

Governor's Snowmobile Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

August 12th, 2017 ~ LRC Room 413, Capitol Building, Pierre

Chairman Russ Johnson called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m. Council members Scott Erstad, Bruce Hintz, Russell Johnson, Al Nagel, Dave Kennedy, Todd Wilkinson, and Gary Ulmer were present. Game, Fish, and Parks (GFP) members present were Shannon Percy and Ryan Raynor.

Agenda Adoption

Erstad asked for agenda changes and Raynor requested two additions of: C "Fat Tire Update" under Black Hills Update and C "Trail Signing" under East River Update. A motion was made by Kennedy and seconded by Nagel to adopt the agenda with requested changes. **Motion Carried.**

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Wilkinson and seconded by Nagel to approve the minutes of the May 13th, 2017, meeting as presented. **Motion Carried.**

Council Re-Appointments

Raynor recognized Bruce Hintz and Todd Wilkinson for being re-appointed to the Governor's Snowmobile Advisory Council by Governor Daugaard. Council members serve three-year terms with no limit on the number of terms.

Doug Hofer Recognition

A presentation was made to retired Parks and Recreation Director Doug Hofer for his years of service to the sport of snowmobiling. Wilkinson, who represented the whole board, thanked Hofer and presented Hofer with a picture of snowmobile scene over a Mickelson Trail Bridge. Hofer shared his thanks and fond memories of working with the Snowmobile Advisory Council and appreciated all they do for the sport of snowmobiling in South Dakota.

Black Hills Update

Percy discussed two reroutes the first being on Trail #7, by Tomahawk Country Club. The trail runs along HWY 385 and due to off highway vehicle (OHV) destruction in the Right of Way (R-O-W), Department of Transportation (DOT) want all forms of recreational use off the trail. Percy previously thought he knew the landowners of the private property to reroute this section of trail on. Percy shared that it is a different land owner and is currently unaware if this landowner will approve snowmobile use through a permanent easement. DOT will be doing the R-O-W maintenance next year.

Percy reminded the council of the temporary closure on Trail #5. The U. S. Forest Service (FS) promised Percy that this closure would not impact the Christmas and New Year holiday weekends. If snow conditions allow, FS would burn all the slash piles prior to the major holiday weekend.

Trail Cameras

Percy stated two locations have been identified to place cameras but currently awaiting U.S. Forest Service approval. Percy visited with the FS and they are excited to use these cameras as well. The first camera location will be at the Big Hill Lot where Trail #1 and #3 come together and will be solar powered. The second camera will be located by Kirk Trailhead on Trail #7. The third camera will be using current images from the DOT camera located at Hardy Camp. Percy then showed the camera angles that would be visible from two of the camera locations.

Raynor stated he is waiting for specs from DOT on the design of a base for the cameras and the design will then be forwarded to the FS for approval. Upon approval contractors will be contacted to pour the base and DOT can order the tower and camera parts.

Fat Tire Status

GFP was informed that Mark Van Every, the Black Hills National Forest Service (BHNF) Supervisor, does intend to do something with this recreation for the upcoming snowmobile season. At this time, BHNF staff has been tasked with showcasing existing closed roads to snowmobile related travel; possibly providing these to develop a Fat Tire Bike trail system. Percy shared the FS meeting with all recreational groups probably is unlikely to happen.

East River Update

Trail inspections are currently underway by the Snowmobile Trail Coordinator and ten park managers. Raynor stated this was a difficult task to ask of park managers who do not work consistently with the snowmobile program. Starting this season, the Snowmobile Trails Coordinator and the park ranger located in Watertown will be performing all east river trail inspections. This will help improve consistency and remove that responsibility from the park managers. Other duties of the Watertown park ranger will include basic law enforcement across eastern South Dakota, pass out maps and 5-Day temporary Permits, and handle landowner complaints.

Raynor indicated groomer inspections were conducted in early August by the equipment technician from Hardy Camp and himself. It was determined that the groomer from Watertown will be surplused this fall and a 2014 Sno-Cat with 17,570 miles and 2,736 hours from the Black Hills will replace it. The 2004 Sno-Cat with 2,051 hours and 15,950 miles will be traded in for the purchase of a new groomer.

Overall, the groomers were in good shape with few major repairs needed in the east river fleet. Raynor stated he plans to purchase a Track Sno-Cat in the coming weeks and possibly a fourth for the Sisseton club.

Signs in the R-O-W

Nagel shared his concerns in Brown County about the new county highway signs that are placed in the middle of the ditches. Raynor stated he has seen and dealt with this in other areas and fortunately the new signing guidelines allow a safe and practical way of setting signs in these situations. Wilkinson encouraged Raynor get ahead of this in other parts of the trail system by contacting the president of the local club or The County Highway Superintendent. Raynor indicated he would discuss this with the snowmobile community.

2017-2018 GIA Applications

Grant-in-Aid (GIA) applications totaling \$354,425 and includes 1,619 miles of groomed trail were recommended to the council:

Aberdeen	\$18,123	Mitchell	\$ 8,004
Beresford	\$22,931	Poinsett	\$26,155
Brookings	\$27,531	Redfield	\$17,965
Clear Lake	\$31,572	Siouxland	\$23,712
DeSmet	\$66,834	Sisseton	\$24,246
Huron	\$15,881	Watertown	\$15,829
Milbank	\$19,538	Webster	\$25,044
Miller	\$11,060		

Approval of this grant package was delayed until after the review of the FY18 budget later in the meeting. Following the discussion of the proposed FY19 budget Recreational Trails Program budget, Wilkinson made a motion to approve the 2018 GIA package, seconded by Nagel. **Motion Carried.**

FY 2017 Budget Review (July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017)

The snowmobile program spent \$1,028,391 during FY17 and revenue earned totaled \$912,189. The snowmobile trails fund dropped from \$1,091,851 to \$958,173 as of June 30th, 2017.

