

## Approved

Snowmobile Trails Advisory Council (SnowTRAC) Meeting Minutes 9/19/18

### **SnowTRAC Members Present:**

John Scudder-Chair-Anchorage representative  
Dan Mayfield-Mat-Su/Copper River Basin representative

### **Members not present: telephonic**

Teresa Helleck- Anchorage representative  
Justin Derr- Southeast representative  
Shane Serrano-Rural Communities Representative  
Adam Shilman-Mat-Su/Copper River Basin representative

### **Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Staff Present:**

Darcy Harris- DPOR Alaska State Trails Program Manager  
Steve Neel- DPOR Grant Administrator  
Elise Johnston- Office Assistant II, minutes taker  
Matt Wedeking- DPOR, Operations Manager & Deputy Director

### **Others Present:**

Pat Daniels-AGS  
Harry Holt-Lake Louise Snow Machine club  
John Thomas-Mining Land & Water land sales section  
Shelly Ramsey- Caribou Hills Cabin Hoppers

SnowTRAC meeting began at 9:00am where Darcy Harris welcomed everyone and introduced Operations Manager & Deputy Director Matt Wedeking. He thanked everyone for coming and being a part of the council. Updated everyone about the field operations and let them know Wayne Biessel, Mat-Su Superintendent, is retiring in October.

Matt Wedeking left meeting 9:08am

### **Advisory Board Elections:**

John Scudder asked for nominations for chair or co-chair

Teresa Helleck asked what the responsibilities of the Chair and Co-chair are

Dan Mayfield informed her

Teresa Helleck asked what the term of the chair is, and Darcy Harris answered 1 year

Dan Mayfield nominated John Scudder as chair again

Adam Shilman second

John Scudder asked all in favor

Everyone was in favor—6 yes 0 no

## Approved

John Scudder asked for nominations for Co-Chair

John Scudder nominates Dan Mayfield as Co-chair and asked for second

Justin Derr second it

John Scudder asked all in favor

Everyone was in favor-6 yes 0 no

### **Public Comment:**

Comments were made that there needs to be more people involved and going to the legislature to enforce registration for all motorized vehicles so that there can be more funding for programs like the Snowmobile Trails Grant Program. .

There were comments about trails being added to the Grooming Pool. Darcy Harris stated that any trail on a legal easement can be added to the Grooming Pool and they simplified the application to 3 pages.

End public comment

### **Financial Report:**

Steve Neel gave a financial report.

The decrease in funding for the grooming pool is approximately \$34,487. DMV collected about \$12,000 less in 2018.

There was no money left over from 2017-2018

DMV collected \$180,100.00 for FY18 leaving \$158,488 available to allocate to grooming and projects after 12% administration allowance was removed.

There was \$416,383.65 requested by the groomers and since there were no other project applications this year, the funding will be distributed equally at 38% of each groomers' ask.

John Scudder made a motion to take a break at 10:00am and back at 10:15am

Dan Mayfield Seconds it

Darcy Harris calls the meeting back at 10:15am

John Scudder asked if there are any conflicts of interest on the board.

Dan Mayfield addresses that he is the president of Big Lake trails but that there is no conflict of interest.

## Approved

John Scudder calls to vote of approval of budget – everyone is in favor

Motion passes 6 yes and 0 no

### **Discussion:**

Dan Mayfield said, considering the current funding crisis, he would like to come up with a funding formula for clubs to use when they apply to maintain consistency. Dan also thinks they should hold an annual meeting with the groomers to go over funding requests. There was discussion about how in the past SnowTRAC tried to come up with a funding standard but due to the many variables such as type of machinery used to groom and the area of grooming, it was too hard to come up with a standard that meets all scenarios. In conclusion everyone agreed that a pricing formula wasn't going to work .

There were comments by Dan Mayfield asking if the D-3 form in the application is being utilized. Darcy Harris and Steve Neel said they would check if it is necessary.

There was discussion regarding dealerships enforcing new vehicle registration. Steve Neel commented that the DMV can't differentiate types of registrations.

John Scudder made a motion to adjourn meeting

Dan Mayfield seconds

Everyone in favor- 6 yes and 0 no

Meeting adjourn 11:10am

## **Snowmobile Trails Advisory Council (SnowTRAC) Meeting Minutes 09/06/2017**

**8:33 am**

1. **SnowTRAC Members present:**
2. Dan Mayfield-Chair-Big Lake Trails
3. John Scudder-Co-Chair- Anchorage
4. Terry Helleck- Anchorage
5. Gary Anderson-Kenai Peninsula-Valdez-Prince William Sound
6. Shane Serrano-Rural Communities
7. **SnowTRAC members not present: telephonic**
8. Justin Derr- Southeast Alaska
9. Adam Shilman-Mat-Su/Copper River Basin
10. **Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Staff Present:**
11. Darcy Harris- Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation (DPOR) Alaska State Trails Program Manager
12. Steve Neel-DPOR, Grants Administrator
13. Diane Houston-DPOR, Accounting Tech II
14. Matt Wedeking-DPOR, Operations Manager/ Deputy Director
- 15.
16. **Others Present:**
17. Shelley Ramsey, Caribou Hills Cabin Hoppers Club
18. Harry Holt, Lake Louise Snow Machine Club
19. Mike Anderson, Lake Louise Snow Machine Club
20. Heath Hilyard, for Representative Cathy Tilton
21. Marti Steury, Yukon Quest-telephonic
22. **Advisory Board Elections**
23. Dan Mayfield- Chair: term as Chair is over, SnowTRAC will need a new Chairperson
24. Dan Mayfield asks for nominations
25. Gary Anderson nominates John Scudder
26. John Scudder-Co-Chair: nominates Gary Anderson
27. Dan Mayfield seconds the nomination for John Scudder

28. John Scudder accepts nomination
29. Dan Mayfield: "are there any other nominations?" hearing none
30. Darcy Harris asks if there are any nominations from board members on the phone?
31. Justin Derr and Adam Shilman answered "No"
32. Dan Mayfield: Are there any objections for the nomination of John Scudder as Chair of the SnowTRAC?
33. No objections-Motion carries and John Scudder is the new Chairperson.
34. Dan Mayfield: nomination for Co-chair
35. Terry Helleck nominates Shane Serrano
36. Dan Mayfield: Are there any other nominations?
37. Dan Mayfield: any objections?
38. No objections
39. Shane Serrano: "I won't object but could you please explain what those duties are?"
40. Dan Mayfield: "it's a learn-as-you-go."
41. Dan Mayfield: no objections
42. Dan Mayfield: welcome Shane Serrano Co- Chair, and John Scudder-Chair

**Public Comment**

43. Harry Holt: Lake Louise Trail Club: Lake Louise Trail Club has spent lots of money on trail surveys. In the past, there has been resistance from the board to adding new legal trails to the Lake Louise trail system and asking more Grooming Pool money. The club would like SnowTRAC to consider adding these trails to the Grooming Pool in the future.
44. Shelly Ramsey: Caribou Hills Cabin Hoppers, agrees clubs should be able to add legal trails to their systems.
45. Terry Helleck: Asked how and when trails can be added to the Grooming Pool.
46. Dan Mayfield: the trail must have a legal easement
47. John Scudder: discussion about registration-fee increases, and letting the clubs know the importance. "Talk to your legislators."
48. Gary Anderson agreed
49. Dan Mayfield added Rep. Tilton supported House Bill 319 last legislative session to increase registration fees, but it did not pass.
50. A question was asked about requesting additional funds from clubs not needing all of their allocation.
51. John Scudder: answered yes, put in a request by email to Diane Houston or Steve Neel.

52. Harry Holt has had problems with big trucks destroying groomed trails in Lake Louise.
53. Shane Serrano: maybe a possible user fee/ access fee or user pass fund? The public is not aware of what or how these fees are used.
54. Matt Wedeking-Deputy Director of State Parks arrives and addresses the board
55. John Scudder: asked Matt Wedeking about the possibility of a K'esugi Ken to Byers Lake trail, and K'esugi Ken to South Denali trails for snow machining. Wayne Biessel in the Mat-Su DPOR office may be submitting a Recreational Trails Program grant application for a trail to connect K'esugi Ken to Byers Lake trail.
56. **DPOR Financial Discussion**
57. Steve Neel: The DMV collected SFY17 receipts of \$196,964. There is a left-over balance from SFY16 of \$19,647. The \$196,964 that was collected less the 12% administrative allowance leaves a balance of \$173,328. Add the balance from SFY16 \$19,647, and that leaves \$192,975.34 to spend in SFY18.
58. Steve Neel added that the DMV website statistics show registrations for trucks, snowmachines, etc. in the last 10 years are down by 17%. This is the first year the registration collected were under \$200,000.00.
59. Discussion of how money is collected by and from DMV.
60. John Scudder and Terry Helleck: trail users need education about registration fees.
61. Steve Neel: discussed the Buy America Act and how it effects the RTP program and equipment or snowmachines purchases. Any single purchase of equipment containing steel over \$2,500.00 is impacted.
62. 9:30am Break
63. Re-convene at 9:45 am
64. **Next agenda item: The Yukon Quest issue**
65. Marti Steury, Yukon Quest's Executive Director is on the phone
66. John Scudder: SnowTRAC teleconference in May, 2017. John Scudder, Justin Derr, Shane Serrano, Terry Helleck, Dan Mayfield, Darcy Harris and Steve Neel met telephonically about the potential funding for SFY18, and allowing the Yukon Quest to continue receiving funding from the Grooming Pool. The Board passed the motion (4 yes & 1 no) to exclude the Yukon Quest from the Grooming Pool, but allow them to seek funding through a standalone SnowTRAC Safety grant.
67. Dan Mayfield : during the teleconference in May, a motion was passed to exclude them from the Grooming Pool but allow them to seek funding through a Safety grant. We didn't receive any Safety grant applications for the is 17/18 season. "I would make a motion to delete them from excel sheet in front of us and not consider their financial request."
68. Dan Mayfield asks for second on the motion to delete Yukon Quest from the FY17/18 funding
69. Gary Anderson seconds the motion

70. Darcy Harris: Marti Steury is on the phone she missed the opportunity for public comment and would like to comment
71. Marti Steury: Communities having access to these trails in central eastern Alaska is critical for hunting, trapping, transportation, and recreation.
72. Terry Helleck: how many times, and what time of year, was the 464-mile trail groomed last year?
73. Marti Steury: Not until January for lack of snow; trail markers removed in March.
74. Terry Helleck: has the Yukon Quest received these grants in the past?
75. Marti Steury: for at least 10 years.
76. Terry Helleck: how many times was it groomed in previous years?
77. Marti Steury: same issue-no snow until later in the year.
78. Terry Helleck: was it groomed once?
79. Marti Steury: 4 -5 times. Problems with blizzards covering trail markers.
80. Dan Mayfield asks Steve Neel to summarize the Yukon Quest activity and billing requests from last year.
81. Steve Neel: The previous Director allowed the Yukon Quest, to charge for fuel, parts for their sleds, food and lodging, because of the distance and their time of their grooming. This year their reimbursement requests and expenditures were audited. The majority of the grooming was done between February 4<sup>th</sup> through February 17. A small amount in December and right before the race occurred in late January. There were other unusual expenses including a \$544 charge for a rental vehicle during the race, \$936 satellite phone charge that was actually half the cost of the phone someone else paid it, several thousand dollars for Spenard Builders Supply-stakes, stretch wrap and staples etc. So it became obvious that all the work was essentially done for the dog sled race.
82. Darcy Harris :DPOR encourages people to use recreational trails for many kinds of activities, however the money supporting this program is specifically for snowmachine related activities.
83. Dan Mayfield to Marti Steury: “were you aware after the May teleconference that we passed a motion that you may seek funding through a SnowTRAC Safety grant?”
84. Marti Steury: “Darcy made it clear that we were not qualified for a SnowTRAC grooming grant and there were other grants that we could apply for, but did not realize that your committee had removed us from that process.”
85. Dan Mayfield: SnowTRAC passed the motion to remove the Yukon Quest from the Grooming Pool but still apply for a Safety grant, the board has already made a decision on this.
86. Terry Helleck: “Did any of 4-5 times in 2015/2016 the trail was groomed, occur in December, January, and March?”
87. Marti Steury doesn't remember-

88. Terry Helleck: trails should be maintained throughout the snowmachine season if supported by this money.
89. Marti Steury: as soon as there is enough snow on the trail the trail group can start grooming. "so many people use these trails that the sooner we can get them packed the better we are"
90. Terry Helleck: Are the folks that work on those trails paid by the Yukon Quest nonprofit?
91. Marti Steury: "yes, there are organized snow machine groups here in Fairbanks that have offered to put in the trails, but we haven't had any organized groups that have been able to help us because the grooming trips are usually 4-5 days long and are pretty remote, and hundreds of snowmachiners that use our trails
92. Shane Serrano: Rural AK Representative: "I don't think you guys should be removed from the (Grooming) Pool. How many sled dog teams do you have out there and how many snowmobiles are out there supporting the race?"
93. Marti Steury: "...on average about 20-25 dog teams that are on the trail for 4 or five days, and we've got hundreds of snowmachiners that use that trail, from hunting season-moose hunting season started last week so a lot of my snowmachine people are hunting. Over seventy snow machines rely on our trail from Eagle, and Eagle Village area equal amount between Circle and Central. " "We apply for and get grants about 20 right-of-way permits from property owners. Dog sled numbers are minimal compared to the snowmachines that use the trail, either to follow along with the race, or put the race in or for their own personal use, hunting or recreational use."
94. Shane Serrano: By supporting these events, we encourage rural Alaskans to register their machines.
95. Marti Steury-: Costs are three times what is submitted for reimbursement. The Yukon Quest staff wants to improve their process of requesting reimbursements and communicating.
96. Dan Mayfield: important to review our mission and agrees with Darcy's earlier comment of "The SnowTRAC is here to support the Snowmobile Trails Program " When we groom trails for snowmachining we're inviting many other users to utilize our trails to include snowmachines, dog sleds, fat-tire bikers, hikers etc. We open those trails to other users, but, our mission is to support snowmachine trails. When we're looking at a trail for inclusion into the Grooming Pool, we want to be inclusive, this committee is supposed to be inclusive to all the needs around snowmachine use, but there are some organizations, Yukon Quest being one of them, that is built around the purpose of the dog sled race, "who do not pay anything into our funds whatsoever".
97. Shane Serrano: the dog sled race is only for a week, but this trail opens access for snowmobilers for many weeks.
98. Dan Mayfield: This issue was visited in the May meeting. The original motion was to exclude Yukon Quest from the Grooming Pool forever. But that motion was modified to exclude them from the Grooming Pool but allow them to submit an application under the Safety grant process.



99. Shane Serrano: I'm new to this process, I want to make sure I heard correctly-they have been excluded and they are not even eligible for a Safety grant? Can at least the safety component of their application still be included?
100. Dan Mayfield: reads the motion from the May meeting. That was before the Grooming Pool and Safety grant applications were due.
101. Darcy Harris: tells the group that the process for a SnowTRAC Safety grant is more in depth and uses a different application.
102. Dan Mayfield: What SnowTRAC received was a Grooming Pool application from Yukon Quest, and the application doesn't meet the documentation requirement for a Safety grant.
103. Marti Steury: "I was aware that anyone could apply for a Grooming Pool grant and we couldn't be excluded from that, but it was recommended that we apply for a different type of grant, but that didn't have the same deadline as the SnowTRAC grant. I was not aware that we were not considered at all and that we needed to apply for a different program. Is there a different deadline for the different kind of grant?"
104. Darcy Harris: explains to Marti about the details of the Safety grant and that it has the same July 1<sup>st</sup> deadline and a different and more in depth application, and more documentation requirements. Darcy sent Marti an email on May 19 explaining the situation and the alternatives.
105. Marti Steury: does remember Darcy telling her about the RTP grant.
106. Darcy Harris: discusses the dollar amounts for both situations -funding the Yukon Quest's application or not.
107. Dan Mayfield: "What it really comes down to is that the board made a decision in May, are we are going to choose whether we are going to uphold our decision or not."
108. Gary Anderson: They were given an option to fill out a Safety grant application and did not.
109. Dan Mayfield: Yes
110. Shane Serrano: "Are we allowed to accept post-dated modifications to plans?"
111. Dan Mayfield: No
112. Shane Serrano: question: "So once it's (the application is) submitted that's it-we're done?"
113. Shane Serrano: Choice is now to fund them-is to reverse the May decision and fund as they have applied or just exclude them and delete them entirely.
114. Dan Mayfield: I don't think that's the way I see it-we can uphold our May decision and give them the opportunity to apply for a Safety grant next year, or we can approve them for funding through the Grooming Pool this year.
115. Dan Mayfield: "I would like to put in a new motion to uphold the May decision to exclude the Yukon Quest from the Grooming Pool and allow them to seek funding for a standalone Safety grant next year."
116. Gary Anderson Seconds the motion.

117. Shane Serrano: doesn't agree that they should be removed from the Grooming Pool entirely.
118. Dan Mayfield: explains the details of the Grooming pool grants and the Safety grants
119. Terry Helleck: Understands and agrees that for the 2018/2019 season-if Yukon Quest came back with a commitment to maintain the trail for the entire snow season, that would meet the spirit of this program. She would not like them to be excluded forever.
120. Dan Mayfield: "We hold them to the Safety grant next year and if they perform, well then at that time we decide whether we want to allow them to be in the Grooming Pool." Dan makes a motion, calls for the question to uphold the May decision.
121. Gary Anderson: all those in favor say I-2 waiting for phone Adam "NO" Justin "NO" Three on the floor are "NO"-2 "Yes" Nos have it (5 No -2 Yes)
122. Terry Helleck: motions to exclude Yukon Quest from this year's Grooming Pool and allow them to reapply next year and encourage them to provide details about supporting the entire snowmachine season-(same motion but modification only for this year).
123. There is no second to Terry Helleck's motion
124. Shane Serrano: Motions to fully fund them this year based on the application they have actually submitted.
125. Adam Shilman: seconds Shane Serrano's motion – John Scudder-the motion passes
126. Dan Mayfield: There is a "fundamental problem with the motion", because its states " that we will fully fund them base on their application this year, they have requested \$15,000.00 and nobody is going to get fully funded, however, they simply don't qualify this year based upon the audit results from last year." SnowTRAC did decide to exclude them this year. I think the requirements were communicated clearly back in May.
127. Terry Helleck agrees with that decision
128. Shane withdraw his motion
129. Dan Mayfield: Motions to remove them from the Grooming Pool process for the 2017/2018 season.
130. Terry Helleck: seconds the motion
131. John Scudder: discussion?
132. Adam Shilman: Clarification: we will reject their application this year but allow them to apply next year-correct?
133. John Scudder: Yes-they may apply for a Safety grant next year
134. Adam Shilman: The Yukon Quest can apply for either a Safety grant or a Grooming Pool grant?
135. Floor says "Yes"
136. Dan Mayfield: Suggests that they apply for a Safety grant so there is more detail of their planned activity, that wasn't included in the motion.
137. Adam Shilman: It sounds like they need to "tighten up their paper trail somewhat".

138. Dan Mayfield: "exactly"
139. Adam Shilman: agrees
140. John Scudder: any other discussion? -None
141. John Scudder: "Dan could you repeat your motion?"
142. Dan Mayfield: Motions to exclude the Yukon Quest from this year Grooming Pool eligibility
143. Justin Derr: Yes
144. Adam Shilman: Yes
145. Vote: -unanimous-7 Yes 0 No
146. John Scudder: Motion passes
147. Darcy Harris: reminds group the meeting will end in 15 minutes
148. Dan Mayfield: Motions that SnowTRAC utilize the 2016/2017 funding requests rather than the 2017/2018 requests.
149. Terry Helleck: "Why?"
150. Dan Mayfield: "There are some increasing costs that are associated with grooming, however, many of these groups have been involved in this process enough to know over the past years that if they increase their funding request then they will get more money because we, the groomers, are (allocated) a percentage (of available funds). It is easy to game-the-system. When you look at the spreadsheet we have 5 clubs that have increased their requests and 3 clubs that have gone down and another who has remained the same as prior years."
151. Terry Helleck: Denali Hwy stands out
152. Darcy Harris: The same section of Denali Highway trail is being groomed by a new groomer with much more expensive and nicer equipment. This grooming will cost more to accomplish the same distance.
153. Dan Mayfield: The purpose of the motion is to recognize that "we all have limited funding, much more limited funding than we've had in the past" and to "force clubs to make decisions about frequency of grooming and plan their strategy for the year and utilize their money to the best of ability." "I really don't think that we want to continue to play this game of allowing folks to request more money each year so that they can get more dollars."
154. Darcy Harris: States that the available amount is roughly the same every year, there has been little change in many years. Montana Creek asked for \$2500 less this year than last year. "Do you want to use 2016/2017 requests across the board?"
155. Dan Mayfield: "Yes go with last year's funding request"
156. John Scudder: Dan Mayfield's motion to use 2016-2017 funding requests (last year's funding request) is on the floor.
157. All those in favor say I -

158. Shane Serrano: will that leave us with the same remainder at the end of the year? where we don't spend what we have and then accuse of not using all the money?
159. Dan Mayfield and John Scudder reply that it's up to the groomers and the weather.
160. Darcy Harris: "I will do the math and send the spreadsheet out to the board".
161. Darcy Harris: last year requests were \$369,424.00 (including Yukon Quest). This year's requests \$422,860.00
162. John Scudder -Dan Mayfield's motion on the table to use 2016/2017 funding requests as the base for the 2017/2018 funding season
163. 6-Yes, 1 abstention- Motion carried
164. John Scudder-any other discussion?
165. Darcy Harris: Clarify the motion that was passed concerning Yukon Quest funding will hold, everybody else will be using the 16/17 funding requests. That will be your recommendation to the Director?
166. Terry Helleck: asks about not using all the available money
167. Darcy Harris: The money allocated to areas that have less snow can be allocated to another club in another area with more.
168. Dan Mayfield: grooming commitment form – clarification-that you can fill it out with less frequency do the fact that were not being fully funded.
169. Darcy Harris: encourages people to fill it out once they know how much funding their club will be allocated
170. John Scudder: motions to end the meeting
171. Gary Anderson: seconds-Meeting adjourned 11:00am

## **Snowmobile Trail Advisory Council (SnowTRAC) Meeting Minutes 09/20/2016**

### **Approved and Final**

**1. SnowTRAC members present:**

2. Dan Mayfield-Chair-Big Lake Trails, Inc.
3. John Scudder-Co-Chair- -Anchorage Representative
4. Erin McLarnon- Anchorage Representative
5. Gary Anderson-Kenai Peninsula-Valdez-Prince William Sound Representative

6.

**7. SnowTRAC members not present:**

8. Cynthia Hite-Mat-Su-Copper River Basin Representative
9. Justin Derr- Southeast Alaska Rep (see above do same for all)

10.

**11. Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Staff Present:**

12. Darcy Harris- Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation (DPOR) Alaska State Trails Program Coordinator
13. Steve Neel-DPOR, Grants Administrator
14. Jamie Walker-DPOR, Administrative Operations Manager
15. Diane Houston-DPOR, Administrative Assistant
16. Matt Wedeking-DPOR, Operations Manager/ Deputy Director
17. Ed Fogels-DNR, Deputy Commissioner

18.

**19. Others Present:**

20. Shelley Ramsey Caribou Hills Cabin Hoppers Club-Treasurer
21. Kathy Lopeman-Caribou Hills Cabin Hoppers Club-President
22. Randy Arndt-Lake Louise Snow Machine Club
23. Genevieve Wojtuski-staff -State Representative Mark Neuman's office-via teleconference

24.

**25. Public Comment**

26. Dan Mayfield- Chair, Governor Walker's decision not to fund the SnowTRAC program with Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) receipts is "upsetting", but he is hopeful the program will move forward.

27. Concerning Governor Walker not funding the SnowTRAC Program-Randy Arndt (Lake Louis Snow Machine Club), and Shelley Ramsey (Caribou Hills Cabin Hoppers) discussed not registering their snow machines if the program doesn't move forward.
28. John Scudder (Anchorage) concern if they lose funding trails will be gone, there won't be anyone to work on the trails.
29. Gary Anderson (Kenai): He is encouraging everyone to continue to register their machines, in case Governor Walker does revise the program, people won't have to "scramble" to collect lost funds.

30.

**31. DPOR Financial Discussion**

32. Steve Neel- state fiscal year (SFY) 2015 funds left over from the Grooming Pool last year are approximately \$51,000. The snowmobile registration receipt total collected from the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) for SFY16 is \$211,234 (less 12% admin) is \$185,885.92. Added together the total available to spend for one year is \$236,885.92.
33. If the SnowTRAC decides to spend the money over two years the DPOR will take out two years' worth of administration costs, leaving \$105,768.92 available to spend on grants and grooming for each of two years.
34. SnowTRAC members and other club members-discuss pros and cons of one or two year funds.
35. Dan Mayfield-does not want to leave any money unutilized, He discusses wanting to use all available funds.
36. **John Scudder motioned to use all money in one year.**
37. **Gary Anderson agrees with motion.**
38. **Four members vote to spend money all in one year- (Erin McLarnon, Dan Mayfield, John Scudder and Gary Anderson) Motion Carried**

39.

**40. Deputy Commissioner Ed Fogels**

41. Ed Fogels, He is optimistic about the program, the budget, and upcoming legislative session.
42. Gary Anderson -Lots of people benefit from the program, he explained to Deputy Commissioner Fogels about the possibility of the public not registering their snow machines.
43. Ed Fogels-Discussed that the Commissioner's Office is working with other DNR Directors.
44. John Scudder-Asked if the Alaska Department of Transportation (AK DOT&PF) could put funds into the Program since snowmobile trails are often transportation corridors.
45. Dan Mayfield-A question to Deputy Commissioner Fogels: Was the letter he sent to the Governor's office received? Deputy Commissioner Fogels commented that it was received and discussed with Commissioner Mack and Governor's Legislative Support Staff; they do see value of the program.

46. Dan Mayfield: He wants to keep open communication between DPOR and the Governor
47. Ed Fogels "Thank you" to the SnowTRAC board.
- 48.
49. **Grant Application Scoring**
50. Grant Application 1: City of White Mountain-Tripod Repair Project
51. Erin McLarnon -Safety is important-though grant was incomplete; thinks other funding could be available.
52. Erin McLarnon: Made a motion not to fund the City of White Mountain, Tripod Repair Project
53. John seconds the motion
54. 1 Yea (Dan Mayfield)
55. 3 Nays (McLarnon, Scudder, and Anderson)
56. Grant Application 2: Alaska Avalanche Information Center, Inc., "'Five Gets' Backcountry Safety Signs
57. Erin McLarnon, Dan Mayfield, John Scudder, and Gary Anderson all comment on worthiness of the project, but discuss that they think the details are not clear on material costs and have concerns that land owners' approvals are not included in the application package.
58. Erin McLarnon-Makes a motion -to accept and approve the application
59. John Scudder Seconds the motion
60. 1 Yea (McLarnon)
61. 3 Nays (Mayfield, Anderson, and Scudder)
62. SnowTRAC Board will not recommend funding either grant application.
63. **Grooming Pool Discussion**
64. Mayfield: His, Cynthia's, and Erin's terms will expire March 1, 2017
65. Dan Mayfield encourages everyone to keep communicating with the Legislature's and Governor to encourage future funding for the SnowTRAC program.
66. Dan Mayfield any other comments?
67. John Scudder, No
68. Gary Anderson, No
69. Motion to adjourn by Dan Mayfield
70. Motion seconded by John Scudder
71. Meeting adjourned 11:23am.

