

**2010 Gold Rush Trail Dog Sled Mail Run**  
**Eighteenth Annual Edition**  
**January 22, 23, 24,-2010**  
**Quesnel to Cottonwood House to Pine Grove House to Stanley to Van Winkle**  
**to Richfield to Barkerville to Wells British Columbia**  
**COMPLETE MAIL RUN INFORMATION PACKAGE**

**Introduction To The Mail Run**

The Gold Rush Trail Sled Dog Association invites you to join them for the 18th running of the Annual Gold Rush Trail Dog Sled Mail Run.

The Mail Run was initiated in as a demonstration sport in the Northern British Columbia Winter Games. From this modest beginning, the Mail Run evolved to a highly competitive 235 mile long qualifier for the Iditarod Sled Dog Race, to a stage race event featuring six dog, eight dog and unlimited classes, to the multi-faceted non-competitive participation event that it is today.

Dog teams as small as three dogs and as large as 14 dogs are comfortable travelling over the Mail Run route. However it is important that dogs will not be asked to do something that they have not accomplished in training, dog care is a paramount consideration. The route is also suitable for skijorers, skiers, snowshoers. All participants are welcome, including individuals and families that travel together on snowmobile.

Over the years the participants have used many of the same trails and the dog teams have always carried the mail. The current trail is laid out so that participants return to the main highway at the end of each stage where handlers and dog trucks will be available to offer assistance.

The trail for 2010, while starting and finishing at the same places as it has for the past four years, will feature some positive changes that will minimize the chances of having to travel on active logging roads. Essentially the route runs 60 miles (100 kilometres) from Quesnel to Barkerville to Wells B.C., in places over the actual historic Cariboo Waggon Road. The trail will be as well maintained and groomed as mother nature and local logging will allow.

For the purposes of the Mail Run, the total route has been broken into smaller sections or stages. Participants may take part in all or some of the stages. A map of the trail will be given to all participants upon registration and is also available for download.

The goals of event organizers are:

- to celebrate sled dogs as wonderful working animals and to honour sled dog history and traditions.
- to encourage family fun and participation
- to ensure that participants, organizers and volunteers have a great time together
- to enjoy all that the Cariboo area of British Columbia, with its unique history, has to offer in the winter

- to encourage involvement of children and youth....there will be special recognition for all participants aged 16 and younger

### **Events...a Quick Overview**

The Mail Run has been designed to accommodate all participants and all abilities.

Over time it became apparent to organizers that it would be a great event not only for dog teams and dog mushers, but also for skijorers, skiers and snowshoers, all of them supported by snowmobilers. Run over wilderness trails, the event is challenging but organizers have built in many safety factors.

The event is based on a stage format and participants choose only those parts of the trail they wish to travel and over what period of time, either one, two or three days.

Note: Click on the **Events Calendar** for a complete detailing of all events

*Remember, the Mail Run is not a race, it is a participation event. All participants enjoy everything that traditional dog mushing and winter travel and camping have to offer.*

### **Pre-Run Events**

Participants are encouraged to travel to the Quesnel/Wells/Barkerville area early in the week of January 18th, 2010 to enjoy many opportunities on a host of groomed trails in the area.

For those with sled dogs, all attempts will be made to connect you with local sled dog owners so that your questions and needs will be addressed, just let organizers know about your wishes and your needs. Information on accommodation and trail conditions will be available. It is possible to run on trails of all lengths, including extended miles in the Wells area.

For skiers, there are a variety of trail options available. Come and experience the Hallis Lake cross country trail network in Quesnel, a well-developed and maintained trail system for all abilities, including some lighted trails. A second system of groomed trails exists in the Wells area, maintained by the Wells Ski Club. There are also groomed trails at Ten Mile Lake Provincial Park. Well established back country routes exist in the Wells - Barkerville area, complete with overnight cabins. There is also the opportunity to ski on groomed snowmobile trails along the Mail Run route. The downhill skiing is second-to-none at Troll Ski Resort. Simply make your wishes known and you will be accommodated.

