skiers will purchase their food items at local grocery stores. Whether the skiers will have breakfast included with their motel stay depends on the terms of the lodging agreement. The STS trip leader will not make dining arrangements as a part of planned trip. Each skier will make his/her own meal arrangements. The trip leader will not make a group meal reservation for the ski group. If group members decide on their own to dine together in a restaurant, that's their decision to make and not the responsibility of the Ski Touring Section or the PATC.

**Skiing Activity:**

- \* Skiing on the scheduled trips is the least concerning part of the activities from a public health standpoint. The sport is conducted outside, with a hefty amount of distance between individual skiers on the trail. Skiers on the trail are usually separated by a minimum of 10 feet and may be separated by many times that distance.
- \* Skiers on the STS trips are expected to bring along each day a facemask covering both nose and mouth.
- \* Skiers are expected to mask up before entering any building, such as a ski touring center or a remote cabin along the trail.

## Highlights of the PATC-ST\$ Ski Trip Survey

By Ralph E. Heimlich

Between September 10<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>, PATC-ST\$ members were able to respond to a survey about their preferences and tolerances for ski trip travel, lodgings, dining, and activities under COVID-19. Sixty-one members responded out of 156 solicited, but only 53 usable responses were obtained, for a 34 percent response rate. The full response is attached, both in absolute numbers and as a percent of those providing usable responses.

**Past Participation**—The respondents had attended 74 STS trips (average of 1.2 trips each), of which 40 were local trips (.66 each), and 34 were excursion trips (.55 each). 20 respondents had not attended any STS trips in the last two years, and 13 had attended 3 or more trips.

**Mode of Travel**—Air travel is seen as hazardous by 38 percent of respondents, but 41 percent would use it for long distance trips or would always use it. Driving their private car would always be preferred by 29 percent of respondents, and 72 percent would use it always or for short trips. This drops to 36-43 percent for carpooling, either as a driver or passenger, and 43-52 percent would never use this mode. 52 percent would never use a rented van with others, and only 21 percent would use it for short trips. 40 percent would limit travel to themselves and their spouse, 45 percent would travel with others they previously knew, and only 14 percent would travel with any other STS member participating, as before COVID.

**Lodgings**—Private hotel rooms with no contact with other participants are favored by 42-48 percent of respondents as the only way they would travel, while 65-68 percent of respondents would use it always or for excursion trips. Other options are more problematic, with 52-60 percent never preferring to use shared lodging, either a private room in a vacation rental or sharing a hotel room. Private rooms in rental houses are viewed slightly more favorably than shared hotel rooms for excursion trips (20 percent vs. 13-17 percent). Shared lodgings with other STS members or others known previously are only tolerated by 18-22 percent of respondents, while 60 percent would only room by themselves or with a spouse.

**Dining**—Shared dining is only preferred by 17-23 percent of respondents, while bringing food, dining alone or with a roommate is preferred by 26-36 percent. More traditional modes of dining such as going out with all participants or sharing food prepared in a rental house is eschewed by 49-61 percent, and is only tolerated for excursion trips (where there is little alternative) by 15-22 percent. Only 25-31 percent would dine with other trip participants or participants known previously, while 53 percent would only dine alone or with a spouse.

**Activities**—Traditional modes of skiing and interacting at lodges and common areas is only preferred by 31 percent of respondents, while minimal masked interaction at lodges is favored by 61 percent. 50 percent would never tolerate past activity at lodges, but only 36 percent embraced the extreme of avoiding lodges and resorts all together in favor of public trail heads only.

**PATC Social Events**—Ski Fair would be avoided by 22-42 percent, despite masking, social distancing and an outside location. 78 percent would attend if held outside with precautions. The preferred option (67 percent) for the Après Ski party is outdoors at either a private house or public facility with strict mask/social distance protocols. 33-80 percent would not attend regardless of venue or protocols.

