2022 was a busy and fruitful year for HokkaidoWilds.org. We added almost 30 new route guides to the website, explored more of Hokkaido’s amazing wild places with great people, and published our first ever physical product – the Niseko Backcountry ski map. Sea kayaking took center stage for our summer explorations, and we experienced our largest monthly website access numbers in January 2023.

PREAMBLE

2022 marked our fourth full year of operation for HokkaidoWilds.org as a voluntary association. During the first half of the year, Japan was still in an economic mode, but in time for winter the borders opened, and ‘our people’ (adventure-loving folk from overseas) came flooding back in – we recorded our highest website access numbers ever (15,000+ unique visits in January 2023).

We were thrilled to finally publish our first physical guide – the Niseko Backcountry topographic map for backcountry skiing in the greater Niseko area. 2022 was also our first full season of sea kayaking – we’ve loved exploring some of Hokkaido’s amazing coastal areas.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND THANKS

- Many thanks to HokkaidoWilds.org readers, friends and followers for the encouraging comments and for following along our adventures here in Hokkaido.

- An extra special thanks to the local Niseko residents who took the time out of their day to chat with us and show us around.

- A heartfelt thank you to the team at Blackcomb Design who took our original ideas and turned them into something beautiful and functional.

- A huge thanks to our two web developers, Alex and Karen, who continued to keep our site running smoothly.

- Major shoutouts to our board members, Greg and Marco, and to our many volunteers.

- And a big thank you to all the folks who have contributed to our site, either through writing articles or filming content.

- Finally, a huge thank you to all the folks who continue to support us through donations and by using our guides.

PEOPLE OF THE HOKKAIDO WILDS

As with previous years, HokkaidoWilds.org was a success in 2022 because of the following amazing people (in alphabetical order), who helped us along our adventures, planned adventures for us, and gave us invaluable advice. HokkaidoWilds.org co-founders Rob and Hollee are stoked to get to enjoy Hokkaido’s amazing wild places with these awesome folk.

- Alex Johnson
- Andy O’Connor
- Ben Herman
- Chris Auld
- Greg Behrozin
- Greg and Marco
- Sarka Wallberg
- Simon Daly
- Tim Ball
- Tim and Madeleine Whittaker

PUBLICATION OF NISEKO BACKCOUNTRY

Arguably the highlights of 2022 for us was the publication of Niseko Backcountry – a physical printed backcountry ski map for the greater Niseko area. This was the culmination of our map-making efforts to date and represents a huge amount of work in both the ground documentation and also in laying out the maps themselves. We’re really pleased with how it’s come together.

Some of the key takeaways from the design process were:

- The importance of good data. We couldn’t have produced a high-quality map without accurate information from the field.
- The need for clear and concise symbols and icons. We took a great deal of care in choosing symbols that would be easily recognizable to skiers.
- The challenge of integrating topographic and ski-specific information. We worked hard to ensure that the map was both informative and easy to read.

Overall, we’re proud of the result and hope that it will be a useful tool for skiers in the Niseko area for years to come.
• Our full report on the development process of Niseko Backcountry is here (PDF, 1.5MB).
• Companion site: https://hokkaidowild.com/niseko-backcountry-topomap-companion-site
• Copies sold in 2022: 1,077 copies
• Copies donated to mountain safety organizations: 50 copies (details)
• Revenue/loss breakdown: See Financials below. Any profit made on the

map will be donated to mountain safety and mountain-use initiatives in the
greater Niseko area. We haven’t got to profitably on the map yet, but hope
to in 2023.

BUY NISEKO BACK-COUNTRY ONLINE

POSTS ADDED OVER THE YEAR

There are new route blogs we published on hokkaidowild.com from April 1st 2022 till March 31st 2023.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>22</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>164 routes</td>
<td>42 routes</td>
<td>57 routes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 pages</td>
<td>24 pages</td>
<td>24 pages</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>0</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cycle Routes</td>
<td>Hiking Routes</td>
<td>Paddling Routes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42 routes</td>
<td>83 routes</td>
<td>57 routes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42 pages</td>
<td>42 pages</td>
<td>42 pages</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SKI TOURING ROUTES

We published a total of 22 established ski touring routes during the 2022 fiscal year. Many of them were located in the greater Niseko area, as we worked
forwardly to get as many of the Niseko Backcountry regions written up in detail on
the site. We also started to put more attention on the bigger peaks in the central
Hokkaido mountain ranges – Daisetsuzan and the Tokachidake Range.