1 **SnowTRAC Meeting Minutes 8/26/2015 - Approved**

2 **SnowTRAC Members Present:**

- 3 Dan Mayfield – Chair – Mat-Su/Copper River Basin Rep.
- 4 John Scudder – Vice-Chair – Anchorage Rep.
- 5 Erin McLarnon – Anchorage Rep.
- 6 Cynthia Hite – Mat-Su/Copper River Basin Rep.
- 7 Gary Anderson – Kenai Peninsula/Valdez/Prince William Sound Rep.
- 8 Justin Derr – Kenai /Southeast Alaska Rep.

9  
10 **SnowTRAC Members Not Present:**

- 11 Stephen Enochs – Fairbanks Rep.

12  
13 **DNR Staff Present:**

- 14 Ben Ellis – Director of Alaska State Parks
- 15 Jamie Walker – Administrative Operations Manager
- 16 Darcy Harris – Alaska State Trails Program Coordinator
- 17 Steve Neel – Alaska State Parks Grants Administrator
- 18 Justin Wholey – Resource Specialist - Alaska State Trails Program

19  
20 **Others Present:**

- 21 Darrell Breese – Staff representative for State Representative Mark Neuman
- 22 Debra McGhan – Alaska Avalanche Information Center Executive Director
- 23 Rick Northey – Caribou Hills Cabin Hoppers President
- 24 Jay Northey – Caribou Hills Cabin Hoppers Administrator
- 25 Harry Holt – Lake Louise Snowmachine Club President
- 26 Randy Arndt – Lake Louise Snowmachine Club Treasurer

27  
28 \*New SnowTRAC member Justin Derr is in attendance via teleconference.

29  
30 **Board Elections**

31 **Motion:** Gary Anderson nominated Dan Mayfield to continue serving as SnowTRAC Chair. Erin McLarnon  
32 seconded the motion.

33 **Vote: Yes-5 No-0**

34 The motion passed. Dan Mayfield is Chair once again.

35  
36 Dan Mayfield nominated John Scudder to serve as Vice-Chair for SnowTRAC. Gary Anderson seconded  
37 the motion.

38 **Vote: Yes-5 No-0**

39 The motion passed. John Scudder is the new Vice-Chair.



40 **Public Comment**

41 Harry Holt commented that SnowTRAC, State Parks, and Alaska Snowmobile Association did a great job  
42 informing people about the budget issue last year (SnowTRAC was not included in the Governor's  
43 budget last year, but was later added to the state budget legislatively). He also thought that the board  
44 should inform more people about what it is that SnowTRAC accomplishes, so it's not seen as just a  
45 collection agency. He also wanted to make sure that people knew how important SnowTRAC trails were,  
46 and how much they are used by snowmachiners, as well as other user groups.

47  
48 Rick Northey thanked the State Parks staff that he had been working with over the last 4 or 5 years. He  
49 also thanked the board members for taking the time to be at the meeting. He reported that after going  
50 through the grant process with ORTAB, the Cabin Hoppers were awaiting delivery of a new PistenBully  
51 trail-groomer. He said that it is a \$230,000 piece of equipment, with \$ 130,000 coming from the all  
52 volunteer club, and \$100,000 from an ORTAB grant last year; the grant helped get over the mark to be  
53 able to pay for it. He closed in thanking the parks staff for getting everything processed, and to  
54 SnowTRAC for their efforts as volunteers.

55  
56 Debra McGhan thanked SnowTRAC for performing a tough job that spread funds throughout the  
57 statewide snowmobile community. She asked the committee to consider education as a key element in  
58 their decision making process, and mentioned that during the last two years there were no education  
59 grants funded by SnowTRAC. She said that she heard SnowTRAC's request that education projects  
60 should be delivered on a statewide basis, and not a one-shot deal, and that hopefully this grant project  
61 will meet the committees expectations.

62  
63 Justin Derr explained that his goal joining the board was working on the Southeast region. He mentioned  
64 that there was only one established Juneau (snowmobile) club, and a few private clubs, but he would  
65 like to get more established clubs together and bring everyone in Southeast together to improve and  
66 grow the riding community.

67  
68 Cindy Hite commented that she would like to get the program running smoothly, have a statewide trail  
69 system, and employ a full time trail coordinator to travel around the state and promote SnowTRAC. She  
70 said that the safety part of the program should be the signs on the trails, and that the safety curriculum  
71 should go a different route if we don't have all the SnowTRAC funding that we would like.

72  
73 Gary Anderson thought that the program is doing pretty well with the amount of money available to  
74 work with, but there have been cuts over the last several years. He mentioned that SnowTRAC has tried  
75 to find more money by trying to increase registration rates over the years. He noted that the program  
76 needs more money.

77  
78 John Scudder commented that when SnowTRAC first started there were 500 miles of trails with a \$5  
79 registration fee, and that this year there are 2000 miles of trail with the same registration fee of \$5;

80 Groomers have many expenses, and unless fees increase, money for the program will be tight for the  
81 next few years.

82

### 83 **Past Year SnowTRAC Funding Issue**

84 Dan Mayfield outlined a budget issue that SnowTRAC encountered over the last year, and its eventual  
85 resolution. The SnowTRAC line item wasn't included in the Governor's last budget. Only the legislature  
86 could put the line-item back in by the time SnowTRAC was aware of the issue. Mayfield said that several  
87 folks mounted a campaign with the legislature to get that funding put back in. Kevin Hite, Dan Mayfield,  
88 and others wrote letters supporting the SnowTRAC line item, and it was added back into the budget by  
89 legislators. Mayfield thanked Rep. Neuman, Rep. Kathy Tilton, Jim Culver, Sen. Huggins, and Sen.  
90 Dunleavy. He also said that the entire Mat-Su delegation were extremely supportive, and possibly other  
91 legislators. He also mentioned that the Governor was in support, but it was too late to change anything  
92 in the budget when it was called to his office's attention.

93

### 94 **Draft House Bill & SnowTRAC Draft Resolution**

95 Dan Mayfield described a draft house bill that Rep. Mark Neuman and his office created to respond to  
96 SnowTRAC's funding issues. The bill as written would increase the snowmobile and OHV registration fee  
97 from \$10 for 2 years to \$20 for 2 years, with an optional 6 year registration for \$50; if passed the bill  
98 could take effect on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017. Mayfield then presented a SnowTRAC draft resolution supporting  
99 the bill; he also expressed interest in an automatic registration cost increase a few years after the initial  
100 increase.

101

102 Darrell Breese (staff representing Rep. Neuman) described the draft bill as addressing the concern that  
103 there is not enough money available for SnowTRAC. Breese noted SnowTRAC's interest in an automatic  
104 registration increase a few years after the initial increase, and language in statute that automatically  
105 triggers the money being included in the budget. Breese suggested that SnowTRAC include those desires  
106 in their resolution language. Breese also said that Rep. Neuman's office is receptive to any suggestions  
107 SnowTRAC has; he noted that if the registration is increased too much there is the risk of fewer people  
108 not choosing to register their vehicle at all.

109

110 John Scudder asked if there could be a mechanism in place to increase registration in a few years  
111 automatically. Breese said the language would have to be included in this draft bill, and the exact  
112 increase amount and date would have to be stated, as well; he also said that legislators may resist  
113 recurring rate increases, but that he would see if Neuman was receptive to a one-time increase, maybe  
114 \$12 in 2020.

115

116 Dan Mayfield read the Draft Resolution in its entirety; it suggested revising snowmachine and off-  
117 highway vehicle registration fees, and to give SnowTRAC increased authority for (recommendation of)  
118 disbursement. It also referenced economic opportunity spurred from winter trails, that SnowTRAC is  
119 underfunded, and that SnowTRAC supports Rep. Neuman's draft bill. The draft resolution also requests

120 that the DMV authorization to release funds should become codified so disbursement is automatic, thus  
121 not requiring a line item in the state’s budget every year. The resolution also supports an increase in  
122 funding authority authorized from the DMV, from \$250,000 to \$500,000, to meet demands of riders.  
123 Dan Mayfield also discussed language to incorporate a fee increase in 2020 for \$12 for one year (\$24 for  
124 two years). Breese also added that the resolution will be attached to the legislation, and if the board  
125 wants them to review it yearly, then they should include that language.

126

### 127 **Appearance by Director Ellis**

128 Director Ellis had some suggestions to improve the resolution language. The last paragraph said the  
129 DMV will release funds to SnowTRAC, but the DMV cannot do that, DMV would have to release funds to  
130 the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation (DPOR) *for* SnowTRAC. Director Ellis also said that the  
131 authorization limit at one time was higher, than it currently is, but it was reduced because the  
132 registration dollars were not reaching that limit; he explained that the authorization limit should be at or  
133 slightly more than the money available for SnowTRAC, as well. The Director mentioned that the DMV  
134 has a poor accounting system currently, and because of this, registration numbers for snowmobiles vs.  
135 OHV’s and new registrations vs. renewals is unknown. He also said that in the future there will be an  
136 improved system where this data can be queried.

137

138 The Director also stated that Alaska has the lowest snowmobile registration fee in US, and that some  
139 states have a one-time lifetime registration fee; he also said that SnowTRAC’s interest in a \$5 increase is  
140 a good step forward until the new DMV accounting system comes online; then the committee could  
141 analyze the data, and modify the registration fee structure differently, if needed. Director Ellis thought if  
142 the point-of-sale registrations make up most of the funding, then it may be good to focus on those. Ellis  
143 also mentioned that parks can roll over money to the following year, which could enable DPOR to  
144 spread the funding beyond the year it is collected, for multi-year or one-time registrations.

145

146 **Motion:** John Scudder moved to modify the resolution to include mention of an automatic raise in  
147 registration fees in 2022. Gary Anderson seconded.

148 **Discussion:** Cindy Hite thought that this was good language so the board doesn’t have to go through this  
149 same process again down the road.

150 **Vote: Yes-5 No-0**

151 The motion passed.

152

153 Daryl Breese also noted that as the draft legislation is updated Sen. Neuman’s office will keep in contact  
154 with Dan Mayfield and the committee.

155

156

157

158 **Motion:** Cindy Hite moved to approve the resolution (resolution hard copy passed out in room earlier) in  
159 principle, pending the work out of the final details with Director Ellis, and present to the resolution to  
160 the legislators. Justin Derr seconded.

161 **Vote: Yes-5 No-0**

162 The motion passed.

163

164 Director Ellis informed the board that DPOR or he didn't drop the ball, as a magazine article recently  
165 stated, and that the governor's administration for the last nine years added SnowTRAC to the budget  
166 automatically. Ellis said that when he found out he notified the Governor's Office immediately. The  
167 Director pointed out that the new administration just didn't have experience with this like the previous  
168 administration did, and SnowTRAC just fell through the cracks without intent.

169

170 Director Ellis said he supports putting in statute that the snowmachine registration money goes to the  
171 DPOR only for snowmobile activities. Until then the committee should send the Governor's Office a  
172 letter requesting that the Governor's budget include SnowTRAC funding, to make sure the funding issue  
173 doesn't happen again.

174

175 Ellis also thought that the bill would likely have broad support and a good chance of passing. He also said  
176 that he is committed to SnowTRAC and for the program to grow with more funding; he thanked the  
177 SnowTRAC committee.

178

### 179 **DPOR Financial Discussion**

180 Steve Neel stated that the registration dollars for the past year were the lowest he'd seen, but there is  
181 significant money left over from last season that evens this out somewhat. Neel also noted that there is  
182 \$15,000 that was previously set aside for a rural Alaska safety grant, and that SnowTRAC should make a  
183 recommendation for those funds.

184

185 **Motion:** Dan Mayfield moved to recommend the return of the \$15,000 that was set aside for a rural  
186 Alaska safety grant back into the SnowTRAC pool of available funds. Tinker seconded.

187 **Vote: Yes-5 No-0**

188 The motion passed. SnowTRAC recommended returning the money to the SnowTRAC pool.

189

190 Dan Mayfield asked if the board could get an update to see when the DMV's new  
191 registration/accounting system will be online. Jamie Walker says that DPOR can do that for the board.

192

### 193 **Safety & Education Grant Discussion**

194 Dan Mayfield noted that as his duties as assemblyman he sponsored a resolution (that passed  
195 unanimously) to support the Alaska Avalanche Information Center Mobile App grant. He said he didn't  
196 see it as a conflict, but would stay out of the vote if there were objections; there were none.

197 Cindy Hite thought that among the grants either the budgets were not complete or they were all  
198 administrative costs.

199

200 **Live to Ride Another Day Mobile Game App – Alaska Avalanche Information Center, Inc.**

201 Darcy Harris noted that \$15,000 was a placeholder amount since there was no total listed in the budget.  
202 She also noted that project materials from safety projects become property of that State of Alaska,  
203 which she had been talking to the DNR IT department about. Dan Mayfield noted that the budget was  
204 not complete. John Scudder thought that this app would be available to anyone on the internet, and  
205 that SnowTRAC money should benefit only Alaskans. Gary Anderson said that ORTAB (Outdoor  
206 Recreation Trails Advisory Board) would be a better funding avenue for this project. Cindy Hite stated  
207 that the budget was poor, and that it was all administrative costs. Erin McLarnon commented that the  
208 budget was not complete, as well.

209

210 **Aniak Snowmobile Safety Trails – Aniak Traditional Council**

211 Darcy Harris noted that this grant applied for signing and marking only; no grooming. Dan Mayfield was  
212 concerned that the applicant is an extension of the local government, and would use this grant to fund  
213 jobs, as well as fringe. John Scudder said that he supported trail marking, but not a project with a budget  
214 this poor. Gary Anderson said that he likes the safety aspect, but would like the work to be by  
215 volunteers.

216

217 **Alaska DPOR Interpretation & Education – Statewide Snowmachining Safety Brochure**

218 Dan Mayfield and Erin McLarnon thought the wages for the grant were excessive. John Scudder  
219 questioned if more brochures would be printed when they ran out, and Steve Neel clarified that a much  
220 smaller amount of money would be needed to distribute the same amount of brochures (once they  
221 were designed).

222

223 SnowTRAC discussed the scores and decided to vote for each project individually.

224

225 **Motion:** John Scudder moved to recommend funding for the Alaska DPOR (Dept. of Parks and Outdoor  
226 Recreation) grant. Erin McLarnon seconded.

227 **Discussion:** John Scudder thought that even though the budget was questionable, it would help folks  
228 throughout the state. Cindy Hite thought that the State has too many fingers in the SnowTRAC money.

229 **Vote: Yes-2 No-3**

230 The motion failed.

231

232 **Motion**

233 John Scudder moved to recommend funding for the Aniak grant. Gary Anderson seconded.

234 **Vote: Yes-0 No-5**

235 The motion failed.

236

237

238 **Motion**

239 Cindy Hite moved to recommend funding for Alaska Avalanche Information Center’s project. John  
240 Scudder seconded.

241 **Vote: Yes-0 No-5**

242 The motion failed.

243

244 Dan Mayfield suggested a tutorial to help applicants complete better applications, because quality  
245 applications aren’t coming in. John Scudder stated that it may look like the board doesn’t support safety,  
246 but a groomed and marked trail is a safe trail, and will save more lives than a piece of paper or an app.

247

248 **Grooming Grant Discussion**

249 Darcy Harris announced that Lake Louise Snowmachine Club applied to add a new trail (Crosswind  
250 North) to the grooming pool, as well as funding in their grooming grant. Dan Mayfield questioned  
251 whether the board should add new trails to the grooming pool, and mentioned that SnowTRAC decided  
252 not to fund new trails at prior meetings. Cindy Hite thought it was important for folks to apply even if a  
253 trail is not funded, so there is an assessment of need, but until there is more funding we shouldn’t fund  
254 new trails. Harry Holt said that his club spent a lot of time getting the Crosswind North Trail legal, and  
255 that having it in the pool would allow flexibility if other trails weren’t suitable to groom.

256

257 **Motion**

258 Dan Mayfield moved to accept this new trail (Lake Louise Snowmachine Club’s Crosswind North) into the  
259 grooming pool and recommend funding its grooming for this season. John Scudder seconded.

260 **Discussion:** Cindy Hite said she didn’t support new trails because it doesn’t further a statewide trail  
261 system.

262 **Vote: Yes-2 No-2**

263 The motion failed.

264

265 Cindy suggested putting together a list of trails that would be in the grooming pool, but recommended  
266 for funding if more money became available. This list would include Lacey Lane and Crosswind North.

267

268 **Motion**

269 Cindy Hite moved to put the Lake Louise Trail in a file for legal trail status, and when funding becomes  
270 available, we will revisit and take a vote on the funding recommendation for this trail. Gary Anderson  
271 seconded.

272 **Vote: Yes-4 No-0**

273 The motion passed.

274

275 Dan Mayfield noted that \$278,326.27 is available for funding, and State Parks staff has put together a  
276 spreadsheet with several funding options, and grooming can be funded at the 77% funding level.

277

278 **Motion**

279 John Scudder moved to go with column one, at the 77% (funding level) and zero grants. Gary Anderson  
280 seconded.

281 **Discussion:** Cindy Hite asked why Lake Louise asked for \$10,000 less than last year. Randy Arndt  
282 explained that the person that submitted the grant made a mistake.

283 **Vote: Yes-5 No-0**

284 The motion passed. SnowTRAC recommended funding grooming at the 77% funding level.  
285

286 John Scudder noted that in theory, there may be some money available for Lake Louise if other areas  
287 aren't able to groom as much as they want due to weather. Harry Holt asked what the chances of  
288 getting reimbursed for grooming over their grant amount if they checked in with parks first, and Steve  
289 Neel said to check in and parks can work with him to try and work something out if possible.

290  
291 Dan Mayfield noted that the Mat-Su Borough has a recreational grant program for (501(c)(3) non-profit  
292 organizations for gasoline and maintenance reimbursements. The deadline is August 28, and Community  
293 Development Director Eric Phillips is the contact. Mayfield also said the Mat-Su Borough is funding  
294 brushing; trail brushers can be rented. Also, he said that the Mat-Su Borough is putting together a  
295 recreational trails bond package to fund bridges, trail hardening, and interpretive signs. It will likely be  
296 finished in December, and be voted on next election.

297  
298 Darcy Harris explained that there were three year board terms and one year elected terms.  
299

300 **Motion**

301 Gary Anderson moved to have the elected positions (chair and vice chair) in SnowTRAC last for two  
302 years. John Scudder seconded.

303 **Vote: Yes-5 No-0**

304 The motion passed.  
305

306 Cindy Hite requested that the trails approved for SnowTRAC, but not being funded should be added to  
307 the DPOR spreadsheet for the meetings. Darcy Harris took note of this.  
308

309 Dan Mayfield expressed interest in looking into why some groomers are increasing the amount of funds  
310 requested.

311  
312 Cindy asked Justin Derr about the grant scoring process for a new member. Justin Derr said it was quite  
313 difficult. Darcy Harris told the board that the score sheet would be improved for next year.  
314

315 **Public Comment**

316 Rick Northey expressed interest in having signs available for groomers to indicate SnowTRAC funding for  
317 trail grooming, also if there is a template available he would be able to make his own signs.

318 **Motion**

319 John Scudder moved to adjourn. Tinker seconded.

320 **Vote: Yes-5 No-0**

321 The motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 2:45pm.

322

323 **\*Note:** All SnowTRAC members were not present to vote on all motions.



1 **SnowTRAC Meeting Minutes 8/28/2014 - APPROVED**

2 **SnowTRAC Members Present:**

- 3 Dan Mayfield – Chair – Mat-Su/Copper River Basin Rep.
- 4 Erin McLarnon – Co-Chair – Mat-Su/Copper River Basin Rep.
- 5 Andy Morrison –ORTAB/SnowTRAC Liaison
- 6 Stephen Enochs – Fairbanks Rep.
- 7 John Scudder – Anchorage Rep.
- 8 Cynthia Hite – Anchorage Rep.
- 9 Jim Stanford – Southeast Rep.
- 10 Gary Anderson – Kenai Peninsula/Valdez/Prince William Sound Rep.

11  
12 **SnowTRAC Members Not Present:**

- 13 Mark Leary – Western Alaska Rep.
- 14 Doug Boulden - Kenai Peninsula/Valdez/Prince William Sound Rep.

15  
16 **\*Note** – Adam Baxter (Fairbanks Rep.) recently resigned and is no longer a SnowTRAC member.

17  
18 **DNR Staff Present:**

- 19 Jamie Walker – Administrative Operations Manager
- 20 Darcy Harris – Alaska State Trails Program Coordinator
- 21 Steve Neel – Alaska State Parks Grants Administrator
- 22 Justin Wholey – Resource Specialist - Alaska State Trails Program

23  
24 **Others:**

- 25 Debra McGhan – North America Outdoor Institute (AAIC Representative)
- 26 Rick Northey – Caribou Hills Cabin Hoppers President
- 27 Jay Northey – Caribou Hills Cabin Hoppers Administrator
- 28 Kevin Kastner – Iron Dog Inc.
- 29 Harry Holt – Lake Louise Snowmachine Club President
- 30 Alan Echols – Denali Highway Trail Club
- 31 Mark Nordman – Iditarod Trails Committee
- 32 Rex Shattuck – Chief of Staff to State Representative Mark Neuman

33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38

39 **Thursday, August 28, 2014**

40

41 **Board Elections**

42 **Motion**

43 Gary Anderson nominated Dan Mayfield for the Chair position. Stephen Enochs nominated Erin  
44 McLarnon for Co-Chair. Cindy Hite seconded both nominations.

45 **Vote**

46 (8 yea, 0 nay) Motion Passed

47 Dan Mayfield is the new Chair and Erin McLarnon is the new Co-Chair.

48

49 **Public Comment**

50 Rick Northey stated his concern about declining revenue for current SnowTRAC funding, and how side  
51 by side ORVs are degrading groomed trails in the Caribou Hills.

52

53 Harry Holt was concerned about funding, as well; he supports educating the public about snowmobile  
54 registration, and talking to legislators about increased SnowTRAC funding. He said that it had been  
55 difficult getting easements for trails on state land, and that he had spent \$65,000 on easements so far.

56

57 John Scudder (speaking for Randy Crosby) brought up the issue that miners are going to access the  
58 Petersville area in winter by truck, and had done so last year as well. The concern he has is that the  
59 trucks degrade groomed trails and collapse snow bridges. Others in the room that dealt with similar  
60 situations offered advice.

61

62 **Iditarod Trail Presentation & Discussion**

63 A SnowTRAC grant was submitted by the Huslia Tribal Council in 2012, and was approved. The applicant  
64 was not able to use the money in the upcoming year, and the money was set aside specifically for a  
65 safety project in rural Alaska for the 2014/2015 SnowTRAC grant cycle. There were no applicants for this  
66 money. Mark Nordman, from Iditarod Trails Committee, gave a project proposal to SnowTRAC to appeal  
67 for the \$15,000. The project consists of clearing an extremely rough section of the Iditarod Trail where  
68 there was an extensive forest fire; roots have become elevated and need to be mulched to make the  
69 trail safer. Mr. Nordman stated that in its current state the local villages cannot use it without damage  
70 to equipment and personal safety concerns.

71

72 SnowTRAC raised concern that this project may not fit the safety description, but more a trail  
73 development project. There was also question by the board whether it was more benefit to the Iditarod  
74 and Iron Dog races than the rural communities nearby.

75

76

77

78

79 **Motion**

80 To accept Mark Nordman’s proposal as stated, with the caveat that he will submit a grant in 30 days.  
81 Then it will be up to the Director to make the final decision. Gary Anderson seconded.

82 **Discussion**

83 There were concerns that this method of allocating funds was unfair if the application period were not  
84 reopened for everyone to apply.

85 **Vote**

86 (0 yea, 8 nay) Motion Failed

87

88 **Motion**

89 Erin McLarnon moved that the board advises the director to extend the application due date to October  
90 15<sup>th</sup>, and to put out a press release to re-advertise the \$15,000. Jim Stanford seconded.

91 **Discussion**

92 There was some discussion by the board members to wait until next year’s grant cycle to offer the safety  
93 funds again, instead of extending the application period. Darcy Harris explained that October 15<sup>th</sup> would  
94 be too soon of a date to process everything required.

95 **Vote**

96 (2 yea, 6 nay) Motion Failed

97

98 **Motion**

99 Jim Stanford moved to leave the money (the money set aside for a rural Alaska safety project) exactly  
100 where it is right now, where the director allocated it, and await further instructions from him as what he  
101 wants to do with these funds. Erin McLarnon seconded the motion.

102 **Vote**

103 (8 yea, 0 nay) Motion Passed

104 These safety funds are considered not available for this year.

105

106 **Funding Discussion**

107 The board discussed different challenges faced by the grant program; most being related to a lack of  
108 sufficient funds to support the program fully. When asked about point of sale snowmobile registrations,  
109 Rex Shattuck explained that his office had gotten complaints and members of the public had expressed  
110 that they did not want them; the legislature is sensitive to these comments. When asked, Shattuck said  
111 resolutions from SnowTRAC, ORTAB, and snowmobile clubs could possibly help their cause in the  
112 Legislature.

113

114 **Grant Scoring Discussion**

115 The board recounted that no grants were funded last year. This year there were two grant applications  
116 submitted. One project was “Nationally Certified Snowmobile Safety Training” from AAIC; Debra  
117 McGhan was present to give a brief talk about it, and answer questions from the board. The other

118 project was the “Iron Dog Snowmobile Safety Expo.” Kevin Kastner was available to explain the safety  
119 expo and answer questions.

120

121 **Motion**

122 Erin McLarnon moved to fund both of these Safety & Education grants as written. Steve Enochs  
123 seconded.

124 **Discussion**

125 SnowTRAC briefly discussed funding the grants at a reduced rate (at the same percentage that the  
126 grooming applications would be funded).

127 **Vote**

128 (6 yea, 2 nay) Motion Passed

129

130 **Grooming Pool Discussion**

131 The dollar amounts requested for grants and grooming are significantly more than funds available, so  
132 SnowTRAC brainstormed ways to distribute the money.

133

134 **Motion**

135 Erin McLarnon moved to allocate each grantee (returning groomers) 50.56% of their requested amount.  
136 Stephen Enochs seconded.

137 **Vote**

138 (8 yea, 0 nay) Motion Passed

139

140 **General Discussion**

141 The board discussed ways to receive more funding for the program. Erin McLarnon explained her idea to  
142 create a non-profit multi-use trail user group to help bring in money for multi-use trails, winter and  
143 summer, motorized and non-motorized. She explained that a broad user base can bring in significant  
144 funds. She explained that non-profits (as opposed to the State of Alaska) have more opportunities for  
145 fund-raising. Some board members weren't in favor of a multi-use trails non-profit. There was also  
146 discussion of raising money with optional SnowTRAC license plates for highway vehicles.