1. PATC-ST\$ Ski Trip Survey		Summary
This survey is designed to gather information about whether STS members will be willing to go on club-led ski trips this winter, and the characteristics of ski trips likely to succeed under the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Please answer as truthfully as you can so that STS leadership can avoid unwanted trips or low participation.		
1. The first three questions get at your past participation: How many STS XC-ski trips did you participate in during the last two seasons (do not include local social events such as Ski Fair and Après Ski)? Enter a whole number *		74
2. How many of these trips were in the "local" region (defined by PATC as MD, PA, VA, WV)? Enter a whole number. *		40
3. How many were "excursion" trips outside the local region (e.g., Western locales, Adirondacks, Maine, NH, etc.)? Enter a whole number. *		34
2. Mode of travel These questions get at your preferences for and tolerance of different travel modes (please select one answer for each question):For each travel mode below, indicate whether you would travel to a ski trip using this mode given the COVID-19 pandemic	Summary	% of usable
4. Travel by Airplane and rental car at destination *	42	100.0%
Never	16	38.1%
Only for Long distance (1,000 miles or more)	14	33.3%
Only for medium distance (one or more day's drive)	7	16.7%
Only for short travel (less than one day's drive)	2	4.8%
Always (this is the only type of travel you would do)	3	7.1%
5. Private car driving alone *	42	100.0%
Never	3	7.1%
Only for Long distance (1,000 miles or more)	0	0.0%
Only for medium distance (one or more day's drive)	9	21.4%
Only for short travel (less than one day's drive)	18	42.9%
Always (this is the only type of travel you would do)	12	28.6%

(Continued on page 8)

**Ski Trip Survey (cont.)**

6. Private car carpooling with passengers as the driver *	42	100.0%
Never	18	42.9%
Only for Long distance (1,000 miles or more)	0	0.0%
Only for medium distance (one or more day's drive)	6	14.3%
Only for short travel (less than one day's drive)	14	33.3%
Always (this is the only type of travel you would do)	4	9.5%
7. Private car carpooling with passengers as a passenger *	42	100.0%
Never	22	52.4%
Only for Long distance (1,000 miles or more)	1	2.4%
Only for medium distance (one or more day's drive)	4	9.5%
Only for short travel (less than one day's drive)	12	28.6%
Always (this is the only type of travel you would do)	3	7.1%
8. Rented van as a passenger with others	42	100.0%
Never	22	52.4%
Only for Long distance (1,000 miles or more)	1	2.4%
Only for medium distance (one or more day's drive)	6	14.3%
Only for short travel (less than one day's drive)	9	21.4%
Always (this is the only type of travel you would do)	3	7.1%
9. To clarify who you would be willing to carpool with, I would likely ride in a car (private or rental from airport) *	41	97.6%
Only by myself	6	14.3%
By myself and with my spouse/significant other	11	26.2%
Only with people I knew previously	19	45.2%
With any other STS members participating in the trip	6	14.3%
3. Type of Accommodations The next questions get at what kind of accommodations you prefer or would tolerate on a ski trip under the COVID-19 pandemic.	40	100.0%
10. Private hotel/motel room, no contact with other participants in lobby or common areas *		
Never	7	17.5%
Local trips only	7	17.5%
Excursion trips only	7	17.5%
Always (this is the only type of accommodation I would use)	19	47.5%
11. Hotel/motel room shared with one other person, no contact with other participants in lobby or common areas, share bathroom *	40	100.0%
Never	21	52.5%
Local trips only	6	15.0%
Excursion trips only	7	17.5%
Always (this is the only type of accommodation I would use)	6	15.0%
12. Private room in rental house, masked contact with others during stay and meals, share bathroom *	40	100.0%
Never	18	45.0%
Local trips only	6	15.0%
Excursion trips only	8	20.0%
Always (this is the only type of accommodation I would use)	8	20.0%
13. Rental house room shared with one other person, masked contact with others during stay and meals, share bathroom *	40	100.0%
Never	24	60.0%
Local trips only	1	2.5%
Excursion trips only	5	12.5%
Always (this is the only type of accommodation I would use)	10	25.0%
14. Privately booked accommodations with contact only on ski trails or ski areas *	40	100.0%
Never	6	15.0%
Local trips only	7	17.5%
Excursion trips only	10	25.0%
Always (this is the only type of accommodation I would use)	17	42.5%
15. To clarify who you would be willing to room with, I would likely stay in a room with the following people *	40	100.0%
Only by myself	7	17.5%
By myself and with my spouse/significant other	17	42.5%
Only with people I knew previously	9	22.5%
With any other STS members participating in the trip	7	17.5%

