

MONTANA SNOWMOBILE NEWS



NEWSLETTER

February 2022

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Aluminum Shortage is Over!

**Show your support with a
'Winter Wonderland' MSA
sponsored plate on your rig or
trailer. This plate generates
\$20 in funds back to MSA.**



Groomer Etiquette

Snowmobilers in Montana enjoy the opportunity to ride on over 4,000 miles of groomed trails. Respect the work trail groomers do to smooth and restore snowmobile trails to a good condition for a more pleasurable riding experience. Recognize that groomers may be working on the trail at any time. Always keep your snowmobile under control and anticipate that a groomer could be around the next corner or over the hill—and they are a large, immovable object that will win should you collide.

Snowmobile trail grooming requires a 'set up' time whereby the freshly groomed trail can re-freeze. Therefore riders must understand that riding on freshly groomed trails during this essential setup time can quickly destroy the trail base, resulting in long-term rough trails. Set up time will vary depending upon the temperature and moisture content of the snow. Generally, at least two to six or even more than ten hours may be needed for the freshly groomed trail to set up to where it is durable and can withstand heavy snowmobile traffic.

A typical grooming day begins with arriving at the grooming shelter before sunrise to get the equipment ready for the day. Not only do our volunteers groom the trails but they also remove fallen trees and obstacles from trails. In addition, they provide search and rescue assistance in emergencies. It's not uncommon for our volunteers to put in a 10 or 12 hour day grooming. It takes many many hours of training to become a primary groomer. Many groomers are trained in first aid, CPR, and equipment safety and maintenance.

Be sure to show your appreciation by supporting your local snowmobile club!

THE ECONOMICS OF SNOWMOBILING

A Win-Win For Montana Communities!



- Snowmobiling funds 26 local Montana clubs and supports approximately 4,000 miles of groomed trails across the State to make winter recreation possible for Montana's and non-resident visitors.
- Annually Montana generates about \$14.3 million in revenue from non-resident snowmobilers and roughly \$96.3 million from in-state snowmobilers according to the University of Montana's Bureau of Business and Economic Research study.
- It also generates approximately \$1.2 million dollars into the State Highway Trust Fund through the purchase of taxed gasoline to power snowmobiles.
- Nationally motorized recreation is the largest contributor to outdoor recreation accounting for \$59.4 billion of gross output from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis.
- It funds the State of Montana's Snowmobile Safety Education program for the youth and new snowmobilers and also contributes money towards law enforcement, avalanche awareness, and spraying of noxious weeds.
- Snowmobile Clubs and their volunteers donate thousands of hours of time and labor to keep winter recreation alive.
- It is vital to the small rural communities across the State to keep them economically stable during the winter months.

Visit www.snowmobilemt.org,
<http://stateparks.mt.gov/recreation/snowmobileGrants.html>,
and www.snowmobile.org to learn more about snowmobiling
and its economic impacts.



FROM THE PRESIDENT

Montana Snowmobile Association

By Fred Bailey

Well, this will be a little different than what I usually write about, this is something that hit close to home this last week. Last Saturday I found myself in the Emergency Room at the hospital. I collapsed at home and could not get up so my wife called the ambulance and two sons. It was determined that I needed to go to the hospital. My son drove me and my wife to the hospital where we were immediately put into an isolated room so they could begin testing. It was determined that I had Covid and pneumonia, guaranteeing my stay in the hospital. The isolated Covid wing was full and the medical staff was stretched thin, many working extra shifts after already working 12 hours. I can not say enough about the quality and professionalism of our medical staff, never giving up, providing first-class care against very stressful conditions. I even met some snowmobilers in the Covid wing, allowing some lively conversations during my stay. Be sure to thank the medical profession for their dedication and service they provide to keep us enjoying our sport!

~ Fred

Montana Snowmobile Association

406-431-9402 | president@snowmobilemt.org

Volunteer Sledders Needed - Race to the Sky

I received an email from the **Race to The Sky** team asking for our help. If you can help please let them know! Race to the Sky will be running **February 11-15** and they are in dire need of volunteer snow machine operators to run the trails, prior to the dogs as well as in other areas of the race. Volunteers need their own snow machine and will be reimbursed gas.

Please call **Roy Etnire** to inquire, at **406-250-6449**.

Snowmobilers Taking the Pledge

- Protect Snowmobiling access so we and future generations can continue to enjoy the riding freedoms we currently have.
- Protect the Landowners that allow trails to cross their property.
- Protect snowmobiling by riding off-trail **ONLY** where it is legal and allowed.
- **I Pledge** to ride off trail only where I know it's legal and accepted.
- **I Pledge** to check before going off-trail if I don't know.
- **I Pledge** to protect access for future generations by doing the right thing.
- **I Pledge** to protect access by encouraging those I ride with to take the Pledge also.



