



Comox Valley Economic Development
102-2435 Mansfield Drive
Courtenay, Vancouver Island
British Columbia, Canada
V9N 2M2

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - Comox Valley's World Class Destination
Reputation and New Sports Facilities Key in Attracting IPC World Cup**

Paralympic athletes from around the globe travel to Vancouver Island for lead-up event to 2010 Paralympic Winter Games

Comox Valley, Vancouver Island (March 12, 2009) – The 2009 International Paralympic Committee (IPC) World Cup, underway this week, (March 11-14) is the latest international elite sports event to choose the Comox Valley as their team training site - a direct result of the Valley's world-class destination experience, hospitality and recent strategic investments made in the sports infrastructure.

The Comox Valley on Vancouver Island's east coast rests directly across Georgia Strait from the Olympic venues of Whistler and the Callaghan Valley. The Mount Washington Alpine Resort, where the competition is centered, shares almost the same winter conditions and scenic beauty. In addition, the Comox Valley is a most inviting and accessible community.

120 athletes from more than 20 countries have made the long trek to Mount Washington to participate in these conditions as they most closely emulate those to be found next year at the 2010 Paralympic Winter Games in Whistler. Other Olympic winter sports teams who have turned to the Comox Valley as their team training destination include Canada, United States and Switzerland.

**Toll Free 1.877.848.2427
Tel 250.334.2427
Fax 250.334.2414**

discovercomoxvalley.com

DISCOVER

Since the 2010 bid phase, both Mount Washington and the Comox Valley region have invested in new trails, a new stadium, new lighting, and a target biathlon range homologated to FIS standards on Mount Washington to support these elite events. Still to come is the planned development of a Mountain Sport Centre. This state of the art training facility in the heart of Mount Washington's extensive Nordic trail network will offer emerging athletes affordable overnight accommodation for groups, classrooms and fitness facilities.

"The investment is paying off, and Comox Valley's reputation as a go-to sports and tourism destination, builds every time another international event is held here," said Susan Kelsey, Chair of Comox Valley Spirit of BC Community Committee and former Olympian. "We've all heard how the Olympics in Vancouver and Whistler will focus the world's attention on BC. It's true and it is already happening for the Comox Valley as we become a major focus for the international sports community as a preferred training ground for 2010, and for hosting world-class events beyond that. "

(Destination Backgrounder attached)

– 30 –

For more information

www.sportcomoxvalley.com

Media contacts:

Full media access available for weekend events through:

Lara Greasley, Marketing and

Communications Manager

(250) 334-2427 x 233.

Cell: (250) 702-1298

<http://www.discovercomoxvalley.com/news-and-media/default.htm>

Backgrounder

Comox Valley: World-Class Sports and Tourist Destination

About Mount Washington and Comox Valley Training and Winter Event Hosting:

Mount Washington and the Comox Valley enjoy the closest conditions to Whistlers' Callaghan Valley then anywhere else in British Columbia. With similar elevation, snow conditions and temperatures, Olympic Committee cross country teams will find the perfect training conditions in preparation for 2010. We boast incredible cross country and dryland training opportunities, have hosted world cup championships and are the official training site of the Canadian national cross country ski team.

Climate Information:

The Comox Valley is situated approximately 30 minutes from the top of Mount Washington and is home to 62,000 residents. Even during peak winter conditions the Comox Valley is temperate and green, with average temperatures ranging from 7° and 12° respectively.

	Mount Washington	Callaghan Valley
Trail Elevation	930 - 1240 m.	860- 1240 m.
Training Elevation	0 - 1580 m.	0 - 2182 m.
Average Snowfall	900 cm.	1090 cm.
Snow Type	Coastal	Coastal
Average Temperature	-2°C	-4°C
Temperature Ranges	+5°C ~ -8°C	+5°C ~ -12°C

Training Venue Information:

Mount Washington is home to numerous training venues which are all conveniently located within the Mount Washington area.

- Integrated competition/training trails, 200X60 m. stadium
- 30 target IBU standard biathlon range
- On Snow training camps in late May to early June
- 55 km. machine groomed Nordic trails with ocean and mountain views
- Backcountry skiing and snowshoeing routes in the adjacent Strathcona Provincial Park
- Home to the Strathcona Nordic Ski Club with 500 members and an active racing program
- Home to the Courtenay Biathlon Association and Vancouver Island Society for Adaptive Snowsports

www.sportcomoxvalley.com

Come for the sports now, and then come back for the rest

There are places on earth with almost mythic capacity to draw us in, inspire us, and to evoke a quality of spirit and creativity that becomes a part of us. The Comox Valley, on the east coast of Vancouver Island British Columbia, is such a place where the sights, sounds and attractions convey – this is a destination like no other.

With rich culinary bounty from land & sea, over 50 arts, music and sporting events & festivals a year, and stunning alpine to ocean resorts & spas; this place lends itself more easily to inspiration and exploration than others.

It is a place of supernatural beauty that offers rich cultural and outdoor experiences, and perhaps most importantly, it is a place for flat out fun...this is the Comox Valley.

The Comox Valley is the regional mid-island hub for Vancouver Island and is a growing community with a strong tourism sector.

The economy is thriving and the population of 62,326 is growing, along with opportunities for businesses of all kinds. With direct access to key amenities including an international airport, mainland ferry terminal, an excellent sea harbour, a large ski resort, and countless other tourism attractions the Valley is the leading choice as a Vancouver Island travel destination.

www.discovercomoxvalley.com