147

148 The board generally agreed that staying with the State's management of SnowTRAC is the best route,  
149 but investigating the possibilities of a non-profit is important, too. SnowTRAC then discussed how  
150 legislative action is probably the most likely way to receive more funds for the program.

151

152 **Motion**

153 Jim Stanford moved that within the next 30 days every board member will forward to Dan Mayfield one  
154 or two ideas on ways to expand revenues for the SnowTRAC board. Erin McLarnon seconded.

155 **Vote**

156 (4 yea, 4 nay) Motion Failed

157

158 **Motion**  
159 Dan Mayfield moved to have the board establish a Legislative Action Committee. Erin McLarnon  
160 seconded.

161 **Vote**  
162 (8 yea, 0 nay) Motion Passed

163 The committee will include Dan Mayfield, Andy Morrison, Jim Stanford, and Stephen Enochs.

164  
165 Rex Shattuck said he would draft a letter to the DMV to ask how the registration reminders are sent  
166 (letters that are sent in the mail to remind folks to update their snowmobile registration). He said he  
167 would CC Dan Mayfield for distribution to the rest of the the SnowTRAC board.

168  
169 The SnowTRAC discussed implementation of a statewide trail system; they noted that there are few  
170 fueling stations in remote areas. Rex Shattuck suggested that economic benefits may encourage  
171 legislative support, and the legislature could potentially grant money for an economic study.

172  
173 The next topic was about the mission and goals of SnowTRAC. The board generally agreed that the  
174 mission of SnowTRAC was to promote a statewide trail system, and that safety was to be supported by  
175 pursuing a standard signing of trails. Adequate funding of at least \$500,000 annually was also a goal.

176  
177 The board also talked about grooming standards; they requested that there be a place to add a required  
178 funding formula on the returning groomers' applications.

179

## 180 **SnowTRAC Members Discussion**

181 Darcy Harris explained that Adam Baxter had resigned from SnowTRAC, and that Mark Leary and Doug  
182 Boulden had not submitted scores or participated in the last year for unknown reasons. The board  
183 suggested that Dan Mayfield (Chair) speak to Mark Leary and Doug Boulden, and make a  
184 recommendation to the board of what to do about their lack of involvement. The board expressed to  
185 State Parks that they wanted more involvement in the committee member selection process.

186  
187 **Motion**  
188 Dan Mayfield moved that the SnowTRAC board recommends that Gary Anderson be extended another  
189 two years to his full three year term on the SnowTRAC board. Stephen Enochs seconded.

190 **Vote**  
191 (8 yea, 0 nay) Motion Passed

192  
193

194 -Meeting adjourned 4:53pm-

1 **Approved - SnowTRAC Meeting Minutes 8/28/2013**

2 **SnowTRAC Members Present:**

- 3 Andy Morrison - Chair - ORTAB/SnowTRAC Liaison
- 4 Dan Mayfield – Co-Chair - Mat-Su/ Copper River Basin
- 5 Stephen Enochs – Fairbanks Rep.
- 6 John Scudder – Anchorage Rep.
- 7 Jim Stanford – Southeast Rep.
- 8 Cynthia Hite – Anchorage Rep.
- 9 Gary Anderson - Kenai Peninsula/ Valdez/Prince William Sound
- 10 Erin McLarnon - Mat-Su/ Copper River Basin
- 11 Doug Boulden - Kenai Peninsula / Valdez / PWS

12  
13 **DNR Staff Present:**

- 14 Ed Fogels – DNR Deputy Commissioner
- 15 Ben Ellis – Director of Alaska State Parks
- 16 Darcy Harris – Alaska State Trails Program Coordinator
- 17 Jamie Walker - Administrative Operations Manager
- 18 Steve Neel – Alaska State Parks Grants Administrator
- 19 Justin Wholey – Resource Specialist - Alaska State Trails Program
- 20 Wayne Biessel – Mat-Su/Copper Region Parks Superintendent
- 21 Teri Zell – SnowTRAC grant Administrator
- 22 Kyle Kidder - Div. Mining, Land, and Water

23  
24 **Public:**

- 25 Scott Connely – Snomads Snowmachines Club President
- 26 Deborah McGhan – North America Outdoor Institute (NAOI)
- 27 Randy Crosby – Alaska Snowcat – Petersville Groomer
- 28 Rick Northy – Caribou Hills Cabin Hoppers President
- 29 Jay Northy
- 30 Kevin Kastner – Iron Dog Inc.
- 31 Harry Holt - Lake Louise Snowmachine Club President
- 32 Corky Matthews – Lake Louise Snowmachine Club Treasurer
- 33 Jack Kreinheder –Trail Mix Inc. President
- 34 Dave Luce – Groomer Susitna River/Yentna

35  
36  
37  
38  
39

40 **Wednesday, August 28, 2013**

41

42 **Introductions**

43 SnowTRAC members, DNR staff, and the public introduced themselves. Some joined the meeting via  
44 teleconference. New board member Doug Boulden was in attendance.

45

46 **Board Elections**

47 **Motion**

48 Jim Stanford nominated Cindy (Hite) for the Chair position again. Stephen Enochs seconded. Cindy Hite  
49 declined. There was no vote.

50

51 **Motion**

52 Dan Mayfield nominated John Scudder to be the new chair. John Scudder declined. There was no vote.

53

54 **Motion**

55 Stephen Enochs nominated Andy Morrison for Chair. Cindy Hite seconded. Andy Morrison accepted the  
56 nomination for Chair.

57 **Vote**

58 (9 yea, 0 nay) Motion Passes

59

60 **Motion**

61 Gary Anderson Nominated Dan Mayfield for Co-Chair. Steve Enochs seconded. Dan Mayfield accepted  
62 nomination for C-Chair.

63 **Vote**

64 (9 yea, 0 nay) Motion Passes

65

66 Andy Morrison is the new Chair and Dan Mayfield is the new Co-Chair.

67

68 **Public Comment & Funding Discussion**

69 Rick Northy (Cabin Hoppers President) explained that last year his club groomed a 100 mile of trail  
70 system, with a total of 1500 miles of grooming, and logged 500 volunteer hours. He told the board that  
71 his club groomed \$8000 billable hours that were not groomed with SnowTRAC funds (to make a point  
72 that state funds only cover some of the costs). His club also spent \$3000 in non SnowTRAC funds for  
73 summer trail work. He said that his club supports safety, meaning wide-groomed trails and signs for  
74 snowmachining and dog-mushing. He was concerned that 6 hours was spent on grooming standards  
75 during the last meeting, but nothing came of it. He supports a one on one meeting so members have  
76 direct contact. He also mentioned that he had been working with legislators to try to get a line-item for  
77 more SnowTRAC funding.

78 Scott Connely (Snomads President) explained that his club (400+ members) has also put a lot of their  
79 own money into their trail system, with significant volunteer effort. He also mentioned working with the  
80 legislature to find more money for SnowTRAC. The Cabin Hoppers sponsored a fat-tire bike and jogging  
81 race last spring, as well as a ski race. Lacey Lane was added to the trail system this year.

82

83 A round-table discussion began about grooming costs in the SnowTRAC program. A question was raised:  
84 Is there a formula for calculating how much it costs to groom trails? Parks staff answered that there is  
85 not a standard formula used by groomers. A meeting with Wayne Biessel (Mat-Su/Copper Basin  
86 Superintendent) and several groomers took place last year to determine standard grooming costs;  
87 Biessel said they made progress but have a ways to go to have standards finished. Board members and  
88 the public discussed problems with assigning standard costs, including differing amounts of traffic on  
89 trails, and primary vs. secondary trail grooming costs.

90

91 Randy Crosby (Alaska Snowcat groomer) said that the SnowTRAC program is on life support and  
92 groomers are fighting over a shrinking pot of money. He also said he asked for the actual cost to groom  
93 the trails, and if everyone did the same there would be a more accurate depiction of total funds needed  
94 for the program.

95

96 A discussion began about SnowTRAC funding, and how more money is needed to run the program. Ideas  
97 such as increased registration fees, and snowmachine registration enforcement were among the topics.  
98 A recurring theme was that Anchorage cross-country skiers received a grant for just under a million  
99 dollars without asking for it; how could SnowTRAC replicate this? Another idea was to collect money  
100 from other user groups (other than snowmachiners) that used the groomed snowmachine trails. A  
101 longer registration period (4-6 years) at point of sale was also mentioned.

102

103 Jack Kreinheder (Trail Mix President) talked about the Juneau area with its 400 registered riders. He  
104 explained that there are only a few trails in Juneau, but these trails are important to groom; they travel  
105 through the woods to allow snowmachiners to access alpine areas where most riding happens. He said  
106 that raising fees is controversial in Juneau since rural areas don't benefit from SnowTRAC. He  
107 mentioned that some states have both a snowmachine registration fee AND a trailhead fee to more  
108 appropriately charge users; other states are between \$45-\$50 rather than \$5.

109

110 Dave Luce (Mat-Su groomer) agrees with an increased registration fee for snowmobiles, but not a trail-  
111 usage fee; he feels that people will use the trails regardless. He said the trails on the Yentna River are  
112 getting marked and kiosks are erected, but the trails aren't maintained often enough.

113

114 Kevin Kastner (Iron Dog Inc.) thanked SnowTRAC for their work over the years, and mentioned that he  
115 can send out public announcements at the Iron Dog expos about how snowmobile registration fees pay  
116 for grooming. He supports NAOI's efforts for safety projects. He also mentioned the option of removing  
117 line items from his budget if SnowTRAC doesn't agree with an expense.

118



119 **Discussion with State Parks Director**

120 Ben Ellis introduced the new Administrative Operations Manager at Alaska State Parks, Jamie Walker.  
121 He spoke about the budget shortfalls within State Parks; several positions have been left vacant. The  
122 RecTrails program has a serious budget shortage, and may run out of funds in early 2014; it is unknown  
123 what will happen. He also explains how SnowTRAC and ORTAB rely on each other; the managers of both  
124 programs are the same staff, so the viability of each program depends on both existing.

125  
126 Ben Ellis answered questions with the rest of his time. He explained that Representative Fairclough  
127 supports SnowTRAC, but doesn't think the legislature will appropriate any money. Several other topics  
128 were discussed, including requesting State Parks and DOT work together for funding, winter trail system  
129 development, increased registration fees, tapping into the state gas tax for funds, and South Denali  
130 ground-breaking. Another possible funding source could be charging a fee (like a boat launch fee) at  
131 trailheads; this would be through regulation rather than legislation. A change of management of  
132 SnowTRAC from state government to a non-profit was also discussed; the director said he didn't oppose  
133 this.

134  
135 One idea to increase funds collected was to rotate State Park Rangers around the state to enforce  
136 snowmachine registrations; one hurdle is that most park rangers are off during winter. Another idea was  
137 to start a survey to gather data about how important snowmachining is to Alaskans.

138  
139 Board members discussed how the current teleconference meetings for SnowTRAC are inefficient;  
140 Director Ellis explained that it was his decision to not pay for per diem and airfare due to limited funds in  
141 the Parks budget, and the fact that SnowTRAC is not a Governor's Board.

142

143 **DPOR Reports and Huslia Discussion**

144 Grants Administrator Steve Neel reminded the group that 5 non-grooming grants were awarded for the  
145 2011-2012 SnowTRAC season. Excess funds not used from last year will be moved to this year. He  
146 brought up the fact that nothing has been billed from the Huslia Tripods project; he mentioned that the  
147 folks he has been in contact with are different than those who applied for the grant, and it has been  
148 difficult to make contact. Technically the grant has expired, but there is some leeway to wait for a bill a  
149 bit longer.

150

151 **Motion**

152 Dan Mayfield moved to move the \$15,407.98 (from the un-billed Huslia project) to this year's fund (this  
153 year's pool of SnowTRAC money). Cindy Hite seconded.

154 **Discussion**

155 Some board members were hesitant to cut off funds to the Huslia project with haste; they thought that  
156 they needed more information, and communication with folks in rural Alaska is different.

157 **Vote**

158 (5 yea, 4 nay) Motion Passes

159 Before the board discussed individual grants Steve Neel mentioned that money from ORTAB is no longer  
160 available for SnowTRAC. He explained that in the past, there were fewer of motorized applications for  
161 ORTAB, so it made sense for ORTAB to fund part of SnowTRAC (to satisfy percentage requirements for  
162 motorized usage); this is no longer the case.

163

### 164 **Safety & Education Grant Discussion and Voting**

165 Before the discussion, conflicts of interest were discussed, and Dan Mayfield was the one board  
166 member that receives grooming funds (through Big Lake Trails Inc.) through SnowTRAC.

167

168 Some members were concerned that if the safety projects are funded, that it spreads the grooming  
169 money very thin, and that Lake Louise is applying for a grooming grant for a new trail, even though the  
170 board has mentioned in the past that no more trails will be added to the grooming pool. The possibility  
171 of having these grants accepted by ORTAB was also discussed, but this would delay the project until the  
172 following year; there is also a very small chance that any of these safety grants would be awarded by  
173 ORTAB because it is very competitive, and has a 5% cap. It was noted that the program has shifted from  
174 a grant-oriented program to a grooming-oriented program.

175

176 Grants were then discussed and scores were looked at. One thought was that the grooming grant  
177 application (not the returning groomer application) from Lake Louise should be given the same  
178 reduction in funding as the other returning groomers (because there is not enough money to fund the  
179 groomers fully). Another concern about Lake Louise was that the trail will become part of the grooming  
180 pool (see above paragraph). A concern about the Snomads grant is that is it a grant for plowing a parking  
181 lot just off a maintained borough or state road; some members think that State DOT or the Kenai  
182 Peninsula Borough should take care of it. It was noted that the Snomads haven't asked either entity  
183 about this possibility.

184

### 185 **Motion**

186 Dan Mayfield moved to partially fund the Lake Louise Snowmachine Club initiative (John Lake Trail  
187 Grooming) for \$3,875. He would like to fund that at the same level (percentage) as any of the (returning  
188 groomer) grooming requests, and disregard the other grant applications at this time due to austerity  
189 reasons. Gary Anderson seconded.

### 190 **Discussion**

191 One member thought there should be more discussion about this before an official motion. Another  
192 member didn't agree with the second part of the motion.

### 193 **Vote**

194 (5 yea, 4 nay) Motion Passes

195

196 Some board members were concerned with this vote because safety will not being addressed, and folks  
197 may avoid applying for safety grants in the future.

198

199 **Grooming Pool Discussion**

200 Dave Luce mentioned that he may have seriously underbid for grooming the Yentna area and asked  
201 about additional funds. Wayne Biessel informed him that money can be moved around in the grooming  
202 pool, but only the amount up the request can be used initially. More funds can be requested but there is  
203 no guarantee they will be granted.

204  
205 It was pointed out that some groomers have asked for more money this year than last year, with less  
206 money available. Ways of scoring groomers was also discussed, including trailhead/kiosk comment  
207 sheets and having trail-users contact Parks directly. Other ways of dispersing SnowTRAC funds to  
208 groomers was also discussed, such as a standard grooming cost per mile, not contracting groomers that  
209 only groom for part of the year, and not funding grooming in State Parks.

210  
211 **Motion**  
212 Andy Morrison moved to fund the trail grooming requests for 2013/2014, including the John Lake-  
213 Eureka Trail at 60% of the request. Jim Stanford seconded. Andy withdrew his motion until after Ed  
214 Fogels' discussion.

215  
216 **Ed Fogels Discussion**

217 Deputy commissioner Ed Fogels thanked the SnowTRAC board for their commitment. After a brief  
218 introduction he welcomed questions from the board and the public. Board members brought up ideas  
219 to increase funding for SnowTRAC with Ed Fogels, including raising registration fees, extending point of  
220 sale snowmachine registrations to 4-6 years, a fundraiser, tapping into the state gas tax, an economic  
221 impact study about the value of snowmachining to give to the legislature, and corporate sponsorship.  
222 The board also described all the volunteer hours many clubs put into grooming and signing. The idea of  
223 SnowTRAC being run by a non-profit was also discussed; staff turnover was also mentioned by board  
224 members as a reason a statewide trail system hasn't come together. Ed Fogels told the board that he  
225 would make a commitment to get information from DOT and the Department of Revenue to see if there  
226 are other ways to find funds for SnowTRAC; he told the board that he really wants to get stuff done.

227  
228  
229  
230  
231  
232  
233  
234  
235

236 **Continuation of the Grooming Pool Discussion**

237

238 **Motion**

239 Cindy Hite moved to remove DPOR funding requests, as well as Yukon Quest’s funding requests, and  
240 fund grooming as a cost per mile. John Scudder seconded.

241 **Discussion**

242 Some members didn’t like the idea of a cost per mile rate. One member brought up how much work was  
243 done to add Fairbanks into the grooming pool. Another member thought that picking and choosing  
244 grooming areas like this could challenge the validity of the board, and set the precedent for only  
245 grooming in Southcentral Alaska. The issue of the Snomads applying significantly more in their grooming  
246 request was addressed by Scott Connelly; a trail that was formerly groomed by the Caribou Hills Cabin  
247 Hoppers is getting taken over by the Snomads now.

248 **Vote**

249 (1yea, 8 nay) Motion Fails

250

251 The discussion continued about whom to fund and how to allocate SnowTRAC money. The board talked  
252 about how the Denali Highway grooming is problematic; it is only groomed starting in February, high  
253 winds often drift over grooming, and the grooming is essentially to make a trail to private lodges  
254 (businesses).

255

256 The board talked about finding a fair way to allocate the funds. Based on some groomers asking for  
257 more money than last year, the board looked at basing the upcoming season’s groomer funding on last  
258 year’s actual expenses, and reducing each groomer’s funding by the same percentage to fully use this  
259 year’s funds.

260

261 \*The actual amounts charged by returning groomers last year were added to the new groomers’ funding  
262 requests to determine an uninflated funding request total, which was \$293,285.45. The board  
263 determined that there is \$219,702.02 for SnowTRAC to spend for the 2013/2014 season. \$219,702.02 is  
264 74.9% of \$293,285.45, so it was proposed that groomers get awarded 74.9% of their actual expenses  
265 billed to SnowTRAC last year (2012/2013 season), or if they’re new groomers this year (or grooming a  
266 new trail) they get 74.9% of their funding request. There was a concern by some members that funding  
267 requests may have been inflated to try to receive more money this year, that’s why last year’s actual  
268 billed expenses were used.

269

270 **Motion**

271 John Scudder moved to fund last year’s actual maintenance costs to include Alpine, Hatcher pass, and  
272 John Lake at 75%, and the Lower Susitna Yentna - Dave Luce. Dan Mayfield seconded. (For clarification  
273 on this motion see paragraph above preceded with the asterisk.)

274 **Vote**

275 (9yea, 0 nay)

276 **Closing Discussion**

277 Increasing registration duration for snowmobiles was brought up again; a lifetime registration was  
278 mentioned as well (both would be at a higher cost than the current registration, but be valid longer). An  
279 idea that money for a longer registration would need to spread out (funds from 4 year registration  
280 would need to be spread out for grooming and grants over 4 years, for example). A recap of ways to  
281 bring in more money for SnowTRAC was listed: longer snowmobile registration period, snowmobile  
282 registration enforcement-State Parks law enforcement, obtain funds through the Alaska gas tax, and  
283 solicit a new economic impact study (to highlight how important snowmachining is to Alaskans).

284  
285 Travel costs were briefly discussed. Since Alaska State Parks isn't paying for travel, one member wonders  
286 if someone could write a grant for these expenses through SnowTRAC funds.

287

288 **Motion**

289 Andy Morrison moved to adjourn. John Scudder seconded.

290 **Vote**

291 (9yea, 0 nay)

292

293 Meeting was adjourned at 4:50pm.

294

295

296

297

298

299

300

301

302

303

304

305

306

307

308

309

310

311

312

313

314

## **Approved - SnowTRAC Meeting Minutes 8/28-29/2012**

### **SnowTRAC Members Present:**

Andy Morrison – ORTAB/SnowTRAC Liaison  
Bill Luth – Mat-Su /Copper River Basin Rep.  
Steve Enochs – Fairbanks Rep.  
John Scudder – Anchorage Rep.  
Jim Stanford – Southeast Rep.  
Mark Leary – Western Alaska Rep.  
Cynthia Hite – Mat-Su /Copper River Basin Rep.

### **DNR Staff Present:**

Ben Ellis – Director of Alaska State Parks  
Darcy Harris – Alaska State Trails Program Coordinator  
Steve Neel – Alaska State Parks Grants Administrator  
Justin Wholey – Resource Specialist - Alaska State Trails Program  
Wayne Biessel – Mat-Su/Copper Region Parks Superintendent  
Kyle Kidder - Div. Mining, Land, and Water

### **Public:**

Steve Parizek - Snomads President  
Jay Northy  
Deborah McGhan – North America Outdoor Institute (NAOI)  
Dan Mayfield - Big Lake Trails President  
Jenny Daniels - Alpine General Services  
Randy Crosby  
Beth Taber – Lower Susitna Drainage Association (LSDA)  
Rick Northy – Caribou Hills Cabin Hoppers President

### **Others Present:**

Bob Pawlowski - Chief of Staff for Representative Kevin Meyer

## **Tuesday, August 28, 2012**

Meeting called to order at 9:40am.

### **Introductions**

Round table introduction with new board members: Mark Leary and Jim Stanford.

## **Discussion with State Parks Director**

Ben Ellis, Director of Alaska State Parks, had a discussion with the SnowTRAC board, and answered questions for them and the public. He explained how SnowTRAC operated for the new members. He touched on the purpose of the program, funding, trail grooming, standards & accountability, and challenges in the future.

## **Board Elections**

### **Motion**

Steve Enochs moves that Cindy (Hite) should be the Chair and John (Scudder) should be the Co-Chair. Bill Luth seconds.

### **Vote**

(5 yea, 0 nay) - Motion Passes (John Scudder & Cindy Hite did not vote for themselves)

## **Public Comment**

Deborah McGhan told the board about the International Snow Science Workshop that NAOI is participating in this year, and thanked the board for consideration of her grant.

Dan Mayfield expressed concern with lack of communication by State Parks. He also mentioned that grooming standards are necessary, but that groomers need more funding before this should happen.

Rick Northy likes that the SnowTRAC board has an emphasis on safety, and grooming should be considered safety. The better the trail-grooming and marking is, the safer the riding experience is. He supported more money for a full time winter trail coordinator.

Steve Parizek mirrored Rick Northy's thoughts on safety. Grooming is what his snowmobile club wants. He feels that SnowTRAC should groom; his club has its own safety program not funded by SnowTRAC. He also referenced an access issue (Price v. Eastham), and why there is a court case looking for snowmobile trail grooming standards from DNR.

## **Funding Discussion**

State Parks grants administrator Steve Neel discussed funding of SnowTRAC, including current and past challenges, as well as which types of projects qualify. The board also talked about how funding is obtained through snowmobile registration dollars from the DMV, and how to get more funding for the program. Steve Neel announced that Federal Highways has approved funding SnowTRAC (from RecTrails money) for \$100,000.

## **Grant Scoring**

The board discussed the snowmobile grants and their scoring. The board is generally supportive of the Caribou Lake/Lacey Lane Trail project. Snowmachiners have fallen through ice on Caribou Lake in the past; this project would reroute the trail around the lake. The board is also supportive of trail marking near Huslia; they agree trail marking is essential for navigation in this region, and they appreciated getting a grant from rural Alaska. The board had mixed feelings on the Iron Dog Expo. Their primary concern is that it is only a one day event, which limits the public benefit. The board supported Lake Louise trail signs. A concern that the board had with NAOI's grant is that they didn't visit rural Alaska, although Deborah McGhan of NAOI mentioned correspondence with the Army National Guard, who may be able to transport instructors to rural Alaska in the future.

### **Motion**

Bill Luth moves to fund the three snowmobile grants above 85 points (as earned by SnowTRAC members' scoring). No second. Motion dies.

### **Motion**

Steve Enochs moves to fund all snowmobile grants and vote yes/no. Mark Leary seconds.

### **Vote**

In favor of funding all five snowmobile grants as is (4 yea, 3 nay) - Motion Passes

## **Grooming Pool**

Both Lower Susitna Drainage Association and Cozy Bear (Gary Leeds) applied to groom the Lower Susitna/Yentna Rivers area. These bids may go to procurement and follow the State of Alaska's RFP process, or the grooming may be divided. Both bids are included in the grooming pool table on page 8.

### **-Grooming Pool Related Public Comment-**

Beth Taber explains why she turned in a grooming application late. In the past, only an email was needed to apply for funding. This procedure changed, and she was unaware of it. She apologized for the lateness of the application.

### **Motion**

Bill Luth moves to accept all three late applications and to have it ironed out in procurement.

John Scudder seconds.

### **Vote**

(6 yea, 1 nay) – Motion Passes



**Motion**

Jim Stanford moves: if grooming applications are late two years in a row then they lose funding.  
Bill Luth seconds.

**Discussion**

There was a concern that some applicants repeatedly turn in grooming applications late, and that they should be penalized. One idea was a 10% reduction funds dispersed to that organization. Others thought that reprimanding an administrative error by a groomer would ultimately punish snowmobilers, and that everyone should work together to make the trails better.

**Vote**

(1 yea, 5 nay, 1 abstain) - Motion Fails

---

**Motion**

John Scudder moves to reduce everyone equally across the board 10% (10% reduction in request of the applicants' grand totals.) Jim Stanford seconds.

**Discussion**

The main discussion was that there wasn't enough money for all applicants to be fully funded (at the funding request in their applications). One concern the board had was that groomers may increase their bid if they think funding will be less than what their request will be; this could be to a fairness issue.

**Vote**

(5 yea, 1 nay, 1 abstain) - Motion Passes

**Board Recommendation**

Cindy Hite states that the board's recommendation is to fund all returning groomers at 90% (of their grant request).

---

**Motion**

Jim Stanford moves to draft a letter to Ben Ellis, requesting a full-time coordinator position for SnowTRAC. Steve Enochs seconds.

**Discussion**

The board discusses how difficult it is to add a new DNR position. There was some concern whether or not there was actually a need, and whether there would be an economic benefit to the community.

**Vote**

(5 yea, 2 nay) – Motion Passes

---

**Motion**

Jim Stanford moves to draft a letter from the board to request involvement in trail funding & maintenance by Alaska DOT. John Scudder seconds.

**Discussion**

Some members thought involvement of DOT was a good idea, especially on groomed platted roads and for snowmobile transportation routes in rural Alaska. Some members didn't think it was necessary.

**Vote**

(6 yea, 1 nay) – Motion Passes

### **Motion**

Cindy Hite moves to write a letter of recommendation to the Governor and all legislators for an increase in funding. Motion rescinded.

---

### **Motion**

Jim Stanford moves to adjourn. John Scudder seconds.