TAKE A FRIEND SNOWMOBILING CAMPAIGN

February 12 -21, 2022

The Take a Friend Snowmobiling Campaign is all about introducing non-snowmobilers to our winter recreation of choice. Research shows that people WANT to go snowmobiling but don't know HOW to get started. By planning a ride, we take the guesswork out of it for those that might not try it any other way. Buying a snowmobile is a great investment! We can show people how get started properly and increase their enjoyment of our sport, hopefully motivating them to join us in our clubs, associations and on the trails! Taking these individuals out for a ride can introduce them to the fun and excitement of experiencing winter in a unique way with friends and family. We can shed the true light on the family activity of snowmobiling. We encourage you to help our clubs grow by introducing new people to snowmobiling!

When you consider putting together a Take a Friend Snowmobiling ride, just remember that they also want to go snowmobiling for the same reasons you do:

1. **To enjoy the scenery**
2. **To get outdoors to have fun with family and friends**
3. **To go to unique places that they can't reach any other way and see amazing sights**
4. **To have fun in the winter outdoors and go home tired and be ready for a good night's sleep.**

So please, go out and have fun while taking a friend snowmobiling, and enjoy this wonderful time of year. We look forward to seeing you and your friends out on the trails. THINK SNOW!!!



SNOWMOBILEMT.ORG - Account Registration

Have you visited the new MSA Website? Manage your membership online. If you sent in your membership, but we don't have an email for you, please use the Contact Us tool to send us your email address. We'll get your account loaded into our Membership system so you can manage your own membership details. This will help us manage your renewals, keep your address updating and etc.,

Our many thanks to Mark for the time and effort he has put in to make this website a success!

Questions regarding your online account? Contact Mark Smolen at members@snowmobilemt.org.

MONTANA SNOWMOBILE PROGRAM UPDATE

By Seth McArthur

FWP has some trail grant opportunities open and available. Please work with your local clubs to identify summer and winter trail projects. There are many activities that can be funded to improve your trails. Signage identifying locations and trail system maps are very popular for users. There are some great examples available if your club is interested. Brushing and delimiting trails are also very popular projects. These improvements are very important and also provide much-needed safety to recreationists using the trails.

Temperatures in Helena have been far too mild with little precipitation. Some areas of the state are receiving adequate snow, but many areas are lacking. Please be careful if you are playing in the snow. Avalanches are still a real threat. Be prepared and know how to use your gear. I want to thank the Snowmobile Clubs for providing all the avalanche classes each year. If you have not taken one recently, please reconsider. While you are out this summer, practice with your transceivers to hone your skills. Your family and/or friend's life may depend on it.

Please be safe and avalanche aware.

Sincerely,

Seth

Montana Snowmobile Program Manager

Montana FWP | 406-444-3753

SNOW GOER Magazine

Special Offer for MSA Members!

Enjoy Snow Goer, the #1 snowmobiling magazine! The inside source snowmobilers trust to tell it like it is. Snow Goer is packed with new model evaluations, how-to tips, tech updates, product reviews, expert advice, adventure stories, and much more. Bring on the snow!

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6 AVALANCHE MYTHS

By Doug Chabot, Director
Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Center

I hear the wildest things. People share their tales of near-death on social media. During classes students explain their adventurous avalanche experiences. Even coffee shop java junkies will freely tell of their exploits. I listen to these stories because they are entertaining and to glean nuggets of critical snowpack information. Occasionally, laced within these tales are myths about avalanches. All of us hold dear certain myths about our world, me included, like believing caffeine isn't really a drug or that I'll cramp up and drown if I go swimming within an hour of eating lunch, a myth courtesy of my mom.

Avalanche forecasters dispel myths about avalanches so everyone can make better decisions about traveling in avalanche terrain.