**Ski Trip Survey (cont.)**

4. Type of Dining The following questions get at how meals should be handled on ski trips under the COVID-19 pandemic.	39	100.0%
16. Bring food and eat in your room *		
Never	11	28.2%
Local trips only	13	33.3%
Excursion trips only	1	2.6%
Always (this is the only type of meal service I would use)	14	35.9%
17. Go out alone and get takeout to eat in my room *	39	100.0%
Never	10	25.6%
Local trips only	9	23.1%
Excursion trips only	8	20.5%
Always (this is the only type of meal service I would use)	12	30.8%
18. Go out and dine alone in area restaurants *	39	100.0%
Never	20	51.3%
Local trips only	6	15.4%
Excursion trips only	4	10.3%
Always (this is the only type of meal service I would use)	9	23.1%
19. Go out with one roommate and eat takeout or dine at area restaurants *	39	100.0%
Never	16	41.0%
Local trips only	6	15.4%
Excursion trips only	8	20.5%
Always (this is the only type of meal service I would use)	9	23.1%
20. Go out with trip participants and dine at area restaurants *	39	100.0%
Never	19	48.7%
Local trips only	5	12.8%
Excursion trips only	6	15.4%
Always (this is the only type of meal service I would use)	9	23.1%
21. Buy food and prepare in rental house kitchen for myself *	39	100.0%
Never	17	43.6%
Local trips only	2	5.1%
Excursion trips only	10	25.6%
Always (this is the only type of meal service I would use)	10	25.6%
22. Share food prepared in rental house kitchen for group participants *	39	100.0%
Never	22	61.1%
Local trips only	3	8.3%
Excursion trips only	8	22.2%
Always (this is the only type of meal service I would use)	6	16.7%
23. To clarify, these are the only people I would share meals with	39	100.0%
Only by myself	6	16.7%
By myself and with my spouse/significant other	13	36.1%
Only with people I knew previously	11	30.6%
With any other STS members participating in the trip	9	25.0%
5. Type of Activities at Destination These questions get at what kind of activity you would be comfortable engaging on the ski trail or at ski resort areas.	36	100.0%
24. Ski only from public trail heads with no interaction at resort or lodge *		
Never	15	41.7%
Local trips only	3	8.3%
Excursion trips only	4	11.1%
Always (this is the only type of activity you would do)	13	36.1%
25. Masked interaction at lodge for trail pass, but stay outside on trails as much as possible *	35	97.2%
Never	5	13.9%
Local trips only	3	8.3%
Excursion trips only	4	11.1%
Always (this is the only type of activity you would do)	24	66.7%
26. Masked interaction at lodge or resort for trail pass, meals, restrooms, etc., but stay outside on trails as much as possible *	36	100.0%
Never	5	13.9%
Local trips only	4	11.1%
Excursion trips only	5	13.9%
Always (this is the only type of activity you would do)	22	61.1%

**Ski Trip Survey (cont.)**

27. Masked interaction at lodge or resort as usual, with social interaction in common areas or rooms. *	36	100.0%
Never	18	50.0%
Local trips only	2	5.6%
Excursion trips only	5	13.9%
Always (this is the only type of activity you would do)	11	30.6%
6. PATC-STC Social Event Participation The final questions have to do with STS’s typical social events during the ski season.	36	100.0%
28. Would you be willing to attend and participate in Ski Fair at the PATC HQ using masks and social distancing as much as possible? *		
Yes	15	41.7%
No	21	58.3%
29. Would you be willing to attend and participate in Ski Fair at the PATC HQ in the parking lot or outdoors, using masks and social distancing as much as possible? *	36	100.0%
Yes	28	77.8%
No	8	22.2%
30. Would you be willing to attend the Après Ski get-together and Annual Meeting at a private house using masks and social distancing as much as possible? *	36	100.0%
Yes	7	19.4%
No	29	80.6%
31. Would you be willing to attend the Apres Ski get-together and Annual Meeting at a public facility, such as a meeting room or park shelter, using masks and social distancing as much as possible? *	36	100.0%
Yes	20	55.6%
No	16	44.4%
32. *	36	100.0%
Yes	0	0.0%
No	0	0.0%
33. Would you attend the Après Ski party if it were held outdoors at a private house/public facility where strict social distance could be maintained? *		
Yes	24	66.7%
No	12	33.3%
	36	100.0%

**Ski News**

**Free Heel Podcast Interview with Chip Chase**—In case you missed it, the 1.5 hour interview with Chip Chase, operator of the White Grass Ski Touring Center in Canaan Valley, WV, on September 14 is online [here](#). In addition to interesting stuff on skiing from Chip, he also touches on what is likely to happen at White Grass this winter (at about minute 56).