### **Vote**

(7 yea, 0 nay) – Motion Passes

Meeting adjourned at 4:58pm

## **Wednesday, August 29, 2012**

Meeting called to order at 8:35am.

### **Grooming Standards**

#### **-Public Comment Related to Grooming Standards-**

Dan Mayfield is concerned that there isn't enough funding to require groomers to follow grooming standards. Another concern he has regards weekend grooming; Big Lake's groomers all have full time jobs as well as groom, and need to be flexible.

Steve Parizek thinks five foot wide trails are unsafe and lead to head-on collisions. He also said that Snomads groomers are 12'7" wide, and the trails need to be at least that wide. The \$28/mile amount is also too low to groom trails in his area. He said that trail markers every 250' is excessive; every 150 to 250 yards is more realistic.

Rick Northy has an issue with not grooming after 4pm, because groomers have jobs and need some flexibility.

#### **-Modifying the Grooming Standards as drafted by State Parks-**

A timeline for completion of grooming standards was debated, and it was concluded that they should be finished before the application period opens for grooming in the 2013/2014 season. The board wanted to make sure there was enough time to make a quality document. The board then collectively read through the draft standards and added/removed items to make it suitable to Alaskan conditions and the grooming pool. Some of the topics were generalized so the standards can fit varying topography and snowpack of different locations throughout Alaska. Trail sign standardization was also discussed. The revisions made by the board were later approved in a motion (see the second motion on page 7) Wayne

Biessel offered to have a meeting with groomers to find out what realistic costs are for grooming are; information gathered can be used in the grooming standards document.

**Motion**

Jim Stanford moves that this (grooming standards) document should be revisited (and revised if necessary) every three years - at the get-together meeting. Bill Luth seconds.

**Vote**

(7 yea, 0 nay) – Motion Passes

---

**Motion**

Jim Stanford moves to add 1 asterisk after the title (of Standard C), and at the bottom (of the table); we have a statement saying what we want to do with standard C (This is a recommendation of using Standard C from the grooming standards document for trail grooming). Mark Leary seconds.

**Vote**

(4 yea, 1 nay, 2 abstain) – Motion Passes

---

**Motion**

Andy Morrison moves to adjust all the Trail Marker Standards to read: Trail markers will be placed in a single line of stakes or poles with periodic; meaning 250 ft in open areas (for Standard A), 500 ft in open areas (for Standard B & C), 1000 ft in open areas (for Standard D), with periodic (distance as determined by groomer) pairs of stakes or poles to reinforce which side of the stake or pole-line is intended for the flow of traffic. Bill Luth seconds.

**Vote**

(4 yea, 1 nay, 2 abstain) – Motion Passes

---

**-More Public Comment Related to Grooming Standards-**

Dan Mayfield was concerned with the section of the standards which mentions: “any additional changes to frequency of grooming must be approved by DPOR,” because if a grant is not fully funded (i.e. only 90% of a request) then the originally listed grooming frequency on the grant application cannot be performed. He also wants to make sure groomers will have the resources available to get trail marking signs. He suggested the language be changed from *set dates* to “the grooming season” so he isn’t responsible for having signs up when it was impossible or unsafe to groom. He also received clarification of when to report an issue or hazard to DPOR.

Rick Northy has concerns about communication with groomers because of cellular dead zones; he asked about applying for a grant for radios. He likes the idea of getting signs in bulk by a sign coordinator and dispersing them to the groomers so they are uniform for SnowTRAC trails.

**Motion**

Bill Luth moves that we (the SnowTRAC Board) ask the State to write a grant for a certain dollar amount (“I’m not going to nail that down”) every year to go towards these contracts or the contracted people for signage. John Scudder seconds.

**Vote**

(0 yay, 6 nay, 1 abstain) – Motion Fails

**Motion**

Jim Stanford moves for the board to accept draft revisions (of the snowmobile grooming standards). Steve Enochs seconds.

**Vote**

(7 yea, 0 nay) – Motion Passes

---

**Motion**

Jim Stanford moves to adjourn. Bill Luth seconds.

**Vote**

(7 yea, 0 nay) – Motion Passes

Meeting adjourned at 4:58p

**Snowmobile Grant funding as Recommended by the SnowTRAC Board to Alaska State Parks**

**Director Ben Ellis**

Ref. #	Project Name	Submitted by	Funding Request	SnowTRAC Approval	Application Type	Avg. Score
1	Caribou Lake Trail /Lacey Lane Trail	Snowmads Inc.	\$ 4,400.00	Approved	Development Maintenance Aquisition Assessment	89.5
2	Huslia Winter Trail Safety Project	Huslia Tribal Council	\$15,000.00	Approved	Safety, Signing, Education	92.2
3	Iron Dog Snowmobile Safety Education	Iron Dog Inc.	\$11,600.00	Approved	Safety, Signing, Education	61.7
4	Lake Louise Trail Signs	Lake Louise Snowmachine	\$ 5,300.00	Approved	Safety, Signing, Education	86.1
5	Alaska Safe Rider	North America Outdoor Institute	\$15,000.00	Approved	Safety, Signing, Education	65.9
		<b>Total =</b>	<b>\$51,300.00</b>			

Recommendation Totals	2012/2013
Snowmobile Grants	\$ 51,300.00
Grooming Pool	Approx. \$282,000.00

**Grooming Pool Funding Recommendation of 90%  
by the SnowTRAC Board to  
Alaska State Parks Director Ben Ellis**

Groomer	Requested Funds	Funding at 90%	
AK SnowCat	\$67,100.00	\$60,390.00	
Chena River State Recreation Area	\$13,206.00	\$11,885.40	
Lower Susitna Drainage Association	\$9,630.00	Est. Approx. \$10,000.00	Two bids for same area.
Cosy Bear - Gary Leeds	\$13,500.00		
Trail Mix	\$10,000.00	\$9,000.00	
Alpine Gmeneral Services	\$7,500.00	\$6,750.00	
Big Lake Trails	\$23,878.00	\$21,490.20	
Denali Highway Trail Club	\$18,000.00	\$16,200.00	
Mid Valley Trail Club	\$18,300.00	\$16,470.00	
Willow Trail Committee	\$23,600.00	\$21,240.00	
Lake Louise Snowmachine Club	\$27,072.00	\$24,364.80	
Montana Creek Motor Musers	\$5,000.00	\$4,500.00	
Caribou Hills Cabin Hoppers	\$35,700.00	\$32,130.00	
Snomads	\$37,725.00	\$33,952.50	
Yukon Quest	\$15,000.00	\$13,500.00	
Totals	\$325,211.00	Approx. \$282,000.00	

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

TRANSCRIPT OF SnowTRAC PROGRAM MEETING

ATWOOD BUILDING

ROOM 602

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

May 17, 2012

I N D E X

APPEARANCES :

DARCY HARRIS

CINDY HITE

STEVE NEEL

JUSTIN WHOLEY

SALLY DAVIES

JOHN SCUDDER

JOE GAUNA

ED FOGELS

ESTER TEMPLE

CLAIRE LECLAIR

RAY BAKER

MARK WILKE

1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 11:00 a.m.

3 (On record)

4 MS. HARRIS: If you could just state your name quickly  
5 before you have something to say, that would really help our  
6 person who's taking minutes.

7 MS. HITE: Cindy Hite. Darcy, could you please let us  
8 know who's in the room?

9 MS. HARRIS: Absolutely. That's -- you got it, that's  
10 our next step here. So we're just going to do a quick  
11 introduction around the room so that the folks on the phone  
12 will also know and I'll go ahead and start. Darcy Harris,  
13 Trails Program Coordinator.

14 MR. NEEL: Steve Neel, Grant Administrator.

15 MR. WHOLEY: Justin Wholey, Resource Specialist with the  
16 trails program.

17 MS. DAVIES: Sally Davies, Grants Accounting.

18 MR. SCUDDER: John Scudder, Snow TRAC.

19 MR. GAUNA: Joe Gauna, Snow TRAC.

20 MR. FOGELS: Ed Fogels, Deputy Commissioner of the  
21 Department of Natural Resources.

22 MS. TEMPLE: Ester Temple, Special Assistant to the  
23 Commissioner.

24 MS. LECLAIR: Claire LeClair, Deputy Director, Chief of  
25 Field Operations for State Parks.



1 MR. BAKER: Ray Baker, Accu-Type Depositions.

2 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: I'm sorry, I didn't hear the last  
3 one.

4 MR. BAKER: My name's Ray Baker, I'm with Accu-type  
5 Depositions, I'll be recording the meeting today.

6 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Okay.

7 MS. HARRIS: Okay, great.

8 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: (Indiscernible) again Darcy, is  
9 this a meeting -- is this with the public, is this considered  
10 an official Snow TRAC meeting?

11 MR. WILKE: I'd like to answer that, if I could, Darcy?

12 MS. HARRIS: Yes, is this Mark?

13 MR. WILKE: This is Mark. I don't believe this would be  
14 an official Snow TRAC meeting because I believe an official  
15 Snow TRAC meeting would be called by the board.

16 MS. HARRIS: Okay.

17 MR. WILKE: I believe -- I would consider this an  
18 informational meeting, so no motions, no decisions.....

19 MS. HARRIS: Right.

20 MR. WILKE: .....no formal actions are (indiscernible -  
21 cough).

22 MS. HARRIS: Yeah, I think that's a correct assessment,  
23 Mark. We're not planning on making any formal decisions  
24 today. So did those folks online get an agenda for the  
25 meeting? I sent it out to everybody I could remember.

1 UNIDENTIFIED VOICES: I got it.

2 MS. HARRIS: Okay. If you have any questions, we can  
3 help you move along. So I'm going to pass it over for --  
4 beginning with our Deputy Commissioner, Ed Fogels here.

5 MR. FOGELS: Thank you, everybody. Again, this is Ed  
6 Fogels, I'm Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Natural  
7 Resources and I want to thank everyone for being here. I want  
8 to thank the members of the Snow TRAC board for serving and  
9 advising the department on these issues.

10 I guess, first off, I just got back into town from kind  
11 of a trip to Canada, so I'm only going to be able to be here  
12 for the first 30 minutes of the meeting, and so my goal is to  
13 sort of just kind of kick it off and give you my read on what  
14 I think is happening and what should happen and then with me  
15 is Ester Temple, Special Assistant to Commissioner Sullivan  
16 who will be here for the whole meeting, (indiscernible) just  
17 kind of listen and report back. Anyway, so I apologize in  
18 advance for having to only spend 30 minutes with you all.

19 So anyway, and also, one of the reasons I'm here is  
20 because Director Ben Ellis is out of state and was unable to  
21 even call into this, so he asked me to sit in for him. I want  
22 to just kind of start also by saying that I've sort of read  
23 some of the correspondence, some of the papers that --  
24 information that Darcy sent around, so I kind of read all  
25 that, I have a feel for what's going on, but I don't know any

1 of the details, so I'm going to let Ben work with the board to  
2 try and move forward and then I will kind of pay attention,  
3 maybe come to some of the future meetings and see how things  
4 evolve.

5 But basically, as I understand it, Director Ellis and  
6 his staff have identified some adjustments that they would  
7 like to make to the Snow TRAC program. Darcy sent out some  
8 materials that sort of outline their view of the problems and  
9 some potential solutions. I'd like to stress that nothing has  
10 been decided by the Commissioner's Office or by Director Ellis  
11 at this time. This was intended to be a starting point for  
12 discussion, okay, and there was a dartboard that was put up by  
13 Darcy to start throwing darts at. And so just remember that  
14 we want to have a discussion with the board, we want the  
15 board's advice on if and what -- if we need to make changes,  
16 what those changes should be. So just because they're kind of  
17 some specific proposals on here, again, nothing's been decided  
18 and it's a total open discussion as far as I'm concerned and  
19 as far as Director Ellis's concern.

20 So I guess what -- when I look at some of this material,  
21 I kind of -- I'm trying to frame the problems, okay? What are  
22 the problems we're trying to fix? Are they problems, do we  
23 actually need to fix anything, okay? Me, I'd want to be  
24 convinced that there are actually problems, so that should be  
25 the first discussion and I think I'd be asking Darcy and

1 Director Ellis to kind of explain to me very clearly so they  
2 can convince me there are actually problems that need to be  
3 fixed here. If they're not, then why bother, okay?

4 I'm kind of looking at one problem that I see that  
5 probably is at the top that it's kind of hard to argue with at  
6 this point and that's less money, okay? So we're losing some  
7 of the funding, there's a bunch of potential solutions that  
8 could be out there. I mean, Darcy's outlined some on this  
9 paper, but there are others and it would be good to have that  
10 discussion. I think that's one problem that everyone can  
11 agree that we are facing.

12 There are other problems that I've heard about, you  
13 know, are the contracts being fulfilled or is the grooming  
14 being done. I need to be convinced that's actually a problem.  
15 Then, you know, how do we make sure that contracts are being  
16 fulfilled. You know, there are -- I mean, it seems to me you  
17 can always improve the way that's done, so there's probably  
18 improved wording and stipulations and stuff that may be a no  
19 brainer, whether we actually need to send stuff out on site  
20 and spend more time. That's a whole other issue, you know, I  
21 need the board's advice on and the director would like the  
22 board's advice on. That may or may not be one of the  
23 solutions when we come down to it because that costs money and  
24 that takes money from other activities, so.

25 So again, I would urge you -- what I would ask is that

1 you guys start with a discussion of the problems, what are the  
2 problems, and then you know, start attacking them one at a  
3 time and figuring out, you know, if you all agree that there  
4 is an issue, what do we need? I mean, it's clear to me that  
5 we need to make sure that everybody in the State of Alaska has  
6 an opportunity to apply for this money and I know that the --  
7 we've got shrinking money, so if we're trying to broaden the  
8 number of people that apply for this stuff, presents it's own  
9 problems, right?

10 So -- but bottom line is that there has to be a program  
11 for all of Alaskans whether they're in Southeast, the Mat-Su  
12 or out in Bethel somewhere, right? So that's real important  
13 to me and Commissioner Sullivan on -- we -- just as a bit of  
14 an aside that that's related, we have been -- people have been  
15 talking to us about possibly looking at maybe another program  
16 that's parallel to this for ATVs. And so we've been trying to  
17 figure out if that's worth advancing. There's a lot of pluses  
18 to getting money somewhere that we would have to build hard  
19 ATV trails around the state. I think I've mentioned this  
20 before, but myself and Commissioner Sullivan, we'd like to  
21 finish our terms here and be able to point to a mileage number  
22 somewhere. There are X more miles of groomed snowmobile  
23 trails and hard ATV trails in Alaska. We would really like to  
24 increase that number significantly if we can.

25 And so if we're going to be proposing at some point a

1 program and if it's to work, I mean, it has to be clear that,  
2 you know, all Alaskans will benefit from that whether they're  
3 in the Mat-Su or in Fairbanks or villages, connector trails  
4 between villages, right? That has to be part of the deal, so  
5 those are all some of the bigger picture ideas that I have in  
6 my notes. And so I guess with that, I'd turn it back to Darcy  
7 to run this meeting and I know there's some emotional feelings  
8 about some of this stuff. I'm -- I just -- I ask you to just  
9 -- just to roll up your sleeves, you know, be polite. Darcy  
10 was doing her best to try and frame some ideas for you to work  
11 with that are just ideas and let's try and see if we can make  
12 the Snow TRAC program a better program. That's really the  
13 bottom line I don't think anyone can argue with.

14 So with that, I guess I turn it back to Darcy and let  
15 you guys continue and I'll sit here for another 15 or so  
16 minutes, but then I'll have to leave, I apologize for that.

17 MS. HARRIS: Thank you, Ed, appreciate all your thoughts  
18 there. Okay. Did somebody else join us, I heard another call  
19 in there? Somebody new? Maybe not, maybe somebody just does  
20 want (indiscernible). Okay.

21 So the main points that we really want to stress here  
22 are that we feel as are very important for administering the  
23 snowmobile trails grant program, we need to be accountable for  
24 state funds, we should have equitable distribution of the  
25 snowmobile registration fees and the fact that the federal

1 funding that has been used in the past to supplement the  
2 program will be unavailable in the future. We've been  
3 fortunate in the past to have some recreational trails program  
4 grant money to be able to put into the grooming program or the  
5 snowmachine -- the snowmobile trails grant program for  
6 grooming or other projects.

7 And as an example, in the 2011/2012, we had a total of  
8 \$328,706 that was from the registration fees and from some  
9 recreational trails grant program money that was used for the  
10 Snow TRAC program. In the 2012/2013, we won't have any of the  
11 recreational trails program money, but we -- so we will just  
12 have the registration money, which will be approximately  
13 between \$185,000 and \$200,000, so it's -- we're going to --  
14 one issue that I see that's very important is that we have  
15 less money to work with, so we need to adjust and think about  
16 what that's going to mean to the program and how we can  
17 continue to have a, you know, important and meaningful  
18 projects come out of the program, but with reduced funds.

19 So the solutions that I proposed after identifying what  
20 I saw and that we, as the staff in the Parks Office saw as  
21 problems that should be adjusted to make the program better, I  
22 threw out some ideas that could potentially solve these  
23 problems. They are one solution to solve some of the  
24 problems. It is important to our director that we, in some  
25 way, not have the state -- to have parks be the number one

1 supporter for the grooming program and for this program. And  
2 so that is something that we're working on ideas and we're  
3 working on tools to -- to make that possible, whether it's a  
4 match program, that is one solution, or if there are other  
5 good solutions out there, that's one of the reasons why we're  
6 bringing it to the board because we really like people's  
7 ideas, but it's something that we, I think, as a division are  
8 trying to move away as the primary funder for a program, in  
9 particular, because at the moment, with the -- it's growing.  
10 We have more demand for more trails to be groomed and I think  
11 that maybe things could be better and if we're not doing an  
12 excellent grooming program with the amount of money that we  
13 have had in the past, what can we do to have an excellent  
14 program?

15           Maybe that means getting donations from other groups,  
16 maybe that means pulling in our -- ourselves a little bit and  
17 making the program a little bit smaller and diversifying funds  
18 to other projects. I'm not sure what exactly would be the  
19 best solution, but I'd like to have -- I'd like to see this  
20 program be an excellent program and however we get there, I'd  
21 like to see it be accountable, I'd like to see us really  
22 distribute the funds to a wide variety of needs and uses  
23 around the state. Safety and education or whatever is needed  
24 and as well as grooming. It's a very small budget, so we have  
25 to kind of pick and choose what we're going to spend it on. I



1 wish we had a bottomless budget or a budget like some of the  
2 other states have, but we have this to work with, so let's --  
3 let's try to make it a really good program and we can do that  
4 together with your expertise, so I'm going to start that out.

5 Ed, do you have any thoughts, I know you're going to  
6 have to leave. Are there anymore thoughts on that initial --  
7 okay.

8 MR. FOGELS: No, I think that's fine.

9 MR. HARRIS: I don't mean to put you on the spot,  
10 but.....

11 MR. FOGELS: Yeah, I mean, how you structure the meeting  
12 to get everyone's input's.....

13 MS. HARRIS: Sure.

14 MR. FOGELS: .....going to be, you know, how you guys  
15 want to handle it.....

16 MS. HARRIS: Uh-huh, okay.

17 MR. FOGELS: .....but yeah. I mean, and.....

18 MR. MORRISON: And this is Andy Morrison?

19 MS. HARRIS: Yes, Andy.

20 MR. MORRISON: One of the first questions I have is just  
21 in the fact that we're looking -- you said less funding from  
22 rec trails in the future or no funding for rec trails in the  
23 future. And correct me if I'm wrong, I thought it was a  
24 shortfall, just a temporary shortfall because of the way the  
25 feds had calculated the amount that the state gets. As far as

1 I know, there's no like standing resolution to eliminate the  
2 funding from Ortab (ph) to Snow TRAC.

3 MR. NEEL: This is Steve speaking. You're correct,  
4 Andy, in that there's -- that hasn't been severed. We're  
5 looking at one -- and I don't want to take up a lot of time  
6 with the history of the rec trails program, but there was no  
7 funding for FY12 for the Snow TRAC and they money from FY11,  
8 and right now, since there is no new highway bill in Congress,  
9 there is no guaranteed rec trail money for FY13 for anything  
10 at the moment. Now they may put another CR -- continuing  
11 resolution in that gives us money for FY13, but at -- when I  
12 talked to the federal highway's director for Alaska, he had no  
13 idea if that was going to happen or not or whether they were  
14 going to come up with something, so at this moment, I -- you  
15 know, there is no rec trail money other than what Bill had set  
16 aside with FY11 dollars to put into Snow TRAC.

17 And there might be some left over from this year, I  
18 mean, it could be \$10,000, \$15,000, maybe at most, that leaks  
19 into -- that we don't use, but we're not going to have  
20 anywhere near what we've had for the last couple years to  
21 supplement the registration fees.

22 MR. MORRISON: And I'm trying to remember about how much  
23 that was. Was it 50 or 100, I was trying to remember.

24 MR. NEEL: Well, we had -- originally for FY11, we had  
25 \$174,000 and then federal highways took \$45,000 of that away

1 leaving us with about \$125,000 or so and we've already used up  
2 about \$110,000 or so of that for this year due to the increase  
3 in snowfall.

4 And the exact amounts are going to change or vary a  
5 little bit, but that's pretty close.

6 MR. MORRISON: You mean Snow TRAC using Ortab (ph)  
7 money?

8 MR. NEEL: Using -- yeah, rec trail money that was  
9 dedicated motorized that Bill had put aside for Snow TRAC  
10 grooming.

11 MR. FOGELS: Darcy, can I just add real quick that.....

12 MS. HARRIS: Absolutely.

13 MR. FOGELS: This is Ed Fogels again, I just want to  
14 make one point here that we're not just giving up on all this  
15 too. I mean, Director Ellis is back in D.C. meeting with  
16 people to express Alaska's support for continuing this program  
17 and other programs, so you know, I mean, we are working on  
18 trying.....

19 MS. HARRIS: Absolutely.

20 MR. FOGELS: .....to get additional funding, so.

21 MS. HARRIS: Thank you. That's a good point,  
22 absolutely. So and the registration -- this is Darcy Harris  
23 again. Snowmachine registration fees will vary every year a  
24 little bit, but typically are about -- after we take off some  
25 money for administration, which covers the Snow TRAC meetings

1 and some -- a few inspections and things like that, we have  
2 around \$200,000, and so that's been the average roughly.

3 And so in the past, we've enjoyed some extra funding  
4 from the recreational trails program, which will go to --  
5 there's usually a group of groomers that will put in  
6 applications and then a couple other applications will come in  
7 for safety and education, the Iron Dog and some avalanche  
8 safety training.

9 So one of my concerns is that with just the registration  
10 fees, that the program will not have enough money to sustain  
11 the grooming pool at its current rate of expenditure and that  
12 doesn't allow for any additional projects to be included.  
13 Like we have less -- we'll have less money this year than was  
14 spent just on grooming last year and that doesn't include  
15 safety for the Iron Dog or any other safety and education  
16 projects or any shelter cabins or trail marking projects or  
17 anything else.

18 So that's a concern because we won't have enough -- I  
19 mean, we might have another heavy snow year, we don't know,  
20 that's never predictable, but so that's one of my concerns.

21 And looking back at the last several years and Steve has  
22 done a lot of work as well looking at all the minutes and  
23 reading all the minutes from the last meetings over the last  
24 several years and looking at applications that came in. And  
25 we would get, on occasion, up to two dozen grant applications

1 for various projects throughout the state. Safety cabin in  
2 Shaktoolik and trail marking in a whole bunch of different  
3 places and education programs out in the west and up north and  
4 those applications have really dwindled off as the grooming  
5 pool has continued to get stronger. And I -- what I'd like to  
6 see is that funding get more -- have a little more -- a few  
7 more user groups in there because it's -- there's so much that  
8 we could do with this program, so many needs to education and  
9 safety and trail marking that would really benefit the  
10 snowmachine community. And although the grooming definitely  
11 benefits the snowmachine community, there are other things as  
12 well.

13 So that's one thing that I noticed that I would like to  
14 have the money be more diversified. And if we did have more  
15 money being spread out throughout the state, this would  
16 encourage, theoretically, more people to register their  
17 machines because then they would see that money coming back to  
18 their communities.

19 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Darcy, you're breaking up.

20 MS. HARRIS: Oh, sorry.

21 MR. FOGELS: There's someone else making noise on the  
22 system that is interfering with the mic.

23 MS. HARRIS: Can you hear me now?

24 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Yes.

25 MS. HARRIS: Okay, great.

1 MR. FOGELS: Yeah, whoever's typing online, could you  
2 please mute your phone? Thank you.

3 MS. HARRIS: So -- and I think we've all agreed, and I  
4 know there's been discussion at previous meetings before my  
5 time that there needs to be some kind of an oversight trail  
6 inspection program and I know that Cindy and I have talked  
7 about having volunteer groups doing it, different snowmachine  
8 clubs getting together and doing that. That would -- I think  
9 it's important if we did employ that to have some kind of an  
10 infrastructure that then these volunteers could work within.  
11 I do think this also poses some questions and some things we  
12 would really have to work out because of potential conflicts  
13 that would arise, so we need to have some strict  
14 infrastructure for those volunteers to work within, but that  
15 could be a great resource because obviously, those volunteers  
16 from the snowmachine clubs would be -- have a valid interest  
17 in the trails they were inspecting.

18 At the moment, there are not snowmachine trail standards  
19 as far as grooming goes and that would be something else that  
20 I know you guys have talked about in your meetings that would  
21 need to be set, so those volunteers would have a way to gauge  
22 what they saw out in the field.

23 And the thing that -- if we did have volunteers, that  
24 would be an excellent way to use people's time and when it  
25 comes to funding from our office to go out and do trail

1 inspections, we have the one pot of money that comes -- that  
2 the Snow TRAC meetings come out of and our work on say these  
3 meetings and Sally's work and Steve's work on grants. All  
4 that comes out of that 12 percent, but also the trail  
5 inspections come out of that pot of money and I know that  
6 there has been limited -- definitely there is limited funds to  
7 do that and also limited personnel.

8 So one of the things that Ben and I were thinking that  
9 would be a way to solve that problem would be to make sure  
10 that there was inspection money taken out of the funds that we  
11 could then use for inspections of the grooming and have  
12 grooming and trail inspections come out of that and maybe have  
13 some more standardized grooming.

14 (Whispered conversation)

15 MS. HARRIS: Thank you, Ed.

16 MR. WILKE: Darcy, this is Mark.

17 MS. HARRIS: Yes, Mark.

18 MR. WILKE: I guess we're starting off on the topic of  
19 trail inspections since we've been going that way for just a  
20 few minutes here. I think -- I have a little bit of a problem  
21 with volunteers doing the trail inspections, particularly if  
22 we're finding the situation which somebody hasn't been meeting  
23 the obligations of the contracts.

24 MS. HARRIS: Right.

25 MR. WILKE: I just wonder if what -- you know, what

1 authority of volunteers trail report would have in taking  
2 action against somebody not meeting the terms of the contract.

