

## Project Name

Richter Trail Reconstruction and Extension Improvements

## Goals

Provide a classic-only trail loop in the Hillside trail system that can be reached from either Service High school or the Hilltop trail head. Create a trail that follows gentle terrain for use by older and less experienced skiers who travel at a slower pace. Use existing trails as much as possible, especially the Richter Loop, and maintain a relatively narrow winding character while still accommodating grooming equipment. Improve the surface of the trail so that it can be groomed with minimal snow cover.

## Background

The Hillside trail system accommodates all skill levels and styles of Nordic skiing. There has been an increasing demand for classic-only trails with gentle terrain for use by older and less experienced skiers who travel at a slower pace. Many people avoid the lighted trails used by faster competitive skate skiers and prefer the narrower winding trails with less traffic. The Richter loop is an easy classic-only trail but its present access route is too difficult, making it inaccessible to many skiers. This project will improve the west access from the Service high school trail head. The present condition of the trail surface prevents adequate grooming until substantial snow depth is available (approximately 0.6 meters), which limits the usefulness of the trail. This project will smooth the trail surface so that it can be groomed with minimal snow cover to extend the usefulness of the facility.

## Description

The trail improvements consist of 4 sections:

**1. Bog Trail Reconstruction** - Approximately 0.5 kilometers (1,700 feet) of existing trail reconstruction along a section of trail known as the "Bog Trail". Portions of the trail are wet and have poor foundation material. Fill material will be imported to provide a stable trail base. The overall trail width will remain unchanged at approximately 4.3 meters (14 feet) which is similar to the Tour of Anchorage Trail. This section of trail would be two-way during the ski season.

**2. New Trail Section** - Approximately 0.5 km (1,700 feet) of new trail construction from the existing Bog Trail to the Richter Trail. The trail will generally follow the north slope of the existing ridge. The trail width will be approximately 3.0 meters (10 feet). The topography will avoid steep grades or sharp turns. This section of trail would be two-way during the ski season.

**3. Richter Loop Reconstruction** - Approximately 1.5 km (5,000 feet) of existing trail reconstruction along the existing Richter Trail, a classic-only trail with an approximate width of 3.0 meters (10 feet) which is similar to the Abbott Multi-use Trail. The overall width will generally remain unchanged but the cross section will be leveled to allow grooming with minimal snow cover. Trail surface leveling will be accomplished by a combination of methods including grinding the surface material, adding wood chips, blading and removing large rocks. Some trees at select locations will have to be removed to provide a 3.6 meter (12 foot) wide space to allow passage of the grooming equipment. The trail will be one way (counter-clockwise) during the ski season.

**4. Richter Loop Cutoff** - Approximately 0.1 km (350 feet) of new trail construction at the east end of the Richter Loop to complete the loop. This is necessary to eliminate the steep hills exiting and entering the Richter from the Besh Loop. The trail width will be approximately 3.0 meters (10 feet). The topography will avoid steep grades or sharp turns. The trail will be one way (counter-clockwise) during the ski season.

Trail widths noted are the finished groomed surface. Additional clearing beyond the edge of the trail may be necessary to allow for passage of the grooming equipment (requiring a 3.6 meter space between trees) and stabilization of slopes. All new and reconstructed trails will have a narrow and curvilinear character while still providing minimal space for passage of grooming equipment. Any necessary trail widening will be accomplished by utilizing the native soil. Trees that must be removed will be chipped. Large diameter trees (greater than 0.3 meters in diameter) will be removed from the area. Stumps and roots will be ground into the trail base and buried. Disturbed soils will be re-vegetated to provide stabilization and erosion control.

## Cost & Management

The estimated cost to construct the proposed improvements is approximately \$50,000. The project will be managed by NSAA and costs covered by NSAA or from trail grants. Equipment and manpower will be supplied and managed by NSAA. The project is proposed for 2006.