- 1** **Avalanches strike without warning.** 90% of avalanche accidents are triggered by the victims or someone in their party. Rarely are they hapless victims. Avalanches, unlike earthquakes which strike with little warning, are typically preceded by obvious signs of instability such as previous avalanches and collapsing or cracking of the snowpack. If we know what to look for we can see patterns and recognize warning signs of dangerous avalanche conditions.
- 2** **I can outrun an avalanche.** If luck is on your side, sometimes this is possible, but avalanches can accelerate quickly and easily reach speeds over 80 mph. Snowmobilers have better odds than skiers of outrunning a slide if they're facing downhill and low on the slope. Even with a throttle at your disposal, the odds are not good. It doesn't matter how big an engine you have, the accident literature is littered with burials and fatalities of folks who thought they could outrun a slide.
- 3** **Tracks on a slope mean it is safe.** This is a common and incorrect assumption. If a slope has a widespread weak layer it is possible to trigger an avalanche, even on a slope with hundreds of tracks. This has happened more than once on Crown Butte outside Cooke City. Snow depth is not uniform and slopes harbor both deep and thinner areas. A sledder might not affect a deeply buried weak layer but trigger a thinner area of the same slope. An avalanche released on a thin spot could propagate into deeper snow and wipe out a winter's worth of tracks. Previous tracks have lured many avalanche victims into thinking the slope was safe.
- 4** **This slope never slides.** It is naïve to think that just because you have not seen a slope avalanche it never will. A snowy slope steeper than 30 degrees is avalanche terrain and could slide if unstable conditions exist. If the ingredients for an avalanche are present (a steep slope with a slab of snow overlying a weak layer) then all that is missing is you, the trigger.
- 5** **The noise of my snowmobile triggered the slope.** This is a popular myth. Noise does not exert enough force onto the snowpack to trigger a slide. If noise were powerful enough to trigger slides our snowmobiles would knock us to the ground every time we started them. The combined weight of a rider and machine on the snowpack is the trigger, not the noise.
- 6** **If I get caught, I can dig myself out.** Avalanche debris sets up like concrete. Even light powder forms avalanche debris so dense that moving a hand is near impossible. A buried victim is helpless and has to rely on a partner for rescue, provided both were carrying avalanche transceivers, a probe, and a shovel.

Throw out myths and embrace reality. There is no excuse to think, "Hey, let's hit this slope! It's already got tracks on it, plus it never slides anyway. Even if the noise of my machine triggers it, I can always outrun it, or if I'm really unlucky at least dig myself out." You are smarter than that.

Follow us on Facebook
"TransMontanaRide"



TRANS-MONTANA SNOWMOBILE CHARITY RIDE DONATION SUPPORT

It's January 19, as I write this and my thumb is twitching! In just a couple weeks, we'll be gathering in Lolo Hot Springs for the start of the biggest Trans Montana ever. Riders are coming from Colorado, Minnesota, Nebraska, Nevada, Oregon, Idaho, and of course Montana. We have more riders signed up for full-time riding than ever before. And you know what that means, we should be breaking records for money raised because we have some great folks and great donors all stepping up.

But just because we're doing great, doesn't mean we don't need a little extra help from you. There are many ways you can still help out. For starters, come join us for a day or two. We only ask for a \$25 donation each day you join us and you'll get to meet the local club, see some new areas and meet a bunch of great folks from all over. And if you happen to be a member of the Missoula Snowgoers, Bitterroot Ridge Runners, Big Hole SC, Mining City Trail Riders, Jackpine Savages, or the Upper Yellowstone SC, we sure would appreciate you joining us as trail leaders showing us your great area (no \$25 donation expected)--but we could really use the help (please!).

We also could use your help selling (or buying!) sweepstakes tickets...you don't even have to sell paper tickets, just share this link on your Facebook site, text it to your friends, and let them buy tickets online.

<https://bit.ly/3IhA6kU>

The lucky ticket will get a \$2,500 KLIM gift certificate! And there are six other drawings!

Finally, if you'd just like to help out with a small donation, you can make a donation at our website listed below on the Donate page. www.trans-montana.org/donate Every little bit helps and every penny goes to NAMI Montana and stays in Montana. You can also tag your donation to a rider as a sponsor. I want to thank all the clubs that are participating and donating...it's humbling and amazing to see the support from everyone--thank you.

Mark Smolen



MSA CLUB RIDING CONVENTION AND ANNUAL AWARDS BANQUET



MSA Club Ride:

**MSA Club Ride: Lolo, MT
Saturday, February 5, 2022**

Meet in the parking lot for 8:30 a.m. safety briefing! **Hit the trail:** 9:00 a.m.

Guided by Missoula Snowgoers

Choose to trail ride or backcountry ride

Meet and park: Lolo Hotsprings

Avalanche beacons highly recommended.

MSA Annual Banquet:

**MSA Annual Banquet: Victor Steakhouse,
Victor, MT**

Giveaways, 50-50, and Silent Auction

Saturday, February 5, 2022

RSVP ASAP: Mark Smolen - 406-407-0301

Dinner Choices: 12 oz Prime Rib \$34.75, Lemon

Chicken \$19.14, Grilled Prawns/Shrimp \$27.50.