3 MS. HARRIS: No, I totally agree with you, Mark, that's  
4 -- that is definitely one of the issues that we would have to  
5 think about and -- you know, if we have a contract with a  
6 groomer, then we have -- and I'm not as familiar with maybe  
7 people who have a little more familiar -- Claire, you probably  
8 do, with if we have competing interests, we would go to a  
9 request for proposal, we had that meeting, which would give us  
10 some kind of authority to then -- if they weren't meeting  
11 contractual agreements, we could discuss that with them and  
12 say you're out of compliance.

13 But without that, do we have authority to go -- if we  
14 have a contract with them, and I know that Teri administers a  
15 lot of contracts and works really hard with that every year.  
16 And I do think we maybe should refine -- it's getting a little  
17 off topic, but we need to refine those contracts a little  
18 better to be very specific.

19 MS. LECLAIR: Well, the question is, do you have --  
20 would the state have some way to clearly enforce standards in  
21 a grant versus a contract and a grant agreement is not  
22 enforceable in the field, whereas, a contract, you know, the  
23 state could not pay a contractor if they don't fulfill -- if  
24 they don't do the work that they signed up to do on the  
25 contract.



1           But once a grant is -- and maybe Teri, correct me, or  
2 Karlyn, you're on the line as well, but my understanding is  
3 once a grant is allocated to a group, that's it and then they  
4 report at the end, but there's no real teeth to it, there's no  
5 way to enforce the -- them providing the work that they say  
6 they will.....

7           MS. HARRIS: Right.

8           MS. LECLAIR: .....into the grant.

9           MS. HERRERA: And this is Karlyn Herrera and  
10 (indiscernible) that's a correct assessment.

11          MS. LECLAIR: Okay, thanks.

12          MR. MORRISON: Andy Morrison. I got a chance to check  
13 out a lot of the areas, Lake Louise, Eureka, I do some riding  
14 up in the Mat-Su a little bit too and I mostly see really  
15 dedicated volunteers that.....

16          MS. HARRIS: Oh sure.

17          MR. MORRISON: .....are really passionate about grooming  
18 trails. I don't really see or meet too many people that are  
19 just trying to work the system and it almost seems like  
20 they're putting in more effort than they're probably getting  
21 paid for in most cases.

22          MS. HARRIS: Absolutely.

23          MR. MORRISON: And you could talk about this trail  
24 inspections, and you know -- but I don't think you want to  
25 discourage that volunteerism and.....

1 MS. HARRIS: No, no.

2 MR. MORRISON: .....that (indiscernible - up here.

3 MS. HARRIS: I agree with you, Andy, and that's what  
4 I've -- from talking with you in the past, I understand and I  
5 believe that the volunteers certainly volunteering their time  
6 is a really -- it's important to them and it helps.....

7 MR. LUTH: This is Bill Luth.

8 MS. HARRIS: .....the community.

9 MR. LUTH: I just wanted to add in on that note a little  
10 bit.

11 MS. HARRIS: Yeah.

12 MR. LUTH: That I think if we use the clubs to do base  
13 inspection and if they find that there's a problem and refer  
14 it to the state, that the state could take, at that point, and  
15 have an official inspection of a problem area. But you're  
16 going to find that most of our people that are out there  
17 grooming, I have not really seen anything in the past year  
18 that has been a problem.

19 MS. HARRIS: Right.

20 MR. LUTH: They're putting in way more hours than  
21 they're billing out for and putting in a lot more time and  
22 effort than I have seen in the past and it's just amazing the  
23 amount of grooming getting done with the little amount of  
24 funds that we are providing at this point.

25 MS. HARRIS: Uh-huh.

1 MR. LUTH: It's -- you know, to have this done by an  
2 actual contractor on a regular basis would cost well over a  
3 million dollars in the effort that's been put out in the last  
4 year.

5 MS. HARRIS: Right. And I.....

6 MR. LUTH: Yeah, Andy, I'd have to agree with that  
7 statement again too. A lot of times, it seems like the clubs  
8 and the groomers, they know if the trail is bumpy, they know  
9 if they need a few more signs. A lot of times, they just need  
10 signs sent to them, they need a little extra help with  
11 volunteers to get out and put them up and things like that.  
12 It's not -- I don't think it's a huge problem, I think most of  
13 them know what their trails are like.

14 MS. HARRIS: Right.

15 MR. LUTH: And (indiscernible).

16 MS. HARRIS: This is Darcy again. I have gotten  
17 numerous calls this year from various places around the state  
18 about -- with people with concerns, people from equipment  
19 freighters -- or I mean, supply freighters out on the Yenta  
20 and different people who use the Denali Highway on -- the  
21 groom trails on the Denali Highway and various other places  
22 who are very concerned that the trails weren't groomed to any  
23 kind of standard or at all and I realize we had very -- we had  
24 tough conditions this year. There was a lot of snow and wind  
25 and I know that the conditions were tough and hard to keep up

1 with I'm sure.

2 But I -- it's really hard for me to ignore people  
3 calling me and saying hey, this trail never got groomed this  
4 year and I go back and look at the contract, and sure enough,  
5 that contract's fully paid. And we don't have any people to  
6 go out and say hey, this was done or this wasn't done and so  
7 it's just -- it's this problem that I'm trying to manage and  
8 I'm not exactly sure how we can solve that yet, but I know  
9 that there are parts of the snowmachining community that are  
10 really unhappy with the grooming program as it stands.

11 MR. CROSBY: Yeah, Darcy, this is Randy Crosby, I'd like  
12 to interject if I could?

13 MS. HARRIS: thank you.

14 MR. CROSBY: First of all, we would need access to --  
15 what (indiscernible) said in these phone calls, I mean, we  
16 need some more documentation other than, you know, I received  
17 some phone calls, so that we can analyze what is being said  
18 and see if the complaints are legitimate or not.

19 MS. HARRIS: Uh-huh.

20 MR. CROSBY: And then as far as the trail inspections  
21 and making sure everybody is responsible and everything, this  
22 has been discussed at -- in depth in the past and the bottom  
23 line is, is that you can groom a professional trail today and  
24 do everything that was required and tomorrow, because of  
25 weather, because of heavy trail use, because of a lot of

1 freighters or a lot of -- some big tour group, the trail, you  
2 know, completely changes and now needs grooming again, but we  
3 don't have the funds to go out there and groom  
4 (indiscernible).

5 MS. HARRIS: Right.

6 MR. CROSBY: And then as far as the issue of not being  
7 able to withhold payment if the job is not done, I've been  
8 signing the contracts for years. I call them contracts,  
9 they're grant agreements, it's the same thing in a business  
10 sense and I provide the work first and then you get reimbursed  
11 once the work is done. And so if a person isn't doing the  
12 work and is yet getting paid, then they are in violation of,  
13 you know, state laws. It's pretty well spelled out. I don't  
14 see where, you know, that issue really needs to be dwelled on,  
15 but if you just want to change the document from grant  
16 agreement to contract to tighten something up, well then that  
17 should be done without it costing any money or taking a lot of  
18 time.

19 MS. HARRIS: Sure.

20 MR. CROSBY: And we employed a gentleman for two years  
21 in a trail coordinator position to come up with standards, to  
22 come up with, you know, some sort of framework to guide us  
23 through this and we got nothing. And we bought this  
24 snowmachine for him and where is that snowmachine today? That  
25 snowmachine money came out of the Snow TRAC program, so a lot

1 of time and money have been spent up to this point by the  
2 State of Alaska and now we're hearing the State of Alaska come  
3 back and saying we need to do all this again and I just am at  
4 a complete loss of words over this whole subject.

5 MS. HARRIS: Thank you for your input.

6 MR. ANDERSON: I agree with Randy, and this is Tinker.

7 MS. HARRIS: I think -- and Teri, you're on the line and  
8 you're the one that deals most closely with those grooming  
9 contracts and I know that.....

10 MS. ZELL: Yeah, I just -- I would like to just have a  
11 little bit of input here. I know that we did have an issue  
12 with one groomer. We got a call evidently or Darcy got a call  
13 that this work wasn't being done, but you know, when I get  
14 invoices from the club or whoever is doing the grooming, what  
15 I'm looking for is if they -- first of all, their pictures say  
16 a lot and I'm looking to make sure that they are billing for  
17 what they were originally granted to do and make sure they're  
18 not on trails that -- and billing for trails that haven't been  
19 authorized. I look for time that it takes, you know, like oh  
20 my goodness, last time this took 10 hours and now you're  
21 saying it only took fives hours, what was the difference and  
22 maybe I'll call somebody and ask them why was there such a big  
23 difference here.

24 But like the one that we had complaints about, well,  
25 this groomer could probably go through that trail system on a

1 daily basis, but it is such a high freight area that -- and  
2 due to the snow and the wind conditions or whatever, there's  
3 so many factors dealing with it that this particular trail  
4 could be done on a daily basis and still somebody could  
5 complaint about it because it's so heavily used.

6 MS. HARRIS: Right.

7 MS. ZELL: So I basically -- without any oversight in  
8 the field, I have to take them at their word unless I see  
9 something that's just way out of whack and then I call them  
10 and I ask them what are you doing here?

11 MS. HARRIS: Teri, this is Darcy. On those contracts, I  
12 know that I've looked at the applications and they might say  
13 we'll groom this trail from here to here three times per month  
14 and then they sign their name to their application. Do we  
15 have a mileage and/or frequency component of the contracts  
16 that they sign?

17 MS. ZELL: We have mileage and there should have been  
18 frequency and I was just explaining to Wayne. On your  
19 programmatic, sorry, changes on number seven, the last  
20 sentence, it says the contract agreements are insufficient and  
21 do not hold groomers accountable for the miles or frequency  
22 outlined in the application process.

23 MS. HARRIS: Uh-huh.

24 MS. ZELL: They are held accountable for the miles and I  
25 check those miles to make sure that.....

1 MS. HARRIS: Okay.

2 MS. ZELL: .....what they're doing.

3 MS. HARRIS: Okay, good catch.

4 MS. ZELL: The frequency outline, my bad. When I set  
5 these up this year, I did a cut and paste from the original  
6 that was sent out and the frequencies did not get on there.  
7 My fault. But I'm also watching for that to see how often  
8 they do it.

9 We have another contractor that is supposed to be doing  
10 from mile one to mile 150 and he's only sending in invoices  
11 for mile one through mile 75 and the other 75 aren't never  
12 getting billed for. So I call him up and find out well, he  
13 can't do it because the wind is so strong, there's no reason  
14 to be doing it because he can turn around and have to do it  
15 all over again the next day. It just is impossible to get to.

16 MS. HARRIS: Right. Yeah, that makes sense.

17 MS. ZELL: A lot of give and take with these things and  
18 it's all pretty much weather based.

19 MS. HARRIS: Thanks, Teri, yeah, that makes a lot of  
20 sense.

21 MR. LUTH: Yeah, I have to agree with Teri, being a  
22 groomer on the ground, I've had times where I'd love to go out  
23 and groom, but there's so much overflow you can't drag your  
24 groomer through it or the snow is so darn deep that you got to  
25 go out and pre pack it before you can take and go out and



1 groom it.

2 MS. HARRIS: Right.

3 MS. ZELL: And I'd also like to say one more thing that  
4 was mentioned earlier. I get a lot of these invoices coming  
5 through where the groomer has put down the trail that they've  
6 groomed, how many hours, how many machines they put on it and  
7 then in the far column, it says NC, no charge.

8 MR. LUTH: There's a lot of that.

9 MS. ZELL: They are doing a lot of that and so they're  
10 already putting in a lot of their time and especially towards  
11 the end of the season and people are running out of funds. I  
12 see that end fee a lot more. They're doing it because they  
13 know it needs to be done even though there's no money.

14 MS. HARRIS: Okay.

15 MR. LUTH: And with a broken shoulder.

16 MS. HARRIS: Right.

17 MR. NEEL: Is that Bill?

18 MS. HARRIS: Yes.

19 MR. ENOCHS: Steve Enochs in Fairbanks, I'd like to make  
20 a comment, please.

21 MR. NEEL: Okay.

22 MS. HARRIS: Go ahead, Steve.

23 MR. ENOCHS: My comment is I'm glad that I live in  
24 Fairbanks because we don't have all your grooming problems  
25 that you have down in south central, but I do welcome the

1 comments about benefitting what limited resource we have for  
2 all of Alaskans in all part of Alaska. I think that that's  
3 something that's really lacking as I listen to all this poor  
4 little groomers out there that just don't have enough money to  
5 do it. All the grooming that's done up here is primarily done  
6 voluntarily and they seem to do it just fine and I don't hear  
7 any whining about the lack of funds up here or oversight  
8 because we don't have that problem, so that's a good thing.

9 The other thing that I'd like to talk about is I also  
10 welcome the anticipation of a short fall of funds to the  
11 grooming or should I say the Snow TRAC funds because I think  
12 it's about time that the Snow TRAC board and everybody  
13 realize, go back to the origination of this program that was  
14 poorly put together, I think, when Governor Knowles took over  
15 and made this point of registration BS because this is what we  
16 got now and instead of doing what we should be doing and  
17 looking at ways -- I mean, personally, I'd like to see money  
18 go towards improving trails and not necessarily grooming them,  
19 but fixing them, repairing them and making them good so that  
20 when wintertime comes around, we can actually go over them.  
21 That would be a better use of funds in my opinion and marking  
22 is certainly a good thing.

23 All this grooming stuff needs to go away. I think it --  
24 I welcome the comments by Darcy on her letter, though I don't  
25 know if I agree with all the options. I think there's a

1 couple of other options that need to be discussed in some  
2 future, but really, this grooming stuff is nonsense. I mean,  
3 I understand without throwing names out there, when you're  
4 talking about the Denali Highway, I know that people try to do  
5 their best. I've gone on the Denali Highway and I've seen  
6 where it was groomed and it might have been groomed two hours  
7 ago, but it's tough to tell now because of weather.

8 MS. HARRIS: Right. The winds are high out there.

9 MR. ENOCHS: So we're just throwing away money for a  
10 limited few people on an occasional day and I don't know how  
11 it is in other areas. I just know the Denali Highway is very  
12 volatile weather wise. If trails are groomed in the Cantwell  
13 area or at Summit where I happen to go occasionally when I  
14 feel like going up in the mountains, which is rare, you know,  
15 groom that. Sure, I mean, it snows all the time and that  
16 would be a good waste of money.

17 People need to wake up. Let's go back to the original  
18 thing of this program and start using the money for what it  
19 was intended to do, grooming was not it as far as I know and  
20 if I'm wrong, I'm sure there'll be at least three or four  
21 people who will throw darts at me and say I was wrong, which  
22 is fine.

23 But I'd like to go forward and say look, we got a  
24 problem with the shortage of funds and lets look at the way  
25 this all -- and use the money appropriately instead of

1 throwing it away because I'd like to see some benefit north of  
2 Palmer or Petersville or wherever people snowmachine down in  
3 southcentral and see some of that money come up here and I  
4 don't like seeing it go to the -- no the Iditarod, but the  
5 Quest, I think that's foolish too. Let the dog mushers pay  
6 their way, we shouldn't be using money for Snow TRAC or  
7 snowmachiners to groom the Quest. I think that's silly.

8 I don't think we should be using money for the Iron Dog,  
9 let the Iron Doggers pay for it, they're the ones that get the  
10 money if they win, so why don't they use some of that money to  
11 groom? Why come after a state portion of it? I know they put  
12 out some safety programs and I was pretty adamant about making  
13 sure that they got it only because I want to see some  
14 equitable distribution of money instead of it all going to  
15 grooming. Enough said.

16 MS. HARRIS: Thank you, Steve. That was -- that helps  
17 at least to begin the discussion on some of the points that I  
18 brought up because I would really like to see some more equal  
19 distribution of funds to different kinds of projects because  
20 we just don't have very much money and if we can get various  
21 things going from different regions from the state. And these  
22 -- the things that I -- the percentages of breakdown that I  
23 threw out as options, these are not our only options. They  
24 were suggestions of ways that we could equitably break down  
25 the funding and it came from an idea of how the recreational

1 trails program is broken down into 30 percent diversified, 30  
2 percent -- excuse me, 30 percent motorized, 30 percent non-  
3 motorized and 40 percent diversified projects.

4 So it kind of spurred on an idea that, you know, you can  
5 ensure that certain projects, certain types of projects have a  
6 little money there to help them out, to get them started at  
7 least and so that was where that breaking it down came from  
8 and none of this is set in stone. It was an idea that I think  
9 could solve some of those problems and I really appreciate  
10 your input, Steve, thank you.

11 So that brings us to this idea of funding for grooming  
12 program and the idea that I threw out for a match program and  
13 the match program is just one idea. Obviously, somehow --  
14 obviously, people are putting in a lot of time and volunteer  
15 money that it's just not being -- they're already, I bet,  
16 putting in a lot of what this match idea and it's just not  
17 being captured as that because this match doesn't have to be  
18 dollars, it can be volunteers, donated equipment, any kind of  
19 that volunteer from the clubs, that can be counted as match,  
20 so I think it's already happening from what I'm hearing here  
21 and people just aren't counting it or calling it a match  
22 program. But because we obviously don't have a million-dollar  
23 budget just to put into the grooming pool.

24 People are soliciting from their clubs and their  
25 neighbors to get out and get the job done so everybody can

1 have great trails to ride on because that's the goal. So  
2 that's just one -- that's one thing that will help us to  
3 bolster the fact that we will be having reduced funds in the  
4 future. And that's something that our director felt pretty  
5 strongly about, that we could have a better program if people  
6 knew that there would need to be funds coming from the  
7 community. Yes, John.

8 MR. SCUDDER: Yes, this is John Scudder. You talk about  
9 match fundings. How about DOT start matching? A lot of the  
10 trails -- I want to change that, a lot of the trails that were  
11 recreational are not trails of commerce.

12 MS. HARRIS: Sure. The freights and stuff.

13 MR. SCUDDER: The Denali Highway, freighters are using  
14 them to get to these remote villages, remote lodges, they're  
15 not breaking no more eggs, they're getting their eggs in one  
16 piece. They're getting customers out to their lodge now with  
17 groomed trails. Why can't DOT now slide some money over  
18 because we are grooming Petersville Highway, Hatcher Pass  
19 Road, Denali Highway.

20 MS. HARRIS: Denali Highway, right.

21 MR. SCUDDER: That is a highway.

22 MS. HARRIS: Yeah.

23 MR. SCUDDER: DOT should be providing some funds for  
24 winter use of those roads and when I talked to the governor a  
25 couple years ago, we also have the right-of-ways.

1 MS. HARRIS: Uh-huh.

2 MR. SCUDDER: Signs that have to stop -- someone  
3 (indiscernible) across the highway, Snow TRAC is buying them,  
4 DOT can guy them.

5 MS. HARRIS: Uh-huh.

6 MR. SCUDDER: It's in their right-of-way. They should  
7 provide some funding, especially when you get on the west part  
8 of Alaska, DOT does fund some of that out there.

9 MS. HARRIS: Yeah.

10 MR. SCUDDER: Because that's their only roads they have  
11 in the wintertime.

12 MS. HARRIS: Uh-huh.

13 MR. SCUDDER: They should start looking at the central  
14 to north regions.

15 MS. HARRIS: So that would be outside of our  
16 jurisdiction and our office.

17 MS. LECLAIR: Well then -- no, that could be a  
18 discussion the DNR Commissioner could have with the DOT  
19 Commissioner.

20 MR. SCUDDER: Because even in Fairbanks, you know, they  
21 got remote villages that they're getting trails to.

22 MS. HARRIS: Uh-huh.

23 MR. SCUDDER: They got lodges.

24 MS. HARRIS: Sure.

25 MR. SCUDDER: It's not a recreational trail no more,

1 it's a commercial trail.

2 MS. LECLAIR: Right.

3 MS. HARRIS: That's a good point.

4 MS. LECLAIR: Yeah. Yeah, I didn't realize DOT  
5 maintains those ice roads in the villages, is that what you're  
6 saying?

7 MR. SCUDDER: Yeah, and any place. There could be just  
8 in urban areas. If it -- lodges on Skwentna River.

9 MS. HARRIS: Uh-huh.

10 MR. SCUDDER: Freighters are using that. They're  
11 complaining about the trails aren't being groomed, about ran  
12 out of money, but the DOT provides extra funds. They don't  
13 have to buy -- or provide a million dollars, but \$100,000,  
14 \$200,000, that'll help the program out, it'll help get these  
15 trails down so they can get their supplies out there without  
16 getting them all smashed up, beat up, broken, whatever the  
17 case may be. I think that's a lot of your complaints is from  
18 the freighters.

19 MS. HARRIS: Yeah.

20 MR. SCUDDER: And they're the ones beating up the trails  
21 too.

22 MS. HARRIS: Yeah, they've put a lot of miles on those  
23 trails.

24 MR. MORRISON: Darcy, it's Andy Morrison and I was just  
25 sort of going through your comments about trying to find other



1 aspects of the program and I feel that there is quite a bit  
2 that could be done on Ortab (ph). I know that they're mighty  
3 stressed over there as well, but when you're talking about  
4 some of the safety education programs and I'm not even sure  
5 what other things you're talking about is that, you know,  
6 those grants are out there to apply for Ortab (ph) funding.  
7 There's no reason that Ortab (ph) money can't be spent in the  
8 winter and (indiscernible) projects as well as summer.

9 MS. HARRIS: Right. No, that'd be great.

10 MR. MORRISON: (Indiscernible) projects and other  
11 projects as well.

12 MS. HARRIS: Good point, Andy, absolutely and I think  
13 we've encouraged that in the past.

14 MR. MORRISON: Well, that's one reason that I feel that  
15 the grant applications for both Ortab (ph) and Snow TRAC  
16 should be very close to each other so that someone doesn't  
17 have to go completely redo a grant to make it work for one  
18 program or the other. You could -- you know, there's quite a  
19 bit of stuff, safety and education included, that could go  
20 towards the Ortab (ph).

21 MS. HARRIS: I think that's what Samantha Carol  
22 originally had planned with that application being very close.  
23 I talked to her about that and it's just for that so people  
24 could switch back and forth and try to get money from  
25 somewhere as necessary.

1 MR. MORRISON: Well, a lot of the infrastructure,  
2 purchasing equipment, doing land surveys, all that stuff can  
3 be done on Ortab (ph) and especially if it's a multi-use trail  
4 (indiscernible) put it all in the snowmobile category, keep it  
5 out there in the general recreation category.

6 MS. HARRIS: Well, to kind of circle back on the idea of  
7 spreading these funds, you know, on the website, it talks  
8 about this program, snowmobile trails grant program as being  
9 -- it says primarily for trail development and maintenance and  
10 safety and education programs and I think that is what was  
11 originally planned with this project -- or this program and I  
12 just -- I think that we should diversify the funds so it's --  
13 so we get more benefit for the small amount of money and I'll  
14 reiterate, I think that we could have an excellent program if  
15 we scale it down and do a few projects really well versus  
16 trying to do too much with a limited budget and it's just  
17 unfortunate. Yes, Joe.

18 MR. GAUNA: This is Joe Gauna. Maybe we should suspend  
19 grooming it for one year.

20 MR. LUTH: That'll throw some stuff up in the wind.

21 MR. MAYFIELD: Oh, I don't think so.

22 MR. NEEL: If you're on the phone, can you please state  
23 your name?

24 MR. GAUNA: That was Bill and.....

25 MS. HARRIS: Dan Mayfield.

1 MR. NEEL: For recording. Yeah.

2 MR. GAUNA: .....Dan. Maybe we should suspend grooming  
3 for one season.

4 MR. MAYFIELD: This is Dan. You know, I just have a few  
5 comments I'd like to make. You know, I don't know much about  
6 the history of Snow TRAC, but I do this program evolved  
7 through the years and the evolution was really based on public  
8 need for well groomed trails. I mean, that was the need. You  
9 know, well groomed trails provided an elevated level of  
10 enjoyment and safety for the -- you know, for the vast  
11 majority of our users out there. And in my opinion, that was  
12 the correct evolutionary path of this program. The evolution  
13 -- this evolution has brought us even closer to a statewide  
14 trail system than we've ever been before and the changes in  
15 (indiscernible) in this proposal, with all due respect, I  
16 think it'll slap us back in the dark ages and make the dream  
17 of a statewide trail system impossible.

18 MR. GAUNA: Dan, this is Joe. I agree with you, but the  
19 only way we're going to find out is to either do it or not do  
20 it. Maybe we should suspend grooming for one season and let  
21 the public speak to the governor, the legislature and DNR and  
22 then figure it out and go from there.

23 MR. MAYFIELD: You know, I do believe that there would  
24 be a gigantic public outcry, but I -- you know, I don't know  
25 that we want to get that reactionary in that kind of move.

1           MR. GAUNA: I don't either, Dan, but so far the last 10  
2 years, not much has worked. I agree with you that the  
3 evolution to grooming came from the Snow TRAC board telling  
4 DNR what the public has said they wanted, I agree that it's  
5 evolved and that is what the public wants. They don't care  
6 that much about safety, they don't care that much about other  
7 stuff. They want groomed trails, but until DNR sees it from  
8 the public, we're going to continue going on, find -- spread  
9 less money over more things, so let's just cut out the  
10 grooming for a season and let them spend the money where they  
11 want to.

12           MR. ENOCHS: This is Steve again in Fairbanks. I happen  
13 to agree with most of what you said with the exception I do  
14 not agree that we should suspend any grooming even though I'm  
15 pretty much opposed to grooming. I also don't believe there  
16 will not be any gigantic or gigantic outcry except for those  
17 in a limited area, i.e. those that get the majority of the  
18 money for grooming. Everyone else will not cry because  
19 they've already been complaining that they don't see any  
20 benefit to it, so you know, so what?

21           However, when I talk to people around the  
22 Fairbanks/Delta area and they all basically give me the same  
23 smirk. Grooming? What they have said is when I've brought up  
24 the bullets from about three years ago when I first came on  
25 the board about the possibility of increasing the fees, but

1 one of the bullets to justify increasing the fees was the  
2 development of a statewide trail system. There was a lot of  
3 interest in that, so you know, I go back to what I said  
4 earlier and I'll stay with it. I don't really think that the  
5 grooming is really absolute answer, though I also agreed with  
6 you, a lot of people, they really don't care about safety,  
7 that's true, you know, boring, but that doesn't preclude the  
8 requirement to be responsible to stick education out there to  
9 try to prevent death and destruction because we know it  
10 happens. Certainly out in the villages, people drive across  
11 rivers and ground every year, there's plenty of them that go  
12 around, a little more education might prevent that.

13 We know that avalanches happen, we need to continue  
14 putting education for that. Yeah, people don't want to hear  
15 it, but they need it. I really think so anyway, so I still  
16 think that there's a reason to keep the program going, but  
17 there certainly has to be some kind of scaling back of money  
18 going to grooming because it's not the only thing that's out  
19 there that matters and the little area that we're talking in  
20 the state is not the entire state and we need to do a better  
21 distribution of money even though it's limited. Thank you.