Total Revenue Earned Included:

Gas Tax:	\$406,805	(12,384 Registered Snowmobiles)
\$10 Snowmobile License:	\$112,669	
3% Registration Tax:	\$281,101	
\$40 5-Day Temporary Permit:	\$ 14,280	
Interest:	\$ 17,636	
Charges for Sales/Services:	\$ 8,603	
Other:	\$ 71,095	

Total Expenditures Included:

Salaries & Benefits:	\$313,108	Travel:	\$ 12,994
Contractual Services:	\$ 94,511	Supplies & Materials:	\$183,977
Grants:	\$120,730	Capital Assets:	\$303,071

Capital Assets Purchased:

Raynor reminded the council that two groomers, a drag, and a wood chipper (split 50/50 with parks budget) were purchased for Capital Assets in FY17. Raynor provided the council a graph which reflected the number of snowmobiles registered in South Dakota as of July 1st since 2011:

FY2011 – 13,080	FY2015 – 13,234
FY2012 – 15,554	FY2016 – 12,384
FY2013 – 14,845	FY2017 – 11,623
FY2014 – 14,589	FY2018 – 11,407

FY 2018 Budget Preview (July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018)

Projected revenue for FY18 is \$870,245 while \$1,329,199 of spending authority is budgeted. The 11,407 snowmobile registrations account for \$399,245 received through the gas tax reimbursement.

Projected Revenue:

Gas Tax:	\$399,245
\$10 Snowmobile License:	\$113,000
4% Registration Tax:	\$280,000
\$40 5-Day Temporary Permit:	\$ 14,000
Interest :	\$ 14,000
Charges for Sales/Services:	\$ 15,000
Other:	\$ 35,000

Projected Expenses:

Personnel Services:	\$397,814	Supplies:	\$181,750
Travel:	\$ 22,550	Grants:	\$312,500
Contractual Supplies:	\$142,585	Capital Assets:	\$272,000

Projected Capital Assets:

Groomer:	\$230,000
Drags (2):	\$ 42,000

FY 2019 Budget Recommendation (July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019)

Projected revenue for FY19 is \$871,000. Raynor shared that due to the continued decrease in excise tax, the number of registered snowmobiles, and gas tax this revenue projection fits closer to current trends. This projection is taking into account the below average snowfall as well.

Projected Revenue:

Gas Tax:	\$400,000
\$10 Snowmobile Licenses:	\$113,000
3% Registration Tax:	\$280,000
\$40 5-Day Temporary Permit:	\$ 14,000
Interest :	\$ 14,000

Charges for Sales/Services: \$ 15,000
Other: \$ 35,000

Raynor presented the anticipated expenses and noted that two categories were decreased which better reflect existing expenses from year to year.

Projected Expenditure:

Personnel Services:	\$397,814	Supplies and Materials:	\$181,750
Travel:	\$ 22,550	Grants:	\$245,000
Contractual Supplies:	\$120,000	Capital Assets:	\$250,000

Projected Capital Assets:

Trails Groomer	\$225,000
Drags (2)	\$ 25,000

Wilkinson shared his concern in cutting the Grant-In-Aid program budget from \$312,500 to \$245,000; especially where over \$345,000 in grants were proposed. Wilkinson felt it was too big of a hit to the Grant-In-Aid program and would prove to be devastating to the clubs in eastern South Dakota, especially if the winter season would be like 1996-1997. All agreed that while this is rare, the council wanted to make sure the budget was capable of getting through this type of snow event. A GFP request for an increase in spending authority could leave clubs empty handed which would affect the quality of the groomed trails and quality of service on state owned equipment. Raynor agreed these are valid concerns and additional consideration will be given to the proposed FY19 budget.

Raynor stated three snowmobile groomers were approved to receive funding through the Recreation Trails Program in June. The new groomers are for Clear Lake, DeSmet, and GFP.

Wilkinson asked to receive a list of the current RTP council members, the recreational group each member represents, and a list of the approved projects. Raynor indicated he would share that information by email.

Wilkinson made a motion to increase in the Contractual Services budget by \$10,000 and an increase in the Grants budget by \$55,000 in FY19. Motion was seconded by Ulmer. **Motion Carried.**

Election of Officers

Typically Chairman and Vice Chairman positions are held for 2-year rotations. Russ Johnson is currently Chairman and could serve for one more year. Gary Ulmer is currently Vice Chairman and could serve one more year.

Wilkinson made a motion to make Russ Johnson Chairman and Gary Ulmer Vice Chairman for 2018. Motion was seconded by Nagel. **Motion Carried.**

Next Meeting

The next meeting was scheduled for 10:00 a.m. on Friday, November 3rd, 2017, in Brookings. This meeting is held in conjunction with the SD Snowmobile Association Convention.

Adjournment

A motion was made by Wilkinson and was seconded by Kennedy to adjourn at 10:45 a.m. **Motion carried.**

*This note is describing the record of what happened after the meeting to approve the FY 2019 budget by both the Snowmobile Advisory Council and the Department of Game Fish and Parks.

While the council approved a budget before the end of the meeting, GFP came back with a different version. GFP emailed all seven of the council members via email, to review and give a final recommendation. All seven council members approved what GFP presented by email by 8-26-17.