See all ski touring: https://hokkaidowild.com/skibur

PADDLING ROUTES

2022 was the first full season for us to document what the Hokkaido coast has to
offer for the sea kayaker. It did not disappoint. Hokkaido’s coast has some
incredible geys – rugged and tower cliffs, sea caves, crystal clear water, diverse
wildlife, and some extremely remote spots that offer a feeling of wildness seldom
accessible with other activities in the Hokkaido outdoors.

The seven paddling spots we published in 2022 don’t include the other seven or so
coastal areas we documented but hadn’t posted before the end of March 2022 –
the sea kayaking PDF topomap take a lot of time to create, so the pace of
publishing is somewhat restricted. We estimate at least twice the time is required
for sea kayaking posts compared with other posts – combining marine chart data
and land-based topomap data is time-consuming but rewarding process.

See all the paddling routes here: https://hokkaidowild.org/water

OTHER NOTABLE POSTS

• Based on three (short) seasons of exploring Hokkaido’s lakes and rivers, we
published our top 10 lakes for canoeing in Hokkaido.

• The Niseko Backcountry companion web page: we mentored our paper
backcountry ski map for the Niseko region to be a foundation for online
and analogue information. So, we published a comprehensive web page as a
companion to the map, with links to our detailed online route guides.

• We gave away the data required to replicate our Niseko Backcountry physical
ski map. We hope by making the data open source, this will encourage
others to create English-language resources for other parts of Japan.

OUTREACH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Award</td>
<td>Articles</td>
<td>Committee Roles</td>
<td>Public Talks</td>
<td>Public Meetings</td>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>Media Appearances</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PUBLIC APPEARANCES

As with previous years, we were happy to be invited to speak at a number of events and symposiums.

• Canterbury Sea/Kayaking Network Talk (Christchurch, New Zealand) – Haslee and Rob had the pleasure and honour of sharing about adventure in Hokkaido
with a podium speaking at Future Talk in Christchurch, New Zealand. It was such a privilege to share with other Kiwi adventurers everything that Hokkaido has to offer to the DIY explorer traveler (August 23rd, 2022 – 11th).

- 9th Rural District Tourism Seminar – Rob was asked to speak about Hokkaido/Wild’s view of the Rurui area’s potential for adventure tourism at a seminar attended by 45 people in the tourism industry in the area. Hosted by the Japanese Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (Rurui Development and Construction Dept) (December 5th, 2022)

- 2021 Mountain Day Symposium – We were invited to speak at the International Mountain Day Symposium in Toyama Prefecture (Kurashiki), about our work on the challenges and potential of the Odori Range for hiking adventures (December 10th – 11th, 2022 – 14th).

- Japan National Tourism Office (JNTO) Netherlands Hokkaido Webinar – Rob gave a talk and video link to about 60 travel agents in the Netherlands about adventure in Hokkaido (February 23rd, 2023).

COLLABORATION
Rob was happy to help the Hokkaido Police with writing their English translation of their backcountry ski notice, which advises backcountry visitors about the risks inherent to enjoying Hokkaido’s winter mountains.

MEDIA APPEARANCES
- Hokkaido Shincho Newspaper (February 2nd, 2023) - An article about Nikko Backcountry, our backcountry ski map for the greater Nikko area (link / screenshot).
- Yomiuri Newspaper (February 4th, 2023) - An article about Nikko Backcountry, the English-language topographic map with backcountry ski routes overlaid for the Nikko region (link / translation).