22 MS. HARRIS: Thanks, Steve.

23 MS. ZELL: This is Teri.

24 MS. HARRIS: Teri Zell?

25 MS. ZELL: Yes.

1 MR. HARRIS: Yes.

2 MS. ZELL: I agree with all these comments that are  
3 going on. I've been with this grooming pool from the get go,  
4 from it's start and it has evolved quite a bit and I think the  
5 public has driven that process into a grooming program. Now I  
6 know that there's a huge need for safety and education and I  
7 have been a proponent and keep asking every year why don't we  
8 have a snowmachine safety program like we have a boating  
9 safety program, a full blown one that we go out into the  
10 schools and do all of this stuff.

11 But I also have to just agree a little bit about the  
12 spreading of the monies. I think that if you try to diversity  
13 this money too far, you're going to have little bits for lots  
14 of things and it should, in my opinion, it should all be set  
15 for whatever the public wants and like I said, the evolvement  
16 has been they want grooming. If people are not getting  
17 grooming funds in certain areas, it's because they're not  
18 applying for them.

19 MR. ENOCHS: I'm sorry, this is Steve again from  
20 Fairbanks. I hate that comment because.....

21 MS. ZELL: I'm sorry.

22 MR. ENOCHS: .....you're penalizing a population that if  
23 a snowmachine club doesn't ask for the funds, the population  
24 doesn't get any benefit so they pay into it, that's BS. I'm  
25 sorry, but you know, I get angry too. I wish the snowmachine

1 club up here in Fairbanks -- and I've heard this criticism for  
2 years now, but you know -- well, they ought to ask for the  
3 money. Well, you know what, it shouldn't be dependent upon a  
4 snowmachine club asking for money. Everybody pays into that,  
5 at least most people pay for it, they register the snowmachine  
6 and they ought to get the benefit from it. And it shouldn't  
7 be -- just be dependent upon a snowmachine club that makes it  
8 happen. There has to be a way to make it equitable for  
9 everybody that pays into it, at least somewhat.

10 I realize that there's going to be some give and take  
11 here, but it shouldn't -- to say that if we don't get  
12 (indiscernible) we don't ask for it, that's just malarkey.

13 MS. ZELL: But -- okay, I -- and I agree with that, but  
14 we can't just read your mind and say oh, they probably want  
15 some too and I -- and for me, I know that -- probably that  
16 statement is not well received and I'm sorry, but it should be  
17 up to that area, like Northern State Parks, to get out there  
18 and beat the bushes and say you guys -- we'll help you apply  
19 for this stuff, but.....

20 MR. ENOCHS: I agree with that, I definitely agree with  
21 you there, there's no doubt.

22 MS. ZELL: But there needs to be an application process  
23 and there's a lot of people onboard in certain areas that do  
24 it. A few years ago, we had nobody on the Kenai Peninsula and  
25 all of a sudden, they were saying well, what about us? Well,

1 apply for the money and they did and we started getting lots  
2 of applications from there. So I know it may not be a well  
3 received comment, but it's still very applicable.

4 MS. HARRIS: Thanks, Teri.

5 MR. ENOCHS: Again, Steve from Fairbanks. I still don't  
6 have to take exception to it because I do know that the -- at  
7 least from Fairbanks and I don't recall the gentleman's name  
8 that's from White Mountain that he shows up every year, but he  
9 and I both laugh every time this stuff just comes up because  
10 people in Nome area of White Mountain, if you will, they could  
11 care less about grooming trails. And the same thing -- most  
12 people here in Fairbanks, at least in this particular area  
13 that I know of, most people don't care about groomed trails.

14 They break a trail, it's good and then you have a few  
15 volunteers, so the whole subject is like they don't care about  
16 that. But I do think that there's still a need to look at  
17 education and safety, and yeah, you're not going to -- I want  
18 to get some money so I can go teach those people up in Hugla  
19 (ph) not to cross the river until it's safe. That isn't going  
20 to happen.

21 MS. HITE: This is Cindy Hite. (Indiscernible) we go to  
22 two meetings a year, we have the same discussions at every  
23 meeting. We did put some bullets together a few years ago,  
24 Steve's right, were never addressed. They actually addressed  
25 the program, think it's a great program, but we keep going



1 around in circles every year and I actually started to believe  
2 this was on purpose. I work full-time and I don't want to sit  
3 here for two more hours doing this.

4 You say they're dropping applications. Application  
5 process is a monster, so no one's been dropping applications,  
6 that's because it's all going to grooming now. And Steve, I'm  
7 trying to understand, anybody can -- this is a free will,  
8 anybody can apply for this money, I don't -- they can apply  
9 for it up north or anything they want, I (indiscernible) make  
10 any cuts or, you know, get signs, so I'm not understanding we  
11 as a Snow TRAC board, are arguing amongst ourselves.

12 We know how this program works and we can make it work,  
13 but we're not full-time employees for DNR. Every year we get  
14 together and it seems like we're supposed to advise them. We  
15 advise them and they go on and they do exactly what they're  
16 going to do and we come back the next year and we do it again.  
17 I am sick of doing this. You know, Teri's right, we talked  
18 about a safety program, part of our bullets. Statewide trail  
19 system, marking and safety. There. We don't need  
20 distribution amounts, we need common sense and we need to get  
21 working on this, not have these (indiscernible) meetings every  
22 year. So there, there's my advisement. Let's get working and  
23 stop talking.

24 MR. MAYFIELD: And I'd like to chime in on this.

25 MS. HARRIS: Dan Mayfield.

1 MR. MAYFIELD: In a greater amount of safety and  
2 education that's providing through grooming and our local  
3 grooming organizations and ever to be achieved by funding  
4 workshops or, you know, with limited audiences. That's just a  
5 fact. You know, we get more bangs than the buck by grooming  
6 trails and keeping them safe for the public than we do through  
7 funding some workshop with a limited audience.

8 There's trials and tribulations of the grant process and  
9 the compliance fees and a limited amount of funds that are  
10 available, just take an extremely (indiscernible) for  
11 volunteer organizations just to begin with. You know, those  
12 same barriers make it difficult to attract organizations to  
13 want to contribute, you know, to a better rider experience.  
14 You know, I really believe that it's only through the strength  
15 of character and an overriding desire by, you know, a lot of  
16 the folks that are out there that, you know, the groomers that  
17 are out there that keep their wanting to put up with the  
18 barriers in this program as today.

19 You know, if you want more grant money to be spread out  
20 in a more diverse manner, the answer is to attract more money,  
21 you know, to a fund and make it where it needs to be  
22 attainable rather than restricted to divide the funds, and you  
23 know, like the proposal we have in front of us, so that's my  
24 two cents.

25 MS. HARRIS: Steve Neel?

1 MR. CROSBY: This is Randy up in Trapper Creek.

2 MS. HARRIS: Oh, you got it.

3 MR. CROSBY: You know, Steve, up there in Fairbanks, I  
4 mean, I agree with the basis of what you're saying but the  
5 program already provides those opportunities for the money to  
6 go into other areas and it always has. I sat on the Snow TRAC  
7 board in the very beginning, helped kind of come up with the  
8 idea of how this thing would all work and grooming was not a  
9 component in the beginning and it was divided into safety and  
10 education 20 percent, 30 percent for administration and then  
11 the rest went into trail development, trail this, trail that,  
12 whatever you wanted to do, there's been cabins funded, all  
13 sorts of projects funded.

14 That process is still in place and the way I understand  
15 it, although it gets more confusing every year, is that  
16 grooming is the last thing to get funded. The applications  
17 are requested for your normal grant process and those come in  
18 for safety education, for any other ideas trail related,  
19 building, whatever. Once that process has been figured out,  
20 then the money that's left over goes towards grooming and  
21 there certainly has been efforts to make as much money  
22 available for grooming as possible in the past few years.

23 But see, the process of getting money into other areas  
24 of the state for other things has always existed. Here in my  
25 community, Trapper Creek and Petersville, we're a rural

1 community and we've been overrun by snowmachiners for the 30,  
2 40 years that snowmobiles have been around in the area. And  
3 this grooming process is something that our club and myself  
4 and our community have struggled with and we developed a  
5 system that would be able to apply for money to go out there  
6 and groom because our community sees grooming as the number  
7 one benefit in our situation.

8 I would never say that that's the best benefit for you  
9 or people out in Nome and I've never implied anything like  
10 that and I don't think anybody has. But in our area, without  
11 the grooming, it's chaos. We are overrun by thousands of  
12 snowmobilers every winter on every weekend coming down from  
13 Fairbanks, coming up from the Kenai, coming wherever because  
14 we always have the snow and it's good terrain. And now we  
15 have great trail system that gets people around safely into  
16 the areas. Some people come to ride just because they are  
17 groomed, but people come up here and ride this trail system  
18 because they provide the safe, fast, easy way for them to get  
19 into the back country and enjoy things.

20 I think one of the biggest problems here is that we're  
21 trying to combine too many things into one pool of money and I  
22 would love to see the grooming separate completely out and  
23 funded just like roads are funded to be plowed, to be graded,  
24 to have the ruts graded out, how the highways out here is  
25 funded to be plowed instead of trying to combine everything

1 into a bunch of other projects and then we always end up, you  
2 know, competing and fighting and dividing and accomplishing  
3 nothing.

4 So you know, I just want to stress that I agree,  
5 grooming may not be the thing for your area, but it is the  
6 number one thing for our area, and without it, you know, we're  
7 going to have a lot of problems up here.

8 MS. HARRIS: Thanks, Randy.

9 MR. ENOCHS: I don't disagree with you and I welcome --  
10 this is Steve from Fairbanks and I think what you just said is  
11 very, very, very true. And I can't disagree with what you  
12 say, but it isn't important up here. I mean, dog mushing is  
13 the number one sport or snowmachines, pick one. Those are the  
14 number one sports, but across the board, I would -- I  
15 personally would love to see grooming as a separate item. The  
16 problem is, is we have more grooming money requested than  
17 we've money available, so what do you do when you have all  
18 those things. I really think that you can't support  
19 everybody.

20 I mean, I look at last year or the last two years what  
21 Big Lake wanted and what they got. I mean, good grief, they  
22 got good people, they know how to write the request and they  
23 do a good job, and you know, what can I say? I mean, hey, if  
24 you don't know how to do it, you ought to go to Big Lake and  
25 figure out -- and watch them because they know how to get

1 money and we're -- you know, the Snow TRAC board or funds  
2 weren't the only place that they got money to do their  
3 grooming, so that's a good thing.

4 But we do have to look at the fact that you have limited  
5 resource, so a decision has to be made how do you use that  
6 limited resource. It can't all go to Petersville, it can't  
7 all go to Big Lake, it can't all go to Hatcher Pass. I mean,  
8 that's just a limited -- too limited an area of the state for  
9 that limited amount of money. I mean, between those three  
10 areas and maybe the Kenai, you've just gobbled up almost all  
11 the money.

12 MS. HARRIS: Thanks, Steve, we have.....

13 MR. MAYFIELD: This is Dan again. Steve.....

14 MS. HARRIS: Dan.....

15 MR. NEEL: No, that's fine.

16 MR. MAYFIELD: .....the thing about what you said there,  
17 you know, Snow TRAC ought to be funded 59 percent of our  
18 effort this year. You know, we're very, very grateful for  
19 that, but you know, it didn't fund our complete effort and I'm  
20 not saying that they necessarily should, but I do believe that  
21 they should be the primary funder of the grooming efforts. I  
22 mean, we live in Alaska, snowmachines, the users and the trail  
23 systems, they're just critical to our social and our economic  
24 welfare in this state.

25 And you know, I truly think that there will be a huge

1 outcry from users if these proposals are accepted and -- or  
2 if, you know, some critical cutbacks are made on the grooming  
3 effort. I just truly believe that and.....

4 MR. ENOCHS: I agree with you. Again, this is Steve  
5 from Fairbanks, I don't disagree with you. (Indiscernible -  
6 simultaneous speech).....

7 MR. MAYFIELD: (Indiscernible - simultaneous speech).

8 MR. ENOCHS: .....or what I'm suggesting is, is that the  
9 people are going to be crying the loudest is those people in  
10 the limited areas that all receive the funds. The people in  
11 Fairbanks or in this area could care less about it, but we're  
12 paying for your groomed trails and that's the issue that I've  
13 got. There has to be more representation of the money that's  
14 gotten.

15 It's like the two or three years ago when there was an  
16 effort to try to increase the registration fees, there was a  
17 huge outcry up here, totally against it and I think that  
18 you'll see the same thing happen and there'll be a whole bunch  
19 of people lining up with their legislators and standing  
20 outside ready to put both feet on somebody's desk if there's  
21 an effort to put all the money in one little area.

22 MS. HARRIS: Okay, I think -- this is Darcy and I  
23 definitely -- I really appreciate the discussion, this is  
24 really good. We have very clear ideas, I think, about what --  
25 how we feel about the registration fees in various regions. I

1 want to give a couple people in the room a chance to talk. I  
2 know Steve Neel and also Joe Gauna have a couple things they'd  
3 like to say. Steve?

4 MR. NEEL: This is just from historical perspective  
5 after having worked on the program for a couple years. I  
6 notice that when I talked to several grantees from the rec  
7 trails program out in the western part of the state and also  
8 in the northern part and I've asked them why they don't apply  
9 for snowmobile trail assessment or equipment or shelter cabins  
10 or safety. They've indicated that they know it's there, but  
11 they don't use it because they assume that all of it's going  
12 to go to grooming and I'm not saying that's necessarily an  
13 accurate statement, but I picked it up from more than one area  
14 and more than one town.

15 So while, in essence, it's true, that funding is out  
16 there and available for everybody to apply for. I think since  
17 the grooming pool has grown exponentially with the addition of  
18 RTP funds, the attitude out there has been less -- that they  
19 will be successful in applying because there's more money  
20 going into grooming, and again, I'm not stressing that I --  
21 that that's totally accurate, but I think the perception is  
22 that there's -- they shouldn't -- they don't need to apply  
23 because they don't have a chance to fight against the grooming  
24 pool.

25 So I think there's a difference between yes, they have



1 the access, yes they have the ability to apply just like  
2 everybody else does, but at the same time, the perception in  
3 some of those areas is that because grooming has become so  
4 large, it will -- we will not fund the smaller safety and  
5 education projects.

6 And you know, it's -- basically it's down to one or two  
7 groups that continually now applies for safety and ed, Iron  
8 Dog, sometimes Mat-Su Borough and of course, NAOI applies, but  
9 after -- you know, other than that, not a whole lot of people  
10 are applying for safety and ed, and you know, I've run into  
11 just that current of well, we know it's going to go to  
12 grooming and breaking that perception I think is going to be  
13 hard enough.

14 So I just wanted to throw that out there that after, you  
15 know, being in and around it for a couple years with the  
16 programs, I start to see where people are just, you know,  
17 they're backing off applying because of the assumption that  
18 grooming will get, you know, the massive amount of dollars.  
19 So I just put that out there as my observation.

20 MS. HARRIS: And Joe?

21 MR. GAUNA: Well, that kind of falls in with what I was  
22 thinking here. What Steve is saying is, okay, the perception  
23 of course is reality to whoever is perceiving it, so maybe we  
24 should suspend grooming for a year and put all the money into  
25 something else and notwithstanding what Dan and Steve are

1 saying, let's see what the public says and find out what's  
2 really important to them. This is one way to do, it's drastic  
3 and it's reactionary, but I'm with Cindy, I'm really tired of  
4 doing this thing every year, the same thing.

5 You know, one of the other things that needs to be done  
6 is, I believe, is separating the DMV registration fees from  
7 this Snow Trac.

8 MS. ZELL: Yes.

9 MR. GAUNA: This was a temporary thing 10, 12, 13 years  
10 ago that -- hell, longer than that. The DMV funds were a  
11 (indiscernible) agreement with the legislature to get around,  
12 we can't have dedicated funds and at the time, the state parks  
13 leadership promised oh yeah, and after this thing gets going  
14 for a couple of years and it's accepted and all that, then  
15 we'll go ahead and start increasing the line item that goes in  
16 the budget every year and separate away from DMV.

17 We have been tied to the DMV for way too long. That  
18 money comes out of the general fund, it doesn't come from DMV,  
19 it comes out of the general fund and there's no reason that  
20 that can't be increased. Unfortunately, state parks, DNR has  
21 never done that. Strato (ph) didn't do it, James King didn't  
22 do it and now Ben has said he's not going to do it last summer  
23 -- or last winter.

24 But that's what needs to be done. Look, if we don't  
25 have enough money to do all the grooming that we want to do

1 this year, then DNR needs to figure out how much money you  
2 want to spend on grooming and you guys designate which trails  
3 are going to get groomed. This is nothing new, I've said this  
4 before. You guys designate which trails you want groomed and  
5 issue the contracts. That's the way to take care of the  
6 shortfall this year. If it's one trail for 50 miles, you  
7 announce it and say here it is instead of going through all  
8 this garbage of us sitting here and scoring applications and  
9 deciding where the funding line is and all that. Go ahead,  
10 you decide the funding line, you decide which trails are going  
11 to get done and what part of the state or none and let's keep  
12 moving on.

13 But we've got to get away from this artificial and  
14 inappropriate connection with the DMV registration funds. You  
15 guys don't look -- when you go for a line item budget for  
16 summer trails, you don't say well, let's see, so many people  
17 bought shoes and so many people registered their cars or their  
18 bicycles. You go, this is what we need to do summer trails  
19 for tourists and for our local citizens and here's how much we  
20 need. And the legislature says go, here you go. Do the same  
21 with snowmobiles, do the same with snowmobile trails.

22 MS. HARRIS: Okay.

23 MR. GAUNA: There shouldn't be a connection.

24 MS. HARRIS: Can Claire.....

25 MS. HERRERA: I'm sorry to talk over you, but I would

1 like to -- I'm sorry. I'm the administrative officer for the  
2 division and a lot of the things that you're saying are  
3 awesome. They were (indiscernible) what I was thinking. We,  
4 as a division of parks, would request a capital project for  
5 (indiscernible) specifically. Then the other funds in the  
6 Snow TRAC could be used elsewhere. We would have to ask the  
7 state for general fund dollars. Here's where the problem  
8 comes in.

9 We as a division can speak about this forever until your  
10 tongues fall off unless the public, you, this board and  
11 snowmachine riders get in there and say we want this to  
12 happen, it won't happen. They only see us as you guys just  
13 want more money, you guys just want more money no matter how  
14 much talking we do, we cannot get the (indiscernible) costs by  
15 ourselves. So your idea is wonderful.

16 MS. LECLAIR: Could I -- yeah.

17 MS. HERRERA: It's our division -- sorry, go ahead.

18 MS. LECLAIR: Yeah, Karlyn, it's Claire. Joe's looking  
19 really quizzical.....

20 MS. HERRERA: Okay.

21 MS. LECLAIR: .....and I think -- and maybe you can help  
22 straighten out. The receipts that come from DMV are indeed  
23 program receipts, is that correct?

24 MS. HERRERA: They are, yes.

25 MR. GAUNA: No. No.

1 MS. LECLAIR: Yeah, Joe is.....

2 MS. HERRERA: They're not to us.

3 MS. LECLAIR: Yeah, Joe's shaking his head.

4 MS. HERRERA: Okay Joe, what they are, they're actually  
5 called registration fees in our capital request for snowmobile  
6 money, we put in there as not general fund dollars, it is  
7 requested as registration fees.

8 MR. GAUNA: And we've been told for years.....

9 MS. HERRERA: That's why they give it to us.

10 MS. LECLAIR: Okay.

11 MR. GAUNA: We've been told for years you can't do that  
12 because the constitution doesn't allow dedicated funding.

13 MS. LECLAIR: It doesn't and this is the way around it.  
14 I'm sorry, this is Claire LeClair.

15 MS. HERRERA: There's no way around it, exactly.

16 MS. LECLAIR: Yeah, and I shouldn't call it the way  
17 around it, but.....

18 MR. GAUNA: Okay, well.....

19 MS. LECLAIR: .....we did something similar, the charge  
20 -- we charge fees for overnight camping, right? When the fee  
21 legislation was passed in 1987, the legislature well, we can't  
22 just roll that money right into parks budget because.....

23 MR. GAUNA: Yeah.

24 MS. LECLAIR: .....you can't have dedicated funding,  
25 but.....

1 MR. GAUNA: I remember.

2 MS. LECLAIR: .....we'll make the commitment to do our  
3 bets to allocate the money that you receive back to your  
4 agency in order to fulfill your mission and that's exactly --  
5 it's the same thing.....

6 MS. HARRIS: You're right, Joe.

7 MS. LECLAIR: .....that's happening here, so it's not  
8 dedicated, but it is not general fund dollars, that -- the  
9 funds that come in for Snow TRAC are not general fund dollars.  
10 Karlyn, sorry.

11 MS. HERRERA: Correct.

12 MR. GAUNA: Well, that's.....

13 MS. HERRERA: No, that's fine. (Indiscernible).

14 MR. GAUNA: Well, that's a complete surprise to me  
15 because that's what we've been told for years and years and  
16 years that there was a tacit agreement between the legislature  
17 and DNR and the gov that when he signed off on the  
18 legislation, that they promised that they would allocate from  
19 general funds the same amount as DMV collected if DNR would  
20 ask for it. That's how it was explained to us by Strato (ph)  
21 and a number of others. Regardless.....

22 MS. HERRERA: Well, so this -- to go deeply -- this is  
23 Karlyn again, to go deeply into the budget, there are lots of  
24 different fund titles that are classified as general fund  
25 under the state.

1 MR. GAUNA: Okay. So.....

2 MS. HERRERA: Okay? So basically, what they're saying  
3 is the government is not funding us any of this money, no  
4 outside company is giving us any money. It's either general  
5 fund or its other money, so in essence, these revenues created  
6 from the registration fees would go into the state's general  
7 fund if we didn't use it. So basically, they're saying you're  
8 not going to count it as revenue to the state, you're going to  
9 use it to support the snowmobile program. It's kind of a  
10 wash.

11 MR. GAUNA: Then change it. Change it. Get Ben down  
12 there or whoever does the budget.....

13 MS. HERRERA: Well, that's my point.

14 MR. GAUNA: .....and change it.

15 MS. HERRERA: It was my point, yes.

16 MR. GAUNA: So.....

17 MS. HERRERA: To try to get different type of funding, I  
18 understand completely. The best thing that we can do at this  
19 point to get any additional money is to have the public, as  
20 you say, have an outcry.

21 MR. GAUNA: Okay. Then.....

22 MS. HERRERA: We need money for this.

23 MR. GAUNA: Okay, then let's suspend grooming for one  
24 season, that's all it's going to take.

25 MS. HERRERA: I think that's kind of drastic.

1 MR. GAUNA: I -- so do I.

2 MS. HERRERA: I'm sorry, I understand your point.

3 Excuse me?

4 MR. GAUNA: I do too. I think it's very drastic and I  
5 really don't want to see it happen, but I got to tell you, if  
6 we don't have enough money to groom, then let's suspend it  
7 because putting a few bucks out on a couple of trails is just  
8 not going to be adequate because the public is used to what  
9 they've been getting the last five, six years. Let -- suspend  
10 grooming for one season. I'm finished for now.

11 MR. WILKE: Joe, this is Mark. Well, what happens when  
12 season number two comes around and we still don't have enough  
13 money?

14 MR. GAUNA: We suspend grooming. I mean, that's the  
15 answer. That's the answer I have, suspend grooming until DNR  
16 gets the budget money that we need, go ahead and shut down  
17 Snow TRAC. We don't need Snow TRAC, DNR knows what to do and  
18 that's the money that 12 percent we'll get back and get away  
19 from the Snow TRAC DMV connection and let's get to a point  
20 where DNR goes to the legislature and says this is money we  
21 need for our citizens to service our citizens in the  
22 wintertime. And the public, the citizens will let the  
23 legislators know that you got to do this. I mean, it sounds  
24 real simple, doesn't it?

25 MS. HARRIS: Joe, what would your suggest -- this is



1 Darcy again. Joe, what would your suggestion be for then to  
2 do with that money, the registration money as it is -- comes  
3 through the legislator? Would -- if we do suspend, if you  
4 wanted to suspend grooming hypothetically, we could -- what  
5 would you see as your vision to do with that money instead?

6 MR. GAUNA: As Steve says, let everybody in the state  
7 know it's all available for safety and education grants.

8 MS. HARRIS: But also for trail development and trail --  
9 other trail.....

10 MR. GAUNA: Trail development.....

11 MS. HARRIS: .....maintenance, widening.....

12 MR. GAUNA: Trail -- yep, you bet. Surveying.

13 MS. HARRIS: .....straightening, flattening, whatever we  
14 need to do.

15 MR. GAUNA: Yeah, yeah. But no grooming and let the  
16 grooming -- or let the grant requests come flying in. What  
17 the snowstorm of grant requests that comes flying in here and  
18 then we'll score them and the good ones we'll pay for and the  
19 bad ones we won't pay, just like we've done before. Just  
20 completely remove the grooming component for one season.

21 MS. HARRIS: Well, that is certainly.....

22 MR. GAUNA: I know, everybody's sitting there going.....

23 MS. HARRIS: .....an option.

24 MR. GAUNA: .....this guy is nuts, this guy is nuts. I  
25 am tired of doing what Cindy described.

1 MS. HARRIS: You have some very good points and I think  
2 that that is certainly an option we have. You know, these are  
3 all things that are good suggestions. We have to start from  
4 somewhere discussing how to solve these problems, so I really  
5 appreciate the discussion here definitely.

6 MR. ANDERSON: Hey Joe?

7 MR. GAUNA: Yeah.

8 MS. HARRIS: Who's this?

9 MR. ANDERSON: This is Tinker again.

10 MS. HARRIS: Tinker.

11 MR. ANDERSON: You know, I agree with you -- I mean,  
12 sort of, but anyway, just suspend the grooming, put the park's  
13 phone number on every tree or post or whatever and that way,  
14 they can call in and complain, do whatever. But also in that  
15 same tone -- I've been on the board for two years now and I  
16 have set there in the meetings and listened to the Snow TRAC  
17 advisory board to come up with suggestions and take them to  
18 the state, give them to the state and they went in one ear and  
19 right on somebody's desk like grooming standards and other  
20 things.

21 I mean, if we're going to advise and stuff, it needs to  
22 go further than that. I think that might help a lot, you  
23 know, if it just doesn't dead-end someplace real quick and  
24 that's what I've seen happen and seen it happen it more than  
25 once and that's where it's been going, you know?

1 MS. HARRIS: I -- this.....

2 MR. ANDERSON: That's all I got to say.

3 MS. HARRIS: Tinker, this is Darcy and I do think those  
4 -- and I can't speak for anything that happened before I  
5 started last August, but I think these are really complex  
6 situations and questions and I think sometimes those  
7 questions, we -- personally, I can speak to that I -- working  
8 through these solutions and trying to provide some kind of  
9 equitable ends to these concerns, I come on walls that I don't  
10 know how to pass through, I come on questions I don't know how  
11 to answer and I can put questions out to the board, but these  
12 are really complex. They affect a large number of people and  
13 people have varying concerns and interests. There's a lot of  
14 stakeholders in these projects here and I really think it's  
15 important to consider all of the stakeholders.

