Cross Country Ski Areas Association

Fall Conference 2026
Gunstock, New Hampshire – Oct 27 & 28 2026

Last Update 10/25/26

Tuesday, October 27

1:30pm **Gunstock XC Shop Tour** – Details to come
Location: 719 Cherry Valley Rd, Gilford, NH 03249

2:30pm **Snowmaking Workshop** – We'll start with a behind-the-scenes tour of the snowmaking operation, including the pumphouse, pond, gun storage, and a look at how Nordic snowmaking integrates with Gunstock's larger alpine system.

We'll discuss **efficiencies in blowing, moving, and spreading piles of snow**, including the use of a manure spreader and a custom dump body designed for a groomer or loader. It's a practical look at how machine-made snow can be moved efficiently and strategically across the trail system.

We'll finish with a discussion of **summer grooming and trail preparation for low-snow conditions**, including trail implements and techniques that can make a significant difference once winter arrives. Come ready to ask questions and share ideas with other operators.
Dave Ulbrich, Gunstock Staff & HKD

Location: Gunstock Mt Base Lodge, 719 Cherry Valley Rd, Gilford, NH 03249

3:30pm **Grooming Workshop** – We'll take the grooming workshop out on the trails for a hands-on look at **Nordic grooming techniques for New England conditions**. Participants will break into smaller groups based on the groomer you are interested in (Prinoth/PB/Snow Rabbit), creating plenty of opportunity for discussion, demonstration, and questions.

The workshop will focus on the techniques operators use to get the most out of changing snow conditions, including **blading, tilling, track setting, trail shaping, intersections, and managing thin or challenging snowpack**. Operators will share approaches for adapting grooming techniques throughout the season and making the most of the equipment available.

This is designed to be an interactive session, so come ready to ask questions, share what works at your area, and learn from other groomers from across the region.

Location: Gunstock Trails (arriving late, call Reese, 802-236-3021, for meetup location)

5pm **Happy Hour at Gunstock Mt Resort Base Lodge**
Please join us to reacquaint and meet other owners/operators of ski areas and vendors. This is where the work gets done!
Location: 719 Cherry Valley Rd, Gilford, NH 03249

6:30pm **Buffet Dinner** – Following Tuesday Happy Hour, join the group for dinner at Gunstock Mountain Resort and let the networking and conversation continue. You must make a reservation in advance as there is limited seating. Cost is $49 and includes tax and gratuity. Menu: Chicken Marsala. Steak Tips with Demi Glace, Garden Salad, Rice Pilaf, Roasted Seasonal Vegetables, Parmesan Asparagus and Tiramisu.
Purchase a ticket here.

8pm **Fireside Chat at Hotel**



Wednesday, October 28
Location: Gunstock Mountain Resort - 719 Cherry Valley Rd, Gilford, NH 03249

8-9:30am **Registration, Continental Breakfast, Partner Expo and Silent Auction** – *Gunstock Mountain Resort,*

9:40am **Gunstock Introduction** – Robert Drake*, Gunstock Mountain Resort General Manager*

9:45am **Presentation #1**, Jay Broccolo, *Director of Weather Operations at the Mount Washington Observatory* - Mount Washington Regional Mesonet system. How important is monitoring and understanding the complex NE weather patterns, micro climates and their impact on the broader New England region?

Social Break

10:45am **Presentation #2**, *Kelly Davis, Director of Research, Outdoor Industries America and Cross Country Ski Areas Association* - Kelly will share a compelling look at the evolving outdoor consumer and the trends transforming the cross-country ski market including purchasing trends and what the to expect from this Super El Niño.

Social Break

11:45am **CCSAA Update –** *Matt Kuhn, Aspen Snowmass, CO*, *CCSAA Board Vice Chair*

11:55am **Panel Discussions –** *(choose one to attend)*
***Panel #1 – Competitive Venues and Homologation 101* –** Is there value for your ski area? - What does it take to develop and maintain a competitive race venue, and what exactly does homologation mean? We'll break down the basics, discuss what is involved in the process, and explore the potential benefits and challenges for your ski area. Learn how a competitive venue can support events, attract new skiers, and potentially create additional opportunities for your operation.
Panel to include: Facilitator – Matt Kuhn – Aspen/Snowmass, CO, Al Serrano, ORDA, NY, John Morton, Morton Trails, Mike Hussey - Oak Hill, NH,

Panel #2 – Snow Farming – Tips & Tricks – Making the most of the snow you have is more important than ever. Learn how other operators are preserving, managing, and extending their snowpack, and come ready to share the techniques and tricks that are working at your area.
Panel to Include: Facilitator – Reese Brown – CCSAA,

12:45pm **Lunch, Silent Auction and Expo –** *Lunch*

1:15pm Silent Auction Closes and cash out

1:45pm **Discussion Groups –** *(choose one to attend)*
***Group #1* – Hard surface and Ice Renovation/Tilling –** Hard packed and icy trails can be some of the most challenging conditions to manage. We'll discuss techniques for renovating hard surfaces, effective tilling strategies, equipment setup, and how operators are turning difficult conditions back into a quality skiing surface. Come ready to share what has worked, and what hasn't, at your area.
Facilitator – Reese Brown, CCSAA, Supplier Reps

***Group #2* – Leveraging staff resources: Is your groomer also a ski instructor? -** For many cross country ski areas, staff wear multiple hats. How can you make the most of your team while maintaining quality across

operations? We'll discuss creative ways to cross-train employees, share responsibilities, and build a flexible staff that can move between grooming, instruction, rentals, guest services, and other areas when needed.
Facilitator – Dave Ulbrich Gunstock and Kathy Brennan PSIA - AASI

Group #3 **– Entabeni – A New POS System**
Facilitator – Ellen Chandler, Entabeni

Group #4 **– Revenue Diversification: Special Events, Venue Rental and More -** Your ski area has value beyond the trail pass. Explore ways operators are generating additional revenue through special events, venue rentals, private functions, food and beverage, summer activities, and other creative uses of their facilities. Share what's working at your area and hear ideas that could help create new revenue opportunities throughout the year.
Facilitator – Nate Harvey, Great Glen Trails, NH, David Rye, Trapp Outdoor, VT

2:45pm **Final Goodbyes.**

SPONSORS

CCSAA Fall Conference Expo Attendees
Inside

- HKD Snowmakers
- PistenBully
- Prinoth
- Track Inc. – Snow Rabbit
- Mountain Grooming
- Highline Software
- PSIA-AASI

Outside

- Prinoth
- Pisten Bully
- Track Inc