COMMITTEE WORK
- Hokkaido Outdoor Forum - Rob continues to contribute time to help with the running of the annual Hokkaido Outdoor Forum, an annual gathering of 200 people involved in the wider Hokkaido outdoor industry. He is part of the Steering Committee for the Forum.
- Hokkaido Outdoor Network (HON) - Rob is the vice-chairperson of the Hokkaido Outdoor Network (HON) committee. HON seeks to be an online portal for the Hokkaido outdoor industry, connecting, educating, and growing the wider Hokkaido outdoor industry.

PUBLIC MEETINGS
We organized two public meetings about our backcountry ski map for the greater Nikko area, Nikko Backcountry. These were very well attended (1st meeting: 30 people / 2nd meeting: 15 people), and gave us an opportunity to interact with local key industry stakeholders. Full report from these meetings is here.

GOALS FOR THE FUTURE
We’re very likely to hit our goal of 150 km of backcountry routes by 2025. We’re already at 142 routes on the site, and there is still so much to explore - central Hokkaido in particular, as well as the many routes in the Shiretoko in the far north. Otherwise with the paddling routes - we have at least the paddling routes in the backlog presently, and there is simply so much more to explore.

For the hiking and cycling routes, we need to pick up the pace!

Progress towards 2025 Goals

- HIKING ROUTES

| HIKING ROUTES | 83/120 | 69% |

- CYCLING ROUTES

| CYCLING ROUTES | 44/130 | 33% |

WEB ANALYTICS
While the pandemic hit us hard in terms of visitor numbers from 2020 till mid-2021, the full re-opening of Japan’s borders brought in massive increases in users back to the site. We hit our highest ever monthly unique visitor number of over 15,000 people ever the winter season of 2022/2023. Instagram followers count is also higher than it’ve ever been before. Will over 3,000 already people following our updates there.

* We recommend viewing the graphs on a PC or other larger screen.

Website access by source

Sessions by source

Sessions by region
FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS (Apr '22 – Mar '23)

HokkaidoWilds.org has two accounts: a Foundation account and an operational account.

1. Foundation Account: Our Amazon.co.jp Affiliate Income was higher this year than previously, mainly thanks to sales of Niseko Backcountry via our affiliate link. This will be donated to local Hokkaido volunteer groups working to keep access to the Hokkaido outdoors safe and accessible (learn more about the HokkaidoWilds Foundation here). We are hopeful that we will have a profit on Niseko Backcountry maps sales in order to add to the Foundation account, but are yet to cover the next print run costs, so that will have to wait.

2. Operational Account: The operational account was mostly funded in the 2022 fiscal year by sales from our map Niseko Backcountry. This year saw the first time HokkaidoWilds.org, as a voluntary association, has been involved in revenue-generating activities (apart from a very small affiliate link income stream). As such, we’re still figuring out cash flows, ideally, in the future, we’d like to be in a situation where website costs are covered by revenue from map sales, and anything over and above those costs can be donated to other voluntary groups in Hokkaido. We are keen to save up enough funds in the Operating Account to cover a future print run of Niseko Backcountry (around $50,000), so we’re not quite at the point of being able to donate to other causes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FOUNDATION ACCOUNT</th>
<th>OPERATING ACCOUNT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income</strong></td>
<td><strong>Operating Account</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AI/Commissions Apr 1, 2022</td>
<td>AI/Commissions Apr 1, 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affiliate Link Income</td>
<td>17,533</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Map income (in-kind) from Operating Account</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total HokkaidoWilds Foundation Income</td>
<td>22,774</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EXPENSES</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Web (SSL licenses and hosting)</td>
<td>1,477.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Map costs (development, printing, postage etc)</td>
<td>946.289</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (camera, equipment, postage etc)</td>
<td>617.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenditure</strong></td>
<td>1,135,762</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>YEAR END NET ASSETS</strong> as at 2023/03/31</td>
<td>231,878</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*These have been matched so not donated to Foundation Account to cover too many printing costs payable in 2023.*

COMMENTS | QUERIES | DISCUSSION

You can edit your comment before submitting. Required fields are marked *

Type here...

Name* Email* Website

[Yes, add me to your mailing list] Post Comment

This site uses Akismet to reduce spam. Learn how your comment data is processed.

SEE MORE LIKE THIS