16 So it's pretty complex and I'm sorry if you feel like  
17 things have dead-ended on people's desk. I would imagine if  
18 questions have not been addressed, it is has been because  
19 someone just didn't know how to proceed. I can see that  
20 happening certainly.

21 When -- so that brings me to the fact that it's 12:30,  
22 we need to wrap this up around 1:00 if we can have I'm  
23 thinking maybe we could have some -- a summary and also maybe  
24 some action items, where we should go from here, how we should  
25 we proceed with out next stage of discussion or what would

1 people like to see. What would people like to see from this  
2 meeting today? Do we -- I don't think any decisions need to  
3 be made today, but this has gotten the discussion going,  
4 people have started to have a dialogue from the different  
5 areas of the state and different interests, the groomers and  
6 other folks. What should -- where should we go from here?

7 MS. HITE: This is Cindy Hite, I'll tell you what I'd  
8 like to see.

9 MS. HARRIS: Cindy, you're good at this.

10 MS. HITE: I would like to see that no more money goes  
11 to state parks as far as any kind of grant requests because  
12 that's the only applications we've been getting lately is  
13 state parks because I know how to write them and they're  
14 inside, so I don't think any money should go to state parks  
15 because state parks is running the program.

16 Number two, I think that you need to make that  
17 application process easier so that people actually will apply.  
18 And number three, I went through the same (indiscernible)  
19 safety grants are run as you're looking at the groomers  
20 because I've never seen any reports come back, I've never seen  
21 a website up for a person that's been asking for \$25,000 the  
22 last five years for a website. I don't give any  
23 accountability for those people.

24 So if you're going to ask for accountability, ask for it  
25 from everything, not just one.

1 MS. HARRIS: Absolutely.

2 MS. HITE: So that's my advisement.

3 MS. JONES: Darcy, this is Kit Jones. I just wanted to  
4 mention, I think we need to be careful from divorcing the  
5 issue of safety away from the assigned and groomed trails  
6 because I think, as Randy mentioned, it certainly provides a  
7 safe riding area.....

8 MS. HARRIS: I agree.

9 MS. JONES: .....and I know for more inexperienced  
10 people like me, they are very important.

11 MS. HARRIS: I agree with you, Kit. I think that the  
12 trail marking is a huge safety issue as well as even in  
13 various places where shelter cabins have been built. That is  
14 certainly a safety issue as well and trail marking and  
15 grooming. Good grooming helps people have a safer ride,  
16 so.....

17 MR. LUTH: This is Bill Luth, I'd like to interject one  
18 other thing.

19 MS. HITE: I want to make a remark to that because  
20 that's actually where we were going two years ago with our  
21 bullets was to actually look at the Snow TRAC program as we're  
22 on a statewide trail system, which is a safety issue and  
23 having marking, which is a safety issue. And in letting  
24 somebody else apply (indiscernible) safety education program  
25 because it's obvious we do not have enough money for \$150,000

1 safety education system and a trail system, so we decided that  
2 the Snow TRAC -- that was going to be Snow TRAC's goal was to  
3 go for the statewide trail system, which is a safety issue  
4 along with markings for this state, that's a safety issue.  
5 But no, now we're wrapped up in this again.

6 MR. ANDERSON: Hey Darcy, Tinker again.

7 MS. HARRIS: Hi, Tinker.

8 MR. ANDERSON: Last year, the safety request got full  
9 funding in the grooming pool, which was the last of the line,  
10 took a hard hit.

11 MS. HARRIS: How many safety requests were there last  
12 year, do you remember?

13 MR. ANDERSON: No, I don't, not offhand.

14 MR. GAUNA: Three I think it was.

15 MS. HARRIS: Three?

16 MR. NEEL: Four.

17 MR. ENOCH: There was (indiscernible) NAOI.

18 MR. NEEL: NAOI, Iron Dog.

19 (multiple speech)

20 MR. NEEL: Mat-Su Borough had one.

21 MS. HARRIS: Three or four? Okay.

22 MR. GAUNA: Oh yeah, that's right, four. There was the  
23 Quest, the Mat-Su signage.....

24 MS. HARRIS: Okay.

25 MR. GAUNA: .....the dog and.....

1 MS. HARRIS: And these are folks that apply on a regular  
2 basis, is that correct?

3 MR. GAUNA: Yep.

4 MR. NEEL: A couple of them.

5 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Every year.

6 MS. HARRIS: Okay.

7 MR. LUTH: Well, that's not true because Mat-Su actually  
8 didn't apply last year, it was the year before.

9 MS. HARRIS: Okay.

10 (multiple speech)

11 MR. ENOCH: Well, Big Lake last year, due to the thing  
12 that was going on with them and theirs is put off to the side,  
13 I think they got the whole funding also.

14 MS. HARRIS: Who's this?

15 (multiple speech)

16 MR. MORRISON: I'm sorry, this is Andy, I accidentally  
17 disconnected and reconnected.

18 MS. HARRIS: Okay, thanks, Andy. Joe.

19 MR. GAUNA: It doesn't really matter -- this is Joe. It  
20 doesn't really matter that much how many safety grants there  
21 were last year. The fact is, the ones that came in were fully  
22 funded and then the grooming pool took a hit, that's Tinker's  
23 point, isn't that right, Tinker?

24 MR. ANDERSON: Correct, sir.

25 MR. WILKE: This is Mark. Darcy, I think what you're

1 trying to ask is, you know, if this is the road we're going  
2 down, if we're going to, you know, not do the grooming pool  
3 for a year, how -- what do we need to do to get to that point,  
4 what are our next steps to make that happen. I think key to  
5 that is making sure that we get that diversity around the  
6 state, that the groups and organizations that should be  
7 applying for these grants are actually applying for them and  
8 I'll second Cindy's comment about the grant process. I  
9 believe our old grant paperwork used to be four pages. What  
10 it is now is just way too mind boggling for the small  
11 organization or the small group trying to fill out that  
12 paperwork.

13 We've got to get an easier application process and we've  
14 got to get the word out to all the groups around the state,  
15 all the cities and boroughs and all of the native  
16 corporations, they need to know that this money's available.

17 MS. HARRIS: We need to do some marketing then, huh?

18 MR. WILKE: Some marketing, that's exactly right because  
19 what -- if we're not careful, we're going to cancel the  
20 grooming program and not get enough grants to spend all of our  
21 money.

22 MS. HARRIS: Right. Well, I.....

23 MR. LUTH: Hey, this is Bill Luth.....

24 MS. HARRIS: Yes.

25 MR. LUTH: .....I'd like to interject one thing here



1 too. One of our biggest problems, if you take a look at it  
2 and really look at how many machines out there are actually  
3 currently registered that are out and active on the trail,  
4 I've been watching very carefully the last two years and out  
5 in both Big Lake, Willow, Petersville, on average, I'm seeing  
6 no more than three out of 10 with current tags on them. We  
7 have no enforcement, no pressure for these people to pay it,  
8 so if for some reason we could get 80 percent of the machines  
9 registered currently, you would have twice the money you have  
10 now.

11 MS. HARRIS: Right. So.....

12 MR. ANDERSON: And if they are fined there, Bill -- this  
13 is Tinker. If they were fined, that money goes to a different  
14 pot, it doesn't go back into anything like for grooming or  
15 anything like that.

16 MR. LUTH: Right. Well, fix it ticket's the way to go.

17 MR. ENOCHS: This is Steve in Fairbanks. I'd have to  
18 say that this year was probably the most snowmachines that  
19 I've seen not registered on the local trails and it was  
20 interesting we brought the State Troopers in a local club  
21 meeting and they talked about, you know, ticketing  
22 snowmachiners without proper registration. It's probably one  
23 of the last things that's on their mind because they're  
24 usually busy doing other things. I mean, if they're -- it's  
25 just not a priority according to at least the two troops that

1 came to our meeting. They just said look, if we got time and  
2 the situation's right, yeah, maybe we'll ticket, but normally,  
3 they just look the other way, they don't have time. That's  
4 basically what they're saying, but I do agree that this year,  
5 the most snowmachines that I've seen that were not reg -- and  
6 I'd say the number was a lot higher than what I just heard.

7 But I'd also like to comment a couple things, is that  
8 time is limited, I know that we'll have our annual meeting in  
9 August and I don't know if I've gotten a feel that we have  
10 anything resolved or looking towards as a solution, but I do  
11 think that, as a Snow TRAC board member, my obligation is  
12 going to be -- or at least my commitment is going to be to try  
13 to put out the information that I've heard as generically as  
14 possible and see what the comments are and just say hey, look,  
15 there's going to be a shortage, we're going to see less money  
16 in the grooming pool even though the grooming isn't popular up  
17 here or necessarily done and just see what the comments are.

18 I think that a Snow TRAC board member, the one thing  
19 that we should do is go back to the areas that we represent  
20 and say what is your feelings and start getting some comments,  
21 some solicitations as to what they would like to see. I don't  
22 want to see anything suspended because I think that that's the  
23 wrong signal. Granted, we're going to have a shortfall of  
24 money, at least that's the way it looks, but I don't think  
25 that suspending anything is the right answer at this point. I

1 think that we still need to continue using what limited  
2 resource we have and let the rocks fall wherever at least at  
3 this point.

4 We only have a few months to go, I mean, we're already  
5 dealing with next year's limited money and we got to come to  
6 some conclusion.

7 MS. HARRIS: Thanks, Steve. I think Joe has a comment  
8 to that.

9 MR. GAUNA: Yeah, I agree with what Steve as far as  
10 going back to his constituents, that's our job and I know I  
11 certainly do. Every time there's a meeting or a  
12 teleconference or a bulletin, I go to the clubs and I go to my  
13 contacts, so yeah, that's our job.

14 The other thing is the limited amount of money that's  
15 going to be available for grooming, however you guys figure it  
16 out, if you want to have a grooming component, it's going to  
17 be so limited that DNR is going to have to make the choice  
18 about what trails to groom. I don't think it would be a good  
19 idea to come to the Snow TRAC and say here are 27 trails, you  
20 guys tell us.

21 MS. HARRIS: Right.

22 MR. GAUNA: You guys are going to finally have to start  
23 making the decision about what you want groomed for the state  
24 and Bill, you mentioned enforcement will bump up  
25 registrations. I think we better -- we've better off if we

1 got the folks at DNR to put an effort into breaking away from  
2 the DMV, the artificial DMV connection. Let's get away from  
3 that and go to the general fund and say this is what we need  
4 to have a decent program.

5 A statewide trail system that's ungroomed, I don't think  
6 so. People are not going to want that, but hey, we should  
7 work on that as well, so there are some things that obviously  
8 we can all discuss I'm sure. Thank you.

9 MR. ANDERSON: And I got another comment here, Darcy.  
10 It's Tinker. One thing -- and Randy kind of directed kind of  
11 at him. Also, the groomers are out there, they're probably  
12 working on 30 to 40 percent of the money that they really  
13 should have and they're just requesting the funds just enough  
14 to get through and get -- but you'll see, like Teri said,  
15 you'll see a lot of no charges and that's the only way, so  
16 far, the program has been working or is working. You know,  
17 Randy's got a lot of money tied up to it and cabin  
18 (indiscernible), Big Lake, everybody's already tied up in this  
19 stuff and like I say, they're only working under a percentage  
20 of what they actually should have. Right, Randy?

21 MR. CROSBY: Right. That's right.

22 MS. HARRIS: So we really are already needing what the  
23 director would like to see as the state not the primary funder  
24 for these programs and it sounds like we're already getting a  
25 lot of volunteer time and money and effort and equipment put

1 out there in the field on the ground and it sounds like  
2 there's a -- I know from what you guys are saying and what  
3 I've heard before, there's a whole lot of people doing a lot  
4 of work for essentially free or volunteer.

5 MS. HITE: Darcy, I have a questions, this is Cindy  
6 Hite. Two questions actually multi-pronged. First of all,  
7 why does Director Ellis not want to see grooming primarily  
8 funded through the Snow TRAC fund and what does he want to see  
9 funded to the Snow TRAC?

10 MS. HARRIS: It's my understanding that one of the  
11 reasons is, is because we don't have -- the program is  
12 growing, but the money isn't growing and there -- we're not  
13 able to satisfy what the grooming needs are with this program,  
14 so to kind of turn over some of that responsibility, which  
15 sounds like it's already being done to the clubs and the user  
16 groups and the people that are most interested that that's, I  
17 think, his interest is to make sure that it's -- it is spread  
18 out among the user groups because we really don't have enough  
19 money to fund everybody as fully as we'd love to if we had a  
20 million dollars. But we're -- we can only be a small part of  
21 people's funding for every year. John.

22 MR. SCUDDER: That was what Joe said and that's what  
23 everybody else here has said, get a line item in there and  
24 increase it.

25 MS. LECLAIR: So can I address that? This is Claire and

1 on behalf of Ben, sort of a point of procedure. The  
2 department can certainly make a case for priorities for the  
3 budget, but we work for the governor, so we don't ask the  
4 legislature for money, that is not what somebody in the  
5 administration would do. So that's -- you know, you have to  
6 understand that there are a lot of things that the state  
7 budget needs to address and this is one of them certainly, but  
8 it's -- but we can't turn on the spigot and flow some money  
9 straight into the Snow TRAC program. I know you guys  
10 understand that.

11 MR. SCUDDER: I have -- right, especially on that.

12 MR. WILKE: (Indiscernible) I'd like to take an issue  
13 with that, actually capital budgets begin in the departmental  
14 level.

15 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Hang on a second, Mark.

16 MR. WILKE: The director or the commissioner would.....

17 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Mark. Mark.

18 MR. WILKE: .....certainly be capable of including line  
19 item requests in the capital budget.

20 MS. LECLAIR: And I -- Mark, this is Claire and I  
21 understand what you're saying. What I'm trying to convey is  
22 that we cannot guarantee that, any request that we make would  
23 be in the administration's budget.

24 MR. WILKE: Yeah, it could be pulled by the legislature,  
25 it could be line item out by the governor, absolutely, I

1 understand that, but if we have the support of the director  
2 and of the commissioner to include items for grooming in the  
3 capital budget, I believe that that's a viable way of doing  
4 it.

5 MS. LECLAIR: It's one way.

6 MR. ENOCHS: If I could, this is Steve Enochs from  
7 Fairbanks, and just to kind of follow along with that and  
8 something that's kind of the direction that I personally think  
9 I'm going to take is that I was actively involved this past  
10 summer with a group and we met with Director Ben Ellis twice  
11 over the summer over the issue of the state parks up here in  
12 Fairbanks, the (indiscernible) Pond are and the lower  
13 Chatanika (ph) and we were able to successfully, through our  
14 legislators and through Director Ben Ellis's efforts, to come  
15 up to Fairbanks and to talk to everybody, the individual  
16 groups, the northern region parks folks and individual groups.  
17 And we were able to get our legislators and everybody involved  
18 and the end result was, is that we got a park ranger funded up  
19 here, fully funded. We got our parks out of passive  
20 management into active management and extra money so he even  
21 makes some improvements to a park that was closed 10 years ago  
22 and is in shambles.

23 So my point being is that -- and this is what I was more  
24 or less leading to when I was talking earlier, is that I think  
25 as a Snow TRAC board member, one of the means of communication

1 should be to our legislators and say look, you know, we don't  
2 have enough money, this program as it is, in my opinion, is  
3 broke and the only way we're going to effectively change it is  
4 to start going to these legislators and start getting some  
5 support for the legislator to take action. That doesn't mean  
6 that we shouldn't talk to Director Ben Ellis and say look, you  
7 know, you can do this on your -- we recommend that you go this  
8 route every -- I don't know how to put it any other way, but  
9 certainly, we should go to our legislatures and say look, the  
10 Snow TRAC funding as it is is almost broke and it's not  
11 working, we need help, let's look for an avenue, a consensus  
12 avenue of approach and let's start talking to our legislators  
13 and effect change there because that's where it's going to  
14 happen anyway.

15 MS. HARRIS: So Steve, this is Darcy, thank you. That's  
16 -- and so maybe that's one of our action items out of this  
17 meeting. We have about 10 more minutes in the room here and I  
18 would like to kind of summarize this and wrap it up. I know  
19 there's a lot more discussion and a lot more questions. We've  
20 got -- because I don't think we have a clear path forward, but  
21 we've started the discussion, so we have established that  
22 probably need to talk to some legislators, those people who  
23 are interested in adding the funding need to do that.  
24 And.....

25 MR. GAUNA: Well now, when you say those people are



1 interested, you're saying I? I mean, I'm going to, but.....

2 MS. HARRIS: Yes. I can't.

3 MR. GAUNA: .....I'm saying -- you know, Ben keeps  
4 saying that too. I can't talk to the legislature, I can't  
5 talk to the legislature. Well, Strato (ph) could and James  
6 King did. They managed to get down there somehow and get  
7 those legislators where they needed something done. They  
8 managed to do that when they want to get something done. What  
9 I'm saying is Ben needs to, you guys need to, Claire or  
10 whoever it is and so get the legislators to call you and say  
11 hey, what's going on here?

12 Now my legislator, Lesil McGuire said she did. Her  
13 staffer queried Ben or queried state parks is what she said  
14 and they really haven't heard anything, so you know? I had a  
15 meeting with both Mia what's her name and McGuire's staffers  
16 and followed up with emails and said look.....

17 MR. SCUDDER: Mia Costello.

18 MR. GAUNA: Mia Costello, yes, thank you, John. And I  
19 said you guys need to get the boss to call Director Ellis and  
20 here's his phone number and here's his email and ask what's  
21 going on with the Snow TRAC and I don't know -- they told me  
22 okay, we're doing that, but I don't know if Ben's heard from  
23 them or not. What I'm saying is that with state parks or DNR  
24 or Ed or Sullivan, whenever they want something really done,  
25 they figure out how to do it and I'm just saying that for 10

1 years, I've been saying you guys need to do this. Split from  
2 DMV, get this stuff in the line item and our troubles will be  
3 partly over.

4 But every single year, I hear we can't do that, we're  
5 not allowed, we can educate, but we can't cajole, we can't --  
6 I can't meet with them. King said the same thing out in the  
7 field when he said this is fabulous out here, I can't believe  
8 how wonderful this country is when he was watching the bear  
9 across a gully eat up a spring kill. He was just amazed and  
10 blown away and he loved it. He loved it. He said God, we've  
11 got to get something better, but when it came right down to  
12 it, it was like well, you know, I really can't talk to them  
13 and I believe that it's because they just don't realize how  
14 important snowmobiling is to Alaskans.

15 MS. HARRIS: Well, I think.....

16 MR. GAUNA: We are the winter tourists here. We, the  
17 local folks. I know state parks is established to promote  
18 tourism, I know about all the enabling legislation, way way  
19 back in the old days, I was here prior to it, way prior and  
20 after. I know that. We are winter tourists and we are  
21 getting screwed and I'm just really tired of it.

22 MS. HARRIS: Ester, did you have something to say?

23 MS. TEMPLE: Yeah, this is Ester.....

24 MR. GAUNA: Sorry.

25 MS. TEMPLE: No, that's fine. I mean, I think -- so my

1 -- just for your guys' knowledge, my position in the  
2 Commissioner's Office is actually the legislative liaison, so  
3 I do work with the legislature. As far as budgets go, I mean,  
4 I think what you're saying is that maybe DNR should look at  
5 perhaps adding a budget line item, but say if it goes through  
6 our process and it doesn't make it into the governor's budget,  
7 then at that point, DNR cannot go in and go to the legislature  
8 and partially, I think a separation of powers issue of we  
9 can't force their hand to say.....

10 MR. GAUNA: Oh, sure.

11 MS. TEMPLE: Right. And so I think that's the thing, is  
12 it could be a collaborative process in that if we were to say,  
13 okay, we're going to try and look at how we can improve the  
14 funding or whatnot, but that we also need your assistance if  
15 it were to make it in the budget to say hey, we really want  
16 this in the budget, don't take it out or don't, you know,  
17 there's -- and you can even ask potentially for them to  
18 increase the budget, you know? But it's just at a certain  
19 point where if it doesn't get in from our end, we can't do  
20 anything and so.....

21 MR. GAUNA: And I go it.

22 MS. LECLAIR: And that's all I was trying to say.

23 MS. TEMPLE: ....and that's all.....

24 MR. GAUNA: I got it.

25 MS. TEMPLE: .....I think what we're trying to say.

1 MR. GAUNA: I've got it.

2 MS. TEMPLE: And then the only other thing I think that  
3 we mention is that with trying to bypass the DMV even though  
4 it does sound like a great idea and it's just a complicated  
5 thing I think with budgets and how they go, so unless I  
6 believe -- and correct me if I'm wrong, unless parks were to  
7 create a fee, then that -- for snowmachines like -- kind of  
8 like a parking fee that we do for state parks or whatnot.

9 MR. SCUDDER: Trail pass.

10 MS. TEMPLE: Right.

11 MR. SCUDDER: Just like a trail pass.

12 MS. TEMPLE: Right. Right, like a trail pass. Then  
13 that's the only way we would get around I think sometimes  
14 doing the dedicated funds of how we're going to do the DMV,  
15 but.....

16 MR. LUTH: You got to go back to enforcement.

17 MS. HARRIS: Uh-huh.

18 MR. GAUNA: Okay. So -- well, trail pass  
19 (indiscernible) because people ride (indiscernible) so that  
20 ain't going to work.

21 MS. TEMPLE: Right.

22 MR. GAUNA: But you got to try .

23 MS. TEMPLE: Right. So I mean, I think.....

24 MR. GAUNA: Now if you guys.....

25 MS. TEMPLE: .....Darcy's doing a great job and I think,

1 you know, you have Director Ellis and Claire as well is that  
2 we want to start this conversation and it seems like we're all  
3 kind of maybe not coming in new, but we are, you know, a  
4 different group of people who are working, so maybe we'll  
5 actually get something done, but we do need your help, so.

6 MR. GAUNA: Yep. You will get the help.

7 MS. TEMPLE: Yeah.

8 MR. GAUNA: Here's the thing. There are 80 or 100,000  
9 snowmobilers from all the old surveys and all that stuff and  
10 we can get to a lot of them. Not all of them, but we can get  
11 to a lot of them. The thing is, if you guys -- DNR starts the  
12 process to change the line item, get away from DMV and not  
13 even bother about a fee, just get the money in there. And if  
14 it doesn't make it, then there's no grooming and the public  
15 will scream, but we -- when you do that, when you show us that  
16 you're putting it in there and you're doing it, then you will  
17 get a lot of support from the snowmobiling community because  
18 every one of us on the Snow TRAC plus the state association  
19 will put the word out. Call or write your legislator and tell  
20 him we want this in.

21 But up until now, every director and every person has  
22 said it's real complicated, it's hard to do and we can't do it  
23 and dah, dah, dah. I am really tired of hearing that. When  
24 you guys need \$2.7 million to put in some program that you  
25 really want to put in, you figure out how to do it and this is

1 not that complicated to me based on some of the other things  
2 that DNR and the state and the gov have all done. There's  
3 some pretty complicated stuff out there, I get that. I under  
4 -- the thing is I don't understand some of it. Mark does  
5 because he's pretty good at those numbers, but I got to tell  
6 you, somebody's just got to do it and it's not us to start it.  
7 You guys got to do this. I'm ranting, so I'm real sorry.  
8 Sorry, folks.

9 MS. HARRIS: We appreciate your input, Joe, thank you  
10 very much.

11 MS. HITE: This is Cindy Hite. I guess, you know,  
12 you've got about my two hours here, so I know that Darcy wants  
13 to wrap this up.

14 MR. GAUNA: Yep.

15 MS. HITE: Just a few points to make is I don't think  
16 the changes that have been recommended here today are  
17 beneficial to have the snowmobilers of the board snowmobiling  
18 (indiscernible) in Alaska. And I think before you make the  
19 kind of change you're talking about, maybe to look into public  
20 comments from around the state would be interesting too.

21 MS. HARRIS: Thank you, that's a good idea.

22 MS. HITE: So that's it. I think it's time to wrap it  
23 up, folks.

24 MR. GAUNA: Thanks, Cindy.

25 MS. HARRIS: Thank you, Cindy. Are there any other

1 final comments from folks on the phone?

2 MS. HITE: Oh, I'm sorry, I did have one question. It  
3 was a lady, I don't know who it was in the room that said  
4 something about we need your help.

5 MR. GAUNA: That was Ester.

6 MS. HITE: I'm actually kind of curious about she was  
7 asking about. I mean, what she wants help from the advisory  
8 board. Through the years of help, you know, change in the  
9 application and volunteers for trail inspections, you know,  
10 funding for the statewide trail system idea, so I'm trying to  
11 figure out what help you need from the advisory.

12 MR. MAYFIELD: It goes in one ear and on somebody's  
13 desk, right, Cindy?

14 MR. GAUNA: Wait, you guys, wait. This is Joe, hold on.  
15 That was Ester saying when they start the process of changing  
16 away from DMV and getting the budget going.....

17 MR. MAYFIELD: Oh, okay. Got it.

18 MR. GAUNA: .....she is going to need our help that's  
19 when I pledge that they'll have it.

20 MR. MAYFIELD: Okay. See, I was confused, that's  
21 exactly what I needed to know. Thanks, Joe.

22 MR. GAUNA: Yeah.

23 MR. MAYFIELD: Yeah, this is Dan. I -- you know, I am  
24 fairly sure that I can pull together my 200 members in support  
25 of any DNR initiative to increase the grooming pool.

1 MS. HARRIS: The other issue with grooming, we've gotten  
2 several people who have wanted to add new trails, one in  
3 Southeast and one Sitka and are interested in that, and that I  
4 think should also be an option. If we're going to build this  
5 program to be bigger and better, we ought to allow more people  
6 to apply for the trails in their areas, you know?

7 MR. GAUNA: This is Joe. Let's keep -- there's two  
8 parts to this. We said last year we're going to not add any  
9 trails to be groomed.....

10 MS. HARRIS: Right.

11 MR. GAUNA: .....but there should be a process of some  
12 sort to identify a trail as a dedicated Snow Trac trail.....

13 MS. HARRIS: Okay.

14 MR. GAUNA: .....that would make it eligible for  
15 grooming in the future at some time. Okay? So let's make  
16 sure that we're talking the two things. Maybe Southeast wants  
17 to put a trail in and Copper Center, they wanted to put in a  
18 trail, okay, well that's fine, let's designate it as a Snow  
19 TRAC trail and then when money comes, they can put in for  
20 funding.

21 MS. HITE: The trails to nowhere again. Instead of  
22 making a statewide trail system where everybody actually has a  
23 trail somewhere in their district then and is getting money  
24 for it from Snow TRAC.

25 MR. GAUNA: Right, and Cindy, that's where DNR says when



1 they start getting the statewide trail system designated,  
2 that's when we'll jump in and help out as well. Well, we  
3 probably should need another telecon in a few weeks or take  
4 this up in the August meeting. We do have to button up.