All participants are encouraged to “rendezvous” in Quesnel on Thursday January 21<sup>st</sup> at the A & W on Two Mile Flat beginning at 5:00 p.m. for the traditional “Mushers’ Meeting”. Participants are asked to make every effort to be present for this important meeting to confirm their registration and to pick up their participation packages. This is a "no-host" supper. The information sharing part of the meeting with detailed instructions for all participants will begin at 7:30 p.m.

The Official Mail Run Ceremonial Swearing In and Send-Off will take place on Friday January 23rd beginning at 9:00 a.m. This event will take place in front of the downtown Quesnel Post Office. Everyone is encouraged to attend.

### **Stage One - Umiti Pit to Cottonwood**

The first section (stage) runs from Umiti Pit (north of Quesnel) to Cottonwood which is located on Highway 26, the main highway from Quesnel to Barkerville. At time of writing it is not possible to indicate exactly how long this stage will be as this is dependent on just where active logging will be taking place. We anticipate that the distance will be approximately 25 miles, a map of the confirmed trail will be available at the Participants' (Mushers') Meeting on Thursday evening.

This section of the trail will begin beyond the active logging on the 1700 (Umiti Pit) Road. The route follows the well-established Umiti-Ahbau Lake trail until the 21 kilometre (13 mile) point where it branches off to join the 600 Road at the 14 kilometre mark of the 600 Road. The route then makes a left hand turn on the 600 Road, running on what is hoped will be an unplowed logging road to the 17.5 kilometre mark where it branches to the right onto an unused logging road to join the unused 3500A Road which in turn joins the 3500 Road at the 4.5 kilometer mark. The trail then runs down the unused 3500 Road to the 1 kilometre mark where it branches left to connect with the new trail that has been opened up leading right to the Cottonwood Campground checkpoint, the end of the first day's run.

This checkpoint is the site of an overnight campout for those who would like to camp overnight. (The campground has a large heated tent, outhouses, firewood will be available as well as water, access roads and parking will be plowed. All campers must be self-sufficient and prepared for winter camping). Note: At Cottonwood, participants will be guests on private property and are asked to treat all property and people with respect.

For those who do not wish to camp out, overnight, arrangements may be made to "bunk out" on the floor of the heated Cottonwood Community Hall or they may travel back to Quesnel.

The event is organized so that participants may leave Umiti Pit on the Friday any time between 10:30 and 12:30 p.m., giving lots of time to travel out to Umiti Pit following the 9:00 a.m. official send off in downtown Quesnel. Participants are asked not to leave before 10:30 a.m. so that trail safety workers and groomers may be out on the trail ahead of them. There will be lots of time to cover the route to the Cottonwood Checkpoint in the daylight.

It is important that all participants inform organizers when they plan to leave from Umiti Pit, volunteers will be in attendance at Umiti Pit to help and to see participants off. All participants must arrive at the Cottonwood checkpoint by 5:00 p.m. and in January, it is dark by about 5:00 p.m. As indicated, Cottonwood is accessible by road, just 18 miles (28 kilometres) from Quesnel, so participants can arrange to have their dog truck or support team meet them at Cottonwood.

### **Cottonwood Events**

The Cottonwood barbeque/pot luck for all participants, handlers and volunteers is slated to begin at 6:00 p.m. and will take place in the specially-constructed Cafe Del Mar (also known as BC Place North!) Hamburgers and salad as well as something to drink will be provided, Those attending are invited to bring something more to share a la potluck. One featured event during

the evening will be the Best Musher's Hat Fashion Show. Things will begin to wind down around 8:00 p.m.

### **Stage Two - Cottonwood to Troll Resort**

The second section (stage) of trail is run on Day 2 (Saturday January 23rd) from Cottonwood to Troll Ski Resort (site of former Pine Grove House), a trail distance of 15 miles (25 kilometres). Dog teams and skiers who did not participate on Day 1 may choose to start at Cottonwood on Day 2.

A pancake breakfast will be available for purchase at the Cottonwood checkpoint and participants should begin to leave Cottonwood by 10:00 a.m. to arrive at Troll by 1:00 p.m. although this timing is not too crucial. Initially participants will backtrack on Friday's route, turning right on the 3500 Road at the 3501 mark, continuing down the 3500 Road to the 3505 mark and taking a right turn to continue on to Troll Resort. If some participants would like to run longer miles before heading to Troll Resort, this will be possible but please make your intentions known to the organizers so that they can ensure that the longer trail is broken.