Traveling Out of State or Friends Visiting? Non-Resident Trail Registration Fees

Colorado

Non-resident registration fee \$30.25

Idaho

Non-resident registration fee

1 year - \$59.50, 2 year - \$117.50 or

rental - \$75.50

Montana

Non-resident fee \$25

Utah

Non-resident \$30.00 per snowmobile

user pass

Wyoming

Nonresident registration fee \$35

For more state rules and trail pass pricing visit snowmobilers.org.

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KING & QUEEN ROOMS



250 MILES OF GROOMED TRAILS

UPCOMING EVENTS

- February 4-12, 2022** - MSA Trans-Montana Charity Ride, Lolo Hot Springs - Cooke City
- February 5, 2022** - Lincoln County Fun Run, Libby (Lincoln County Snow Kats)
- February 5, 2022** - MSA Annual Club Ride, Lolo (Open to all members)
- February 5, 2022** - MSA Annual Riding Convention Banquet, Hamilton (Open to all members)
- February 11-15, 2022** - Race to the Sky, Lincoln, Ovando, Seeley Lake area (Sled Dog Race)
- February 12, 2022** - 31st Annual Snowmobile Fun Run - Trout Creek (Cabinet Ridge Riders)
- February 12-21, 2022** - "Take a Friend Snowmobiling" Campaign
- February 19, 2022** - Disabled American Veterans Moonlight Fun Run, Lincoln (Ponderosa Snow Warriors)
- February 24-25, 2022** - Western Chapter Summit, West Yellowstone
- February 26, 2022** - Western Chapter Summit Ride, West Yellowstone (Open to all members)
- February 26, 2022** - Annual Fun Run, Helena (Helena Snowdrifters)
- March 1, 2022** - MSA Scholarship Entry Deadline (See snowmobilemt.org)
- March 5, 2022** - Vintage Snowmobile/Scholarship Fun Run, Lincoln (Ponderosa Snow Warriors)
- March 11-12, 2022** - 26th Annual Hog Roast Fundraiser/Fun Run, Cooke City (Upper Yellowstone Snowmobile)
- March 12, 2022** - Family BBQ and Fun Run, Eureka (Ten Lakes Snowmobile Club)
- March 17, 2022** - Western States Scholarship, MSA Award Winner, Submission Deadline

REGIONAL EVENTS

- February 5-6, 2022** - World Series of Snowmobile Racing, Eagle River, WI
- March 24-27, 2022** - 45th Annual World Championship Snowmobile Hill Climb - Jackson Hole, WY
- June 8-11, 2022** - International Snowmobile Congress, Dubuque, IA
- October 7-8, 2022** - Rocky Mountain Snowmobile Expo - Denver, CO

AVALANCHE EDUCATION

Visit Avalanche.org to find an upcoming class!

Share your Club News and Events
Email: news@snowmobilemt.org
Deadline: 22nd of the month

Join online - www.snowmobilemt.org
or complete the form below.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION 2021/2022



Name(s): _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State: MT Zip: _____
 Phone: _____ + _____ Club: _____
 Email: _____

Membership Type

- New Individual/Family: \$22 _____ Number of Family Members
- Renewal Club/Business: \$35

Newsletter Preference: ___ Send via Email ___ Mail Print Copy

Mail completed application with payment to:
Montana Snowmobile Association | P.O. Box 56 | Black Eagle, MT 59414

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Sound and Environment

Myth:

Snowmobiles are noisy and pollute natural soundscapes.

Facts:

Sound Source	Sound Level dB(A)
75-piece orchestra	130
Car horn, snow blower	110
Pre-1969 snowmobile	102
Blow dryer, diesel truck	100
Electric shaver, lawn mower	85
Garbage disposal, vacuum cleaner	80
Post-1975 snowmobile (full throttle at 50 feet; maximum allowed by law)	78
Alarm clock, city traffic	70
Dishwasher	60
Leaves rustling, refrigerator	40

Snowmobiles produced since 1975 are certified to emit no more than 78 decibels from a distance of 50 feet while traveling at full throttle. Comparatively, pre-1969 snowmobile emitted sound levels as high as 102 decibels. Since sound levels are logarithmic, this means sound levels for snowmobiles have been reduced 94% from early models. In every new product released by the snowmobile manufacturers the snowmobiles have been heavily optimized and tested for noise and in many cases, hard decisions have to be made between weight, costs, performance, and noise.