**New SW PA Cross Country Ski Maps 8-26-2020**—Rachael Mahony | Environmental Education Specialist, PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Forestry | Forbes State Forest (E-mail: [rmahony@pa.gov](mailto:rmahony@pa.gov); [www.dcnr.state.pa.us](http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us)) We are happy to announce that all of our trail maps have been updated and will be available online starting tomorrow. You can access the updated maps by clicking this link: [MAPS](#) Some more good news, YCC crew completed Roaring Run Trail connector and we now have reflected these changes on our map.

**Timberline Lodge and Resort Reopens Under New Management**—Officials with Perfect North Slopes, the new owners of Timberline Mountain, have announced that skiers and snowboarders will be riding to the top on a brand new 6-passenger high speed chairlift next winter. The brand new Doppelmayr 6-passenger lift will be the first of its kind in West Virginia. In addition, the ski resort will have a 4-passenger mid-mountain chairlift that will service beginner and intermediate terrain along with easy access to a race course, terrain park, and most trail-side lodging. Other improvements include a re-graded learning area with a conveyor carpet lift, extensive upgrades to the snow-making system, a fully remodeled rental shop, consolidated food service facilities, and an updated outdoor area for a fresh sense of arrival.

The resort, which originally opened in the early 80’s, fell into bankruptcy in 2019 and was not open for this previous ski season. Work to restore the ski area began immediately after the purchase by Perfect North Slopes in December. “We look forward to participating in the economic development of Tucker County and we’re excited to announce the significant investment in Timberline Mountain’s infrastructure that will take place this summer. I believe skiers and snowboarders next season are going to really enjoy the new experience on this very special mountain,” says Chip Perfect, President of Perfect North Slopes and CEO of Timberline Mountain.

Perfect’s family has been in the winter sport business for over 40-years, with the operation of the Lawrenceburg, Indiana resort. Perfect is also a member of the Indiana State Senate. See <https://timberlinemountain.com/>

**Susquehannock - In Search of Snow**

By Dick Simmons



Last February Steve Vikell and I had plans to ski a weekend at White Grass. No snow, so we changed our reservation at Blackwater Lodge to the next weekend. Again, no snow. Who would think even February ski conditions could be iffy? As you know there was very little snow anywhere near WG or Balto/ Wash area. One of our members had skied at Susquehannock State Park in North Central Pennsylvania (Potter County) the prior weekend. It was the closest snow we could find, so we went for it.

It was a long drive (4.5 hours from north of Baltimore) and we saw no snow until we were within a few miles of Susquehannock SP, but that was still good. Very nice trails, well groomed. We skied the trails south of Hwy 6 on Friday. Good cover, nice scenery and deserted. Park Office/ Lodge is basic but well-kept and adequate. Staff was very helpful. Like the group the week earlier, we stayed at Susquehannock Lodge just a few miles east of the park. Older place but clean and functional. Breakfast was great. I skied around the property Saturday morning while Steve got ready. Very nice. You can actually ski from the park office to Susquehannock Lodge along the ridge on the south side of Hwy 6. We didn't have enough time to do that but it's an interesting option. One caution, there are snowmobile trails on the south side which are very popular. It's easy to stay away from those areas, just check the trail map or ask the folks in the office what they recommend.

Saturday we skied the trails north of Hwy 6. These were even nicer. Good variety, many are wide open and all have good scenery and a little roll to the terrain. I recommend the Log Cabin Inn for dinner – great atmosphere and good food.