There is significant elevation gain as teams travel past Hyde Lake, followed by an exhilarating five kilometre descent down Pinegrove Mountain ending right in the heart of Troll Ski Resort. Please note that for safety and liability reasons, all snowmobiles must park in a designated snowmobile parking area, they must not travel near the ski runs or near the lodge.

Troll Resort is located on Highway #26, 27 miles (44 kilometres) from Quesnel and 11 miles (18 kilometres) from Cottonwood. There will be an overnight campout at Troll, with a designated outside camping area for mushers, handlers, volunteers and family members. Again, campers should be self-sufficient although at Troll there are public washrooms with hot and cold running water, and it will also be possible for participants to bunk on the floor in a heated section of the main lodge (note: the "small" lodge will be off limits this year) if they provide all of their own camping gear. Troll Resort is private property and all participants are guests who are asked to treat the property and other participants with total respect.

Because of the proximity of Troll, dog trucks have easy access and again, if participants wish, they may choose to travel back to Quesnel or on to Wells for the night.

Once teams arrive at Troll, lunch can be purchased at the snack bar. In the afternoon there will be a series of contests (Mushers' Sports) for participants, mushers and their dogs. The intent is to offer the public some insight into the world of sled dogs and the public will be invited to come to Troll to watch the teams arrive and to meet the participants

### **Mushers' Sports Competitions**

The setting at Troll Resort lends itself perfectly as a venue to showcase sled dogs for the general public. In keeping with our desire to maintain a focus on the history and traditions associated with sled dogs and dog mushing, a number of Mushers' Sports will be staged for everyone to

enjoy. This is truly a fun event and an opportunity to showcase sled dogs for the many spectators. There will be prizes!!!

At 2:00 p.m., mushers are asked to consider putting their dog team on display for the general public to view and appreciate. ALL DOGS AND EQUIPMENT ARE WELCOME and you are particularly encouraged to use equipment and clothing that you have made yourself.

At 2:30 p.m a weight pull demonstration is planned. This will be simply a demonstration event, to show the working abilities of sled dogs. Enter your dog(s) as you feel comfortable, every dog will be a winner, you can bait or lead your dog with a leash. There will be no attempt to come up with a winner.

Finally, at 4:00 p.m. the popular and hilarious Mushers' Sports/Trapper's Triathlon will be staged. This event requires a team of five people who will chop and split firewood, light a fire, melt snow to make water, prepare tea, bake bannock, snowshoe the distance of a measured trail. There will be demerit points for any indication of cheating....get your team together.

Following the Mushers' Sports, the afternoon celebrations will begin winding down as everyone looks forward to the evening events.

Saturday evening will see the Dinner and Auction which will take place in the main lodge. Tickets must be pre-purchased (at a cost of \$15.00 each) and must be obtained right up until Thursday evening at the Mushers' Meeting.

Socializing beginning at 5:15 p.m., the banquet meal beginning at 6:00 p.m. with the auction beginning at 7:00 p.m. This should be a great evening of fun. Please pre-order your meal tickets when you register (see Registration/Participation Form), however they will be available until Thursday evening at the Mushers' Meeting. All participants (including mushers, skijorers, skiers, snowshoers, and snowmobilers), volunteers, handlers, family members, as well as members of the public are invited to attend. A donation will be made to the Holger Bauer Forest Safety Fund from the money raised at the auction.

### **Stage Three - Stanley to Barkerville**

The third section (stage) will begin on Sunday morning with a pancake breakfast which will be available for purchase beginning at 7:00 a.m. Participants will then travel by vehicle along highway 26, past Beaver Pass House for a distance of 10 miles (16 kilometres) to the ghost town of Stanley.

Dog teams and other participants may begin leaving Stanley at 9:30 a.m. after the first safely snowmobiles have left. Everyone will travel along the original Cariboo Waggon Road, along Lightning Creek, past the site of the former town of Van Winkle, up onto a plateau, past the headwaters of Jack of Cubs Creek, before descending through Richfield to Barkerville. This is a well marked trail running a distance of 15 miles (25 kilometres). This stage is open to every participant, even those who did not take part in earlier stages.

