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Comox Valley, British Columbia

### **2010 Hopefuls Racing on Mount Washington VANOC to Attend**

On March 10<sup>th</sup> to the 14<sup>th</sup> Mount Washington and the Comox Valley will be welcoming 13 nations and over 80 athletes who will be competing for gold at the TimberWest 2007 International Paralympic Committee (IPC) Biathlon and Cross Country Skiing World Cup Finals.

Not only is this the first time an IPC event has been held on Mount Washington, the finals are also considered a test event for both the participating athletes and VANOC as they prepare for the 2010 Winter Olympics.

“Mount Washington provides the Comox Valley the trump card in being able to host events of this caliber,” said Mike McLaughlin, Chair of the Comox Valley World Cup Organizing Committee, “This event cements the fact that the Comox Valley is successfully capturing 2010 opportunities, and will open even more doors for the community.”

Hosting the 2007 IPC World Cup is indeed a significant opportunity. The finals have attracted teams from as far away as Russia, Norway, China and Finland to attend the event. It has also drawn the attention of VANOC who will be sending eight members of their team to the event including John Aalberg, Nordic Manager 2010, Rob Bernhardt, Chief of Competition 2010 and Dena Coward, Director Paralympic Games 2010.

With up to eight races being held most event days, and given the skill level of these athletes, the World Cup promises to be exciting for spectators who will be coming from far and wide to get a glimpse of these elite athletes in action. “The new stadium on Mount Washington is well set-up for spectators to experience the finals up close,” said McLaughlin, “These are the same athletes who competed at the 2006 Torino Winter Olympics and will be honing their skills for 2010. It will be very exciting.”

With only two days until the first World Cup race starts, Mount Washington and the Comox Valley are poised to capture and embody the best of Olympic spirit as 2010 races towards the Province.