Source: <https://www.snowmobilers.org>

Association Officers



FRED BAILEY
President
406-431-9402
president@snowmobilemt.org

JOHN ZELL
Vice President
406-450-2335
vp@snowmobilemt.org

CONNIE WALTER
Treasurer
406-590-0386
treasurer@snowmobilemt.org

PEGGY ALBEE
Secretary
secretary@snowmobilemt.org

JASON HOWELL
Past President
pastpres@snowmobilemt.org

LAURA MEHRER
Membership Chair
406-788-6027
members@snowmobilemt.org

CLIFF WALTER
Charity Chair
406-750-6282
charity@snowmobilemt.org

Anaconda Snowmobile Club
45 Fire Lane
Anaconda, MT 59711
406-563-7789

Beaverhead Sno-Riders
PO Box 867
Dillon, MT 59725
406-925-0501

Big Hole Snowmobile Club
PO Box 141
Wisdom, MT 59761
406-370-2587

Big Sky Snowriders
PO Box 365
Livingston, MT 59047
406-220-0803

Bitterroot Ridgerunners
PO Box 265
Hamilton, MT 59840
406-363-3224
www.ridgerunners.org

Cabinet Ridge Riders
PO Box 1577
Trout Creek, MT 59874
406-827-3226

Flathead Snowmobile Association
PO Box 5041
Kalispell, MT 599-3
406-871-4606
www.flatheadsnowmobiler.com

Gallatin Valley Snowmobile Association
PO Box 3164
Bozeman, MT 59772
406-600-6063

Great Falls Snowmobile Club
PO Box 70
Black Eagle, MT 59414
406-899-5126
www.great-falls-snowmobile.org

Helena Snowdrifters
PO Box 5505
Helena, MT 59624
406-202-2044
www.helenasnowdrifters.org

Jackpine Savages Snowmobile Club
PO Box 65
Wise River, MT 59762
406-267-3389

Lincoln County Sno-Kat Club
PO Box 1180
Libby, MT 59923
406-827-0524

Little Belt Snowmobile Club
PO Box 213
Hobson, MT 59452
406-366-8924

Meagher County Little Belters
PO Box 315
White Sulphur Springs, MT 59645
406-547-3966

Mining City Trail Riders, Inc
P.O. Box 4885
Butte, MT 59702
406-782-4613

Missoula Snowgoers
PO Box 2441
Missoula, MT 59806
406-370-8819
www.missoulasnowgoers.org

Montana Nightriders
PO Box 420242
Haugen, MT 59842
406-544-5416
www.montananightriders.com

Ponderosa Snow Warriors
PO Box 933
Lincoln, MT 59639
406-362-3334

Seeley Lake Driftriders
PO Box 174
Seeley Lake, MT 59868
406-677-7777
www.driftriders.org

Summit Snowgoers
PO Box 301
Cut Bank, MT 59427
406-229-0665

Sweet Grass County Recreation Association
PO Box 922
Big Timber, MT 59011
406-930-1396

Ten Lakes Snowmobile Club
PO Box 404
Eureka, MT 59917
406-297-3377

Troy Snowmobile Club
PO Box 1002
Troy, MT 59935
406-295-4322
www.troysnowmobileclub.org

Upper Yellowstone Snowmobile Club
PO Box 1111
Cooke City, MT 59020
406-838-2207

Vigilante Snowmobilers
PO Box 145
Virginia City, MT 59755
406-581-1776

West Yellowstone Chamber of Commerce
PO Box 458
West Yellowstone, MT 59758
406-646-7701
www.destinationyellowstone.com

snowmobilemt.org



Montana Snowmobile Association Districts

DISTRICT 1
Rick David
dist-one@snowmobilemt.org

DISTRICT 2
Mark Sverdsten
dist-two@snowmobilemt.org

DISTRICT 3
Vacant
dist-three@snowmobilemt.org

DISTRICT 4
Rex Caraker
dist-four@snowmobilemt.org

DISTRICT 5
Rex Caraker
dist-four@snowmobilemt.org

DISTRICT 6
Robert Yunck
dist-four@snowmobilemt.org

DISTRICT 7
Ron Shortridge
dist-four@snowmobilemt.org

DISTRICT 8
Kevin Horne
dist-eight@snowmobilemt.org

DISTRICT 9
Ron Albee
dist-nine@snowmobilemt.org

DISTRICT 10
Kemp O'Neill
dist-ten@snowmobilemt.org

DISTRICT 11
VACANT

DISTRICT 12
VACANT

DISTRICT 13
VACANT

FWP Trails Coordinator
Open

Legislative Lobbyist
Margaret Morgan
406-431-9836
mgtmorgan@consults.com



Seth McArthur
Fish, Wildlife, and Parks
Snowmobile Program
406-444-3753
smcarthur@mt.gov

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Montana Snowmobile Association

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