The trail descends from Summit Rock along the access route to Mount Agnes, ending up at Barkerville. The trip down historic Barkerville's main street is one of the real highlights of the Mail Run journey. It is a prime viewing area for spectators and for photo opportunities, it is anticipated that a few Barkerville merchants will be open to serve light lunch items. Participants should travel the full length of the main street where they will gain access to one of two parking lots which are the staging areas for Stage Five of the Mail Run, the Barkerville Dash.

All participants should aim to arrive at Barkerville by 1:00 p.m., the Barkerville Dash will begin at 2:00 p.m.

#### **Stage Four - Barkerville to Wells**

The fourth section (stage) is called The Barkerville Dash. This event will commence at 2:00 p.m., even if all of the participants have not completed the Stanley to Barkerville trail. Covering a distance of 5 miles (9 kilometres), this is a fun race for teams of three to six dogs, passengers are allowed. This event, which is essentially a mass start sprint race, is open to all participants, dog teams, skiers, skijorers, and snowshoers are encouraged to participate. The trail is a straight, flat run along the meadow between Barkerville and Wells. For those dog mushers who choose not to participate in the Barkerville Dash but who have completed the previous stages, they must ensure that another mail carrier delivers their mail bag to Wells.

There will be participants who only want to participate in The Barkerville Dash, these participants must complete a Registration Form and a Waiver form, these will be available at the start of the event approximately one hour before the start. All registered participants must pay the \$20.00 entry fee and all registered participants will receive the Participation Awards. Every participant must also contribute a prize before the start of this stage.

The Barkerville Dash will end at the helipad in Wells where dog trucks will be waiting, prizes will be chosen/awarded beginning at 4:00 p.m., the mail will be turned over to Canada Post and the 18th Annual Gold Rush Trail Sled Dog Mail Run will wind up. At this point participants are free to leave for home or they might like to spend some time in Wells enjoying the many trails.

#### ***Along The Trail***

You will not be alone. While there will be no "officials" (as in timers and judges) as during a race, there will be safety "sweeps" travelling by snowmobile. All support persons and event officials will be clearly identified.

The trail is beautiful but tough! If you have any questions about your ability or the ability of your dogs to complete this run, please contact organizers to discuss this matter. The starting elevation is approximately 970 metres, the elevation of Wells is 1200 metres. Most of the route runs through forest, some of it is on logging roads...some of the roads may be ploughed, only week or so before the Mail Run will we know the final status of the whole route....but your safety and that of the dogs is a priority.

There will be spotters and good signage along the route. Remember that you must plan your equipment carefully, bring snacks for the dogs, dishes to water them, booties if your dogs use them, and make sure that you dress appropriately for the weather. It has not been uncommon for the temperatures to be at least -20C. Experience has shown that basic safety equipment is valuable and even if you don't use it, your sled or backpack will look cool when you come into Wells! See the Recommended/Mandatory Gear section. Remember that really cold weather complicates everything.

Be certain that your dogs have the coats to withstand the cold especially if they will be camping overnight without a dog box. In the event of an emergency and if required, sick or injured dogs will be transported to a veterinary clinic in Quesnel for treatment.

### **Recommended/Mandatory Gear**

At all times, all participants should have on their person, matches, a knife, a disposable survival blanket. This is especially important in the event that a musher should become separated from his/her team.

At all times, participants should have on their sled or in their pack, an axe, change of clothing, suitable warm-weather parka and footwear, emergency personal food and water, food and feeding equipment for dogs, a headlight,

first aid kit for self and dogs, snowshoes (unless you are skiing).

In addition, if camping out, be sure to bring stakeout chain or picket line for dogs, (if not using truck and dog box), tent or tarp, groundsheet and thermarest-style sleeping pad, good winter sleeping bag, food and cooking equipment for at least two meals.

### **Registration**

Members of the Gold Rush Trail Sled Dog Association are simply inviting others to come along with them on their annual Mail Run. We will endeavour to ensure that the same high quality trail with all of the usual supports are in place. We want this event to be as affordable as possible.