**North Trails** photo by Dick Simmons



**More North Trails** photo by Dick Simmons



**South Trails** photo by Dick Simmons

**Info on Groups.io Listserv**

Given the continuing COVID-19 pandemic situation challenging the operation of social groups of all stripes, staying connected with the aid of internet-hosted tools and platforms is more important than ever. Fortunately, PATC-STC successfully migrated from the dying Yahoo groups platform in early 2020. Our new "listserv" is hosted by groups.io, which offers a less clunky user interface than Yahoo and has operated smoothly for us in almost a year (your MEMBERSHIP DUES help to pay for it ... it isn't free).

The STS group is reachable at the address <https://groups.io/g/PATC-STC>. The user interface has, apart from one exception discussed below, all basic operations front and center. "Log In" and "Sign Up" appear upon first entry, and "post", "subscribe" and "unsubscribe" are handy buttons on the "home" dropdown. Postings are available for perusal via the "messages" dropdown.

The one function that gave subscribers trouble during last season was the classical "reply to all" versus "reply to sender" choice, a matter of group mailing list etiquette that occasionally leads to subscriber annoyance. At the bottom of any posting, see the options gathered under the heading "Groups.io Links": "You receive all messages sent to this group. View/Reply Online (#797) | Reply To Group | Reply To Sender | Mute This Topic | New Topic | Your Subscription | Contact Group Owner | Unsubscribe"

Particularly note "reply to group" and "reply to sender". "Mute this topic" is also helpful. If you simply execute an email client reply, your response goes to the whole group and you may not intend and/or want that.

Doug Lesar

**PATC-Ski Touring Section**  
**c/o Doug Lesar**  
**2507 Campbell Place**  
**Kensington, MD 20895**

To:

## PATC Ski Touring Section Membership Form

*The PATC/STS provides quality services and benefits to its cross-country skiing members while promoting and supporting the PATC and cross country skiing in general. Whether a novice, recreational, citizen racer or telemark skier, STS has something for every XC skier. Imagine yourself floating on the snow, climbing across hill and dale in the quiet of winter, stopping for lunch in brilliant sunshine on a vista with a view of snow-covered ridges and valleys stretching to the horizon, and then making a descent back to home. Our membership enjoys ski touring in the hills with the comradeship and safety of a group. When you become a member, you receive all issues of the club's newsletter UPSLOPE and other useful information. UPSLOPE is published six times a year by PATC/Ski Touring Section, a non-profit, educational and recreational group of cross-country skiing enthusiasts based in the Maryland, DC, Virginia, PA and West Virginia areas. UPSLOPE provides information about STS trips and events (e.g., Learn-To-XC-Ski weekends, Telemark instructional clinics, and mini-week ski trips). One year membership runs from October 1st through September 30th of the next year. If you join in April or later, your one year membership will run through September of the next year. To insure uninterrupted membership for more than one year, you may provide advance dues for up to three years. To join, select your desired membership category and term from the table below, complete this Form legibly, and send it with a check appropriate to your membership choice (payable to PATC Ski Touring Section) to:*

PATC-Ski Touring Section, c/o Doug Lesar, 2507 Campbell Place, Kensington, MD 20895

### Membership Classes

<u>Membership Categories</u>	<u>1 Year Only</u>	<u>2 Years</u>	<u>3 Years</u>
Individual	\$ 9	\$17	\$25
Family	\$13	\$24	\$35

PLEASE PRINT or TYPE THE INFORMATION BELOW !!!

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Request is for:    - NEW Membership: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_ - New Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ - Renewal: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

- Add me to Annual member directory but do not list my: Home Ph.: \_\_\_ ; Work Ph: \_\_\_ ; Email: \_\_\_; Postal Address: \_\_\_
- If checked, add me to New Yahoo Group so I can get infrequent, adhoc announcements of local XC Ski activities: \_\_\_
- If checked, send my UPSLOPE only electronically (no paper copy) to save the club copying and postage: \_\_\_

STS is an all-volunteer organization. We cannot function without the assistance of our members. If you are interested in volunteering to help STS in any of the following areas, please check the box and you will be contacted:

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> STS Officer           | <input type="checkbox"/> Publicity       | <input type="checkbox"/> XC Ski Instructor          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Web Content Assistant | <input type="checkbox"/> Ski Trip Leader | <input type="checkbox"/> Special Events Coordinator |