There is a registration or participation fee of \$20.00. All participants must pre-register by Monday January 18, 2010 and must complete and submit a **Registration/Participation Form**. Please send in your Participation Form as early as possible. In addition, every participant will be asked to complete a **Waiver Form** to be submitted along with the Registration Form. These forms can be downloaded from this website and mailed to Mail Run organizers.

We are asking that everyone (participants, handlers, family members and others) pay for their own Saturday night banquet meal (cost \$15.00 per adult, \$10.00 for children 12 and under and for seniors age 65 and over). It is strongly recommended that these tickets be purchased at time of registration.

When participants arrive in Quesnel they should check in with the registration table that will be located at the Musers' Meeting, in order to pick up their participation package and participation awards.

### **Accommodations**

The Gold Rush Trail Sled Dog Mail Run actually starts just north of Quesnel but it finishes in Wells, approximately 60 miles (by road) away. Participants who are not campers could spend the nights in either Quesnel or Wells. Local accommodation information is listed on the "**links**" section of this website or you may contact event organizers. It is possible for participants to share some of the apartment-style motel units in Wells.

It will be necessary for dog mushers to arrange to have their dog trucks at Cottonwood for Friday evening, Troll for Saturday evening and in

Barkerville/Wells for Sunday afternoon. This will require some prior planning.

### **Mail Run Awards - 2010**

#### **Participation Awards**

All registered participants will receive participation awards consisting of:

- ★ A cancelled 2010 Mail Run envelope
- ★ A participation certificate (mail carriers will also receive an official mail carrier's certificate)
- ★ A 2010 Gold Rush Trail Dog Sled Mail Run mug
- ★ BBQ Supper on Friday evening at Cottonwood Campsite (Café Del Mar)

### **SPECIAL AWARDS**

The following Special Awards will be awarded to individuals in the following three categories

#### **Category 1 - PARTICIPATION**

##### Skiers Award

To recognize skier participants who have completed all or part of the Mail Run trail.  
Perpetual hand painted serving tray plaque

##### Skijorer's Award

To recognize skijorer participants who have completed all or part of the Mail Run trail.  
Perpetual plaque

##### Snowshoers Award

To recognize snowshoer participants who have completed all or part of the Mail Run trail.  
Perpetual plaque

### Mushers Award

To recognize musher participants who have completed all or part of the Mail Run trail.

Perpetual Trophy

## **Category 2 - RECOGNITION**

### Snowmobile Award

This award goes to the snowmobile participant or volunteer who shows extra support on the trail helping out mushers, skiers, skijorers, snowshoers and/or volunteers to help ensure a successful trip.

### Perpetual Trophy

The Holger Bauer Award

In memory of Holger Bauer. This award goes to all participants aged 16 and under.

Perpetual wooden plaque plus individual awards

### Volunteer Recognition Award

All volunteers are acknowledged as important, as without those special people the event simply wouldn't happen. This award is for the official volunteer who has gone "above and beyond" for the Mail Run.

Perpetual Trophy

### Spirit of the Mail Run Award

The Frank Cushman Award. For the participant or volunteer who embodies the unique and special qualities of joy, energy, spontaneity and helpfulness that surface when they are out on the trail.

Perpetual Trophy

## **Category 3 - ACHIEVEMENT**

### Best Musher's Hat Award

To any participant, handler or volunteer with the finest hat that exemplifies true dog mushing roots and traditions – or is just plain the funniest. Wearers will be asked to "fashion show" their hats at the Friday night potluck.

Annual prize

### Best Conditioned Dog Sled Team

This award is to encourage the positive care of all dogs. Judged by the mushers' peers, to have the healthiest and best conditioned team in the Mail Run.

Perpetual Trophy

### Hard Luck Award

Awarded to a participant who experiences genuine tough luck on the trail but who rises above it in true Gold Rush Trail spirit.

Perpetual Trophy

### The Red Lantern Award

This is not a “last place” trophy. In the tradition of all dog sled events, the lantern is lit at the beginning of the journey and it is not extinguished until the last participant is safely home, guided by the light burning in the lantern.

### The Musher’s Sports Award

This award focuses on preserving the very special traditional skills and resourcefulness that ensure survival in the winter wilderness. Awarded to the winning team.

Perpetual Trophy