5 MS. HARRIS: Thank you. Does anyone else have a final  
6 thought at this moment? We didn't come away with any action  
7 items, but I do think we opened some discussion topics here  
8 and I really want to continue this discussion. What I'm going  
9 to do is when Director Ellis gets back to town, I'm going to  
10 -- we'll have a very clear record of the meeting and  
11 everybody's comments and concerns and I'll sit down and talk  
12 with him about these things and people's concerns, solicit  
13 some more public comment at some point, that's very important,  
14 Cindy, and come up with some different and maybe a different  
15 set or proposals for solving some of these issues.

16 I know that one thing that Deputy Commissioner Fogels  
17 has said that he really wants us to have a clear  
18 identification of some of these issues that are most important  
19 to us and ones that we would prioritize for solving or  
20 resolving. And so maybe we can also come up with a clear  
21 short list of the most important problems that we see as the  
22 ones that are most important to come up with solutions for in  
23 the short-term or in the long-term, either way, but the ones  
24 we really want to prioritize.

25 So I'd like to get that to the Commissioner's Office at

1 some point and.....

2 MR. WILKE: Darcy, this is Mark.

3 MS. HARRIS: Yes, Mark.

4 MR. WILKE: I think I can probably sum this up pretty  
5 succinctly on what I heard and through all my experience in  
6 doing this is that it would be the feeling of this group that  
7 the Department of Natural Resources should be requesting  
8 grooming money in the budgetary process and that the Snow TRAC  
9 program, grant program, the \$5 DMV fees could be used for  
10 safety and education and trail development programs.

11 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Here, here, Mark.

12 MS. HARRIS: Yep, that sounds right.

13 MR. WILKE: I think that's as simple as it gets right  
14 there.

15 MS. HARRIS: Thank you, Mark.

16 MR. WILKE: Let me clarify one thing. Grooming, staking  
17 and marking should all be paid for through the budgetary  
18 process.

19 MS. HARRIS: Yeah, that's all part of the same thing,  
20 making the trails clear and safe and marked. Thank you, Mark,  
21 that was excellent.

22 MR. BIESSEL: Hey, Darcy, this is Wayne, I just got one  
23 quick item.

24 MS. HARRIS: Yes, Wayne.

25 MR. BIESSEL: For the next agenda items for future Snow

1 TRAC conferences or whatever, we do need to finalize what the  
2 grooming standards are. I know they've been kicked around and  
3 you know, I'm hearing that it's on somebody's desk. That's  
4 because we don't have a sanction set by both the Snow TRAC  
5 board and state parks, so we need to work that one out so that  
6 we can include those in the next grant cycle.

7 MR. LUTH: Hey, Wayne, can you take and email to the  
8 board your thoughts on what should be on that and we could  
9 just reply to you directly and get that cleared up real  
10 easily?

11 MR. GAUNA: Yeah.

12 MR. BIESSEL: Let me get back to you on that. I think  
13 it's -- it's not something that I'm specifically going to  
14 recommend because there was a lot of work done.....

15 MR. GAUNA: Yes, yes, yes.

16 MR. BIESSEL: .....that I wasn't a party to.

17 (Indiscernible) did a lot of work on this a few years ago and  
18 I know it was a controversial issue with the board, so this  
19 needs to be kind of a separate -- we need to talk about this  
20 separately and I don't think we have the time right here to do  
21 it.

22 (multiple speech)

23 MR. LUTH: Maybe we could have a mini meeting just with  
24 you and the board.

25 MR. BIESSEL: Thank you, Bill.

1 MR. MAYFIELD: Darcy, this is Dan. Those standards need  
2 to be talked about in the public form.

3 MR. BIESSEL: I'm not comfortable just putting off  
4 recommendations right now because I don't know enough about it  
5 and -- yeah.

6 MR. MAYFIELD: I think it just needs to be another  
7 agenda item at our next discussion.

8 MR. GAUNA: This is Joe. Wayne, you've been doing this  
9 stuff for a number of years. How about at least starting with  
10 a draft like we did today. Let's talk with some -- just some  
11 talking points, but you need to do it, not us.

12 MR. BIESSEL: I'll talk to Darcy about it.

13 MR. GAUNA: Okay.

14 MS. HARRIS: Sounds good. Thanks, Wayne. Okay, any  
15 other final thoughts? I think we've talked about having  
16 another meeting at some point. Yes, John.

17 MR. SCUDDER: Are you going to email us the minutes like  
18 you did last time?

19 MS. HARRIS: Yes. When we get them, we certainly will,  
20 absolutely everybody will have them. You bet. Of course. So  
21 then everybody will have a record of these things and we can  
22 come up with the next agenda and where we go from here for our  
23 agenda items. Does anybody have any final thoughts? I think  
24 Mark had a good summary of what came out of here and --  
25 somebody have a thought?

1 MR. MORRISON: This is Andy. Yeah, and it's -- the  
2 other thing with (indiscernible) with DMV and I understand,  
3 you know, going through a bunch of (indiscernible) it's a good  
4 idea and it could also take five or 10 years.

5 MR. GAUNA: Nope.

6 MR. MORRISON: Is that if we can get mobile DMV  
7 (indiscernible) and like Arctic Man, (indiscernible) Alaska,  
8 Iron Dog, maybe Petersville Road on a busy weekend and just  
9 make it easy for people to register their sleds instead of  
10 asking the troopers to do it. I think a lot of people will  
11 glad to spend the 10 bucks, 20 bucks and you'd probably get  
12 (indiscernible) maybe \$50,000 or \$60,000 (indiscernible).

13 MS. HARRIS: Okay, we'll add that to one of the ideas,  
14 Andy, thank you very much. I really appreciate everyone's  
15 input and time away from your busy days. It's really valuable  
16 to have all of you share your thoughts and ideas for how we  
17 can make this program better and that's really the goal here.  
18 Me, as a new program administrator, is I'd like to see  
19 whatever this program turns out to be, I'd really like it to  
20 be an excellent program that we can all be really proud of and  
21 happy with and I'd like it to be accountable and we have  
22 everybody can say they were part of doing something that was  
23 excellent for the state and the citizens.

24 So whatever that evolution needs to be, I'd like to be a  
25 part of that and I'd like you guys to continue the dialogue.

1 Thank you very much for joining us today.

2 (Whispered conversation)

3 MR. SCUDDER: See you guys.

4 MS. HARRIS: Bye everyone.

5 MR. BAKER: We are off record.

6 (Off tape)

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

**TRANSCRIBER'S CERTIFICATE**

I, Sonya Hewes, hereby certify that the foregoing pages numbered 2 through 88 are a true, accurate and complete transcript of proceedings in the SnowTRAC Program Meeting administered by Parks and Outdoor Recreation, as transcribed by me from a copy of the electronic digital sound recording to the best of my knowledge and ability.

June 22, 2012

Sonya A. Hewes  
Sonya Hewes

## 2/9/12 Parks/SnowTRAC RFP Meeting Teleconference

### Anchorage Parks Staff (In Person):

**Darcy Harris** (DH) State Trails Program Coordinator  
**Karlyn Herrera** (KH) Administrative Operations Manager  
**Steve Neel** (SN) Grant Administrator  
**Claire LeClair** (CL) Deputy Director - State Parks  
**Justin Wholey** (JW) Natural Resource Specialist

### Mat-Su Parks Staff (On Phone):

**Wayne Biessel** (WB) Superintendent - Mat-Su/Copper Parks  
**Teresa Zell** (TZ) Administrative Officer

### SnowTRAC Board Members:

**John Scudder**; Anchorage Rep. (In Person)  
**Bill Luth**; Mat-Su/Copper River Basin Rep. (On Phone)  
**Cynthia Hite**; Mat-Su/Copper River Basin Rep. (On Phone)  
**Stephen Enochs**; Fairbanks Rep. (On Phone)  
**Andy Morrison**; inter board liaison with ORTAB

### Public Listening In:

**Ron Lurk** (Curry Ridge Riders Snowmobile Club)

### Teleconference Agenda:

Participants: Alaska State Parks representatives, SnowTRAC representatives, Public

### Planned Agenda

**9:55** (Public only) Sign up for public comment period.  
**10:00** Introductions  
**10:15** Ground Rules (DH)  
**10:20** Public Comment Period  
**10:45** Intro. of discussion topic: Request for Proposal (RFP) process options and State law. (KH, DH)  
**11:15** SnowTRAC and Alaska State Parks Q & A/discussion.  
**12:00** Adjourn

Meeting Begins at 10am.

**DH:** Announces meeting format and agenda. Reminds drivers to be safe on slick/icy roads with very high snow berms obscuring visibility at intersections (Safety Moment)

**BL:** Urges caution for snowmachiners due to high snow berms leading to visibility problems.



**DH:** Introduces topic of the meeting including: the RFP process, competitive bidding with SnowTRAC funds, and how to be in compliance with state regulations in this process.

**KH:** Introduces options for the grooming process in the future:

- 1) Continue grant program as is and if there are competing bids for an area the RFP process begins.
  - 2) Use RFP process for all grooming applicants.
- KH views this as the simplest process overall.

**DH:** It takes 60-90 days to process an RFP; this has the potential to push into the grooming season. The state also has more authority with RFPs for compliance. Contracts can be pulled, or not awarded again the following year.

**BL:** Can this (compliance authority) be added to the grant process?

**DH:** The big question is should we use the RFP process for all groomers, or just the areas with competitive bids? If we use the RFP process we still need SnowTRAC input for developing the standards for the RFP contract.

**KH:** We can have an RFP that is broken into regions, or have one contract and include all of the groomers in it. If a groomer is on the SnowTRAC board then they would have to recuse themselves from putting together the contract.

**CH:** I assume that there would be more rules involved using the RFP process. What would these rules be?

**KH:** You would have to have a business license.

**BL:** Some insurance is required. If we go to RFP Hatcher Pass and Big Lake are the only competitive areas.

**DH:** There is a limitation of funds using the RFP process. The money available has a cap.

**KH:** Did everyone read the statutes in Darcy's Email? There are restrictions, but many of these can be determined by parks, and can be quit flexible.

**BL:** About the Big Lake issue: There were rules put together by a SnowTRAC committee that were turned into Wayne Beissel. Operations on weekends were prohibited, but are still being done.

**KH:** Compliance authority is a benefit of the RFP process.

**CH:** Can we do this with the grant process too?

**KH/WB:** Yes.

**KH:** In the grant process we can choose not to renew a grant the following year, but not pull it mid-year.

**JS:** What happens if there is no groomer grooming an area because of non-compliance issues?

**BL:** There have been no problems except for Big Lake and Hatcher Pass.

**SE:** Money is getting tighter which puts pressure on SnowTRAC dollars. Grants aren't automatic either. Mark (Wilke) was looking at going a different direction because of safety and non-grooming grants. Can SnowTRAC allocate a certain amount of money?

**BL:** There is X amount allocated for each area.

**TZ:** SnowTRAC needs to work on getting the registration fees increased if the program is to go anywhere. Everyone realized that 89% of what was asked for was available for this season. The application can also be trimmed down to 4 pages. Even though Big Lake and Hatcher Pass are our only competitive/problem areas these situations can arise year to year. For the RFP process to run more smoothly we must get all paperwork turned in earlier. We should set firm allocations yearly, once we find out how much money is available. Bids cannot exceed the allocated amounts.

**BL:** The problem with the registration fee increase is that there is no enforcement.

**CH:** Some Park Rangers are checking snowmobile registrations.

**JS:** Fish & Game is checking at Big Lake.

**WB:** State Park Rangers have some authority to enforce this on state land, but it is kind of a grey area. Taking rangers outside of parks stresses staff time/resources.

**BL:** I've asked rangers to write tickets at the Willow Kiosk. Could we send a note to John and Drew?

**SE:** In December the Snow Travelers had State Troopers give a presentation. They said if they have time they'll issue registration citations, but they usually don't have the time.

**CH:** Enforcement is not the way to go. People need to know why their registration dollars are important and are needed. The statewide trail system is my dream and the RFP process can create this system, because we can assign what we want to be groomed.

**TZ:** We need to make sure the RFP process is simple enough.

**KH:** The current grant process requires some hair pulling.

**CH:** SnowTRAC has been dealing with streamlining the grant process for two years and needs some help from DNR. (To DH) How much time do you put into SnowTRAC? 5%? 10%?

**DH:** We try to manage as many things as we can, but we are split between different tasks. We have to make due with the resources we have.

**CH:** What are the cons of the RFP process? I haven't heard any yet.

**TZ:** Time.

**KH:** The time constraints.

**CH:** So it's 60-90 days from when the bid is placed to grooming authorization?

**KH:** Yes that is about how long the procurement process takes.

**BL:** In early November RFPs are available so when does the board meet? When will applications have to be due?

**KH:** Should we have the meeting in May then?

**WB:** The deadline should be Jun 15<sup>th</sup> or July 1<sup>st</sup> for the letter of interest. My idea is we could reshape the application so it acts as an RFP/Grant hybrid process. The application will be set up to get all the information needed for an RFP. If the area becomes competitive then we are safe-guarded and go to RFP. If there is only one applicant then we can follow the grant format.

**TZ:** It takes me one day to process one grant (if there are no outstanding issues). I like Wayne's hybrid idea.

**CH:** Why not send everything to RFP?

**TZ:** Pat Daniels asked me: Why do I have to answer all of these questions?

**CH:** I'm not getting the cons.

**KH:** There really aren't any cons. I think RFP is a cleaner process. The first year will be more difficult, but the second will be easier. There will be many questions that first year.

**CH:** How much bureaucracy will procurement have to deal with in the RFP process?

**KH:** RFP is already set in stone.

**TZ:** If everyone follows the RFP process then money cannot be shuffled around between grooming areas (example: one area receiving lots of snow, and another area not having any snow to groom)

**BL:** Can flexibility of shuffling funds around be written in to the contracts?

**KH:** We'll have to ask procurement about that (shuffling funds between areas).

**TZ:** Groomers will try to bill the maximum amount.

**KH:** They can only bill for what they do.

**TZ:** There are variable grooming conditions and costs attributed by groomers.

**BL:** We will push the season out if we have the ability, and will supplement with our own money.

**CH:** SnowTRAC money is not intended to be the sole source of funding for groomers.

**TZ:** We currently have more leeway with shuffling.

**JS:** One con for the RFP process is it's a moving target.

**KH:** In the RFP process we can have a maximum allowed cost. Example: What can you do for this amount of money?

**WB:** We will have to know how much money is available in advance.

**CH:** What amount must be known?

**KH:** The receipts from the prior fiscal year are used for the upcoming fiscal year.

**SN:** July is the earliest we can know that full amount.

**SE:** This doesn't mean that we'll get more money from registration fees. There is no automatic amount of money set aside for grooming. If more emphasis is placed on trail development and safety, then SnowTRAC will be paying for formerly ORTAB projects.

**KH:** You are correct in that assumption. We can look at this topic later and change it.

**SE:** I agree with making the grooming competitive, but there's not much grooming done in the Fairbanks area. Grooming up here is a crock.

-How could state parks compete against other bidders?

**KH:** Parks cannot compete. There can't be competition between public and private entities.

**DH:** Do you want more money for development and safety?

**SE:** The SnowTRAC Board made a list of things to develop including a statewide trail system. I think that the best interest of the public is the statewide trail system.

**DH:** I would like to see more motorized trail projects for RecTrails.

**BL:** Refers and explains the SVWT (Susitna Valley Winter Trail).

**CH:** I've heard rumors that it's hard to get motorized projects through ORTAB.

**DH:** The breakdown for projects is 30/30/40 requiring 30% motorized projects.

**BL:** How much money is available for RecTrails next year?

**DH:** It is uncertain. It being an election year the congress may keep the status quo.

**JS:** It's a nightmare writing grants for ORTAB.

**DH:** We want to show people that they can apply for grants easily. Let's get back to the original topic.

**SE:** I think we should keep the grant process intact, but if there is competition then it can be handled by the RFP process.

**BL:** I agree with SE except add the stipulations we gave to Wayne.

**CH:** For a statewide trail system, can we go through the RFP process?

**KH:** The RFP process would allow us to designate the trails ahead of time.

**CH:** Suggestion. We go in Wayne's direction and tackle this as an RFP process to prepare for the change-over in the future, and make it 3 or 4 pages.

**JS:** I lean towards the Hybrid (Wayne's suggestion).

**DH:** It looks like folks on the board are for the hybrid option. We should plan for a meeting in May.

-CH, BL, SE, and JS support the hybrid option.

**CH:** The evaluation process in the field hasn't been discussed.

**DH:** I've been brainstorming ways to have Kenai managers inspect trail grooming.

**BL:** Until standards are in place, trail inspections are a waste of time

**DH:** Explain what standardized inspection entails.

**CH:** Wayne mentioned that volunteers can't be use for inspections. What about ASSA members?

**JS:** The general public could report to the ranger district. I have no problem with the public reporting.

**DH:** What about a trail-watch type program for SnowTRAC grooming?

**CH:** The ASSA volunteers could be a good resource.

**DH:** I'll contact ASSA.

**BL:** We could offer volunteer time to do inspections.

-AM joins at 11:15, and DH updates him on past discussion.

**AM:** Sounds ambitious.

**CH:** We have to add a value to each of the trails.

**DH:** Informs AM on what the hybrid process would be.

**AM:** That sounds good.

**JS:** No new trails are to be added to the grooming pool; is that true?

**SE:** It's probably not practical to not add new trails.

**CH:** We should create a trail system to put out to bid, not ask what trails do you want to groom.

**DH:** We should set up a meeting in April?

**BL:** After the 10<sup>th</sup> of May.

**CH:** We can set it up via email and phone calls.

**TZ:** I have a question. Who will be making allocations for different areas? I have an issue with that. I suggest that DNR comes up with the initial allocation and SnowTRAC refines it.

**BL:** That's acceptable to me.

**TZ:** We can look at the historical billings to ballpark it. It may be difficult to figure out the cost per mile. Hatcher Pass has had more than one operator with charges between \$27 and \$50 per hour.

**DH:** We'll revamp the application for ORTAB.

**CH:** I can volunteer to help because I'm here in town (Anchorage).

**DH to TZ:** Do you have the grooming records available?

**TZ:** You have all of the binders.

**AM:** Funds cannot be moved around based on snow with the RFP process.

**CH:** Why didn't we go straight to RFP?

**TZ:** We can't shuffle funds easily with a contract.

**AM:** The RFP process sounds daunting. Do we need to?

**WB:** The RFP process will consume a lot of staff time and won't be cheap for parks.

**AM:** In the future funding sources will be questionable so we should look for more funding sources for the groomers – in-state gas tax being one.

**DH:** Here are the action items:

DNR will look at drafting basic language criteria to get out to the board so you can discuss it. We'll set up a meeting in mid to late May. We'll chat about the application streamlining process.

**TZ:** I'll get together a very streamlined application in a couple weeks.

**DH:** We'll look at historical allocations, billing per hour, and what machinery is being used. Maybe we can standardize a per hour rate based on those criteria. I'll also get the rules from Wayne to put into the draft language.

**TZ:** FYI: The week of the 14<sup>th</sup> Mat-Su parks will be busy training volunteers.

Meeting adjourned at 11:55am.



# SnowTRAC Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

August 25-26, 2011

**Thursday, August 25th**

---

## **ATTENDEES:**

### **SnowTRAC Members Present:**

**Mark Wilke (MW)** – Chair, Southeast Alaska  
**Joe Gauna (JG)** – Co-Chair, Anchorage  
**Steven Enochs (SE)** - Fairbanks  
**John Scudder (JS)** - Anchorage  
**Bill Luth (BL)** – Mat-Su/Copper River Basin  
**Eric Morris (EM)** – Western Alaska  
**Gary Anderson (Tinker)** – Kenai Peninsula/Valdez/PWS  
**Cynthia Hite (CH)** – Mat-Su/ Copper River Basin  
**Andy Morrison (AM)** – Inter-Board Liaison

### **DNR Staff:**

**Ed Fogels** – Deputy Commissioner, DNR  
**Ben Ellis** – Director, DPOR  
**Darcy Harris** – State Trails Program Coordinator, DPOR  
**Steve Neel (SN)** – Grant Administrator, DPOR  
**Justin Wholey** – Natural Resource Specialist II, State Trails Program, DPOR  
**Jessie Meybin** – State Trails Program, Minute-Taker, DPOR  
**Kyle Kidder (Kidder)** – Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
**Sally Davies (SD)** – Grant Administrator, DPOR  
**Karlyn Herrera (KH)** – Chief of Administration and Grants, DPOR

### **Public Present:**

**Dan Mayfield (DM)** – Big Lake Trails  
**Kevin Hite (KH)** – President, ASSA  
**George Woodberry (GW)** – excavation, Big Lake (Iron Dog, Big Lake Trails)  
**Vern Monet (VM)** – Recreational cabin owner at Big Lake  
**Pat Daniels (PD)** – Alpine General Services  
**Jenny Daniels (JD)** – Alpine General Services  
**Scott Mueller (SM)** – Resident, Big Lake  
**Craig Christiansen (CC)** – Recreational cabin owner at Big Lake  
**Cathy Mayfield (CM)** – Board member, Big Lake Trails  
**Dan Kruse** – President, Big Lake Trails, Inc.  
**Orville Wenholz (OW)** – Groomer, Big Lake Trails, Inc.  
**Eileen Stackhouse** – Recreational cabin owner at Big Lake  
**Wayne Stackhouse** – Resident, Big Lake  
**Debra McGhan (DMG)**– NAOI Exec.

## **INTRODUCTION:**

***Mark Wilke makes OFFICIAL CALL TO ORDER: 8:30am***

***Round table introductions, starting with board, then state, then public attendees.***

**Ellis:** I would like to thank everyone on the board. I was on a board down in Kenai, I can tell you it's a lot of work and sometimes you wonder if anybody's listening. I've got empathy. I've tried to go to every advisory council we have in the state... not a one-time thing, but as much as possible to interact with the group. Unfortunately I have to pop in and out today, but I wanted to introduce Darcy, replacing Bill Luck. She will be an integral part of the state working with you. I support the possibility of the snowmachine fee increase, along with other issues that try to promote this fantastic sport I love. One of the nice things about this job, I've gotten out to areas I've never been to before.. and I am looking forward to going out with different clubs. Please give me a holler if you've got a club I'd love to come out

We've got 16 advisory boards under division: some commissioner, some director... they share the same goal.. to provide user input into state parks as we are attempting to address issues as responsibly and logically as we can with the best guidance possible. This is where advisory boards come in. A lot of times in outdoor issues we will have feelings, were in these things because we're passionate. The one thing this government is very big on as well as the commissioner and myself, as we go through these big decisions, we have respect for peoples opinions.. even if not in agreement, it is important to respect the voices and there might not be answers as quick as you want, but we will work through a process that fits the position. We will provide the staff to be able to provide input, the advisory board runs the show, but we have players from our side, Wayne Biessel, Karlyn Herrera. She was there at the ORTAB meeting earlier this month. We'll try to give you the details and facts so you can make the best decision possible. I look forward to getting info from this group. Please pick up the phone, if you have a concern or interest, please contact me. Tomorrow morning I think, if possible, our dep. Commissioner Ed Vogels would like to stop by. Ed's in Palmer today because he wanted to bring a message more directly.. he was at the last ORTAB meeting and wants to talk about issues of motorized access. He is just a very, very good person as far as being able to work with. Fortunate to have him on the commissioners office. I know you have a lot on your plate, if you have any questions please speak up.

**AM:** What are your impressions of how the snowmobile program in AK is shaping up?

**Ellis:** Kind of worried, I went up to Fairbanks and saw how much of a trail system they have. I'm used to Caribou Hills, etc.. that are more open. I know some of you have worked on these east-west trails, I think we're on the verge of developing a very sophisticated trails system, both the lower 48 idea of trail systems, but also there's room for the AK idea of highway systems.

This is something that this state and administration is very supportive of. Whether you are hauling logs to your cabin, or whether you're out on a family ride, or whether it's a bunch of go-getters and you're going over Valdez Pass on some kind of wild adventure, it's all access the way I look at it. I'm very interested in providing that type of access to our resources.

**AM:** how do you feel about registration increases, fee increases? I know we're drawing on a lot of different pools of money. Maybe your thoughts on a state-wide connecting trail system... any other forms of revenue, like gas tax?

**Ellis:** I love the interlocking trail system, administration very supportive of that, we would make it an initiative of the commissioner on funding. Two sources of funding: one through ORTAB is federal funding through the Transportation Bill, which is under heavy federal scrutiny... no guarantee if that will stay at level it is or if it will be there at all. All ORTAB, other than staff time, is 100 percent federal, and that goes away. Then we deal with going to our legislature and having some kind of funding source. Shaky at this time... Senator Murkowsky.. Its pretty dire, things are going to get cut. I encourage like-minded people to keep talking and communicating with their delegation about how critical that federal funding is. On SnowTRAC, we have the \$250,000 based from snowmachine registration fee. My position is that unless the governor's office decides they will introduce a bill or places it in the Division budget; my direction is I'm neutral on it. Doesn't mean I'm against it, it means its more the responsibility of the user groups to move forward, talk to legislators, we would like to do this, this is what the money would be used for.. that office contacts me, we would be in dialogue... if I'm contacted by a law-maker I'm required to respond. I wouldn't necc say we are in support of that, but probably would say we are in need of "x,y, and z". As the SnowTRAC advisory, this group could easily create a 'here is the need; here is how we would like to go forward. I know in the past, we as an agency have talked about a certain amount of increase fee. Whatever this board decides and wants to move forward with is what we will respond to. We won't be for or against anything, but we will respond if you bring it up to legislature. It becomes a discussion between user groups and the legislature.

**AM:** What your thoughts are about getting portion of state gas tax for trails?

**Ellis:** Don't know enough about it to give definitive answer. I would be interested in getting some thoughts and ideas to me about how it would work. It would take legislative measures. I don't know enough about it now... I know there's probably a model within the boating safety program "sport fish gas, dollars... goes into that particular user group program" ...could be modeled here I would assume

**AM:** Your thoughts on the grooming pool... where we might be with dwindling stack of applications... some going to regional, etc.

**Ellis:** I'm going to look toward the board and Darcy for guidance on that, because I have tried to understand that (8 month on job, came in January when everything was moving along) what we may be doing to cause that, what we could do to encourage more applications. With Darcy on board, we could have very pos working relationship. Mine and commissioners' intentions that we move forward in very positive and productive way. I hope that over time I will have an answer for you, and over time the group will help me find what the answer is. I just again appreciate the time, effort and energy, for you and the public coming out, for you to make a very positive impact on this sport that I love.

**MW:** Additions to agenda: Late applications...

**MW:** Any public comment on non-agenda items?

**SE:** Where are we on filling the vacancy? I would still like to see another member from Fairbanks.

**MW:** Trails coordinator and State Parks will recruit new member. We have pretty good lay out procedures on process of hiring.

We decided not to fill the ADA guy because we should all fill those requirements, so didn't need specific position.

**JG:** 1 from southeast, 2 from anchorage, 2 from Matsu/copper, 1 Kenai, 1 western, 2 Fairbanks (one vacant)

**AM:** We got some bridges down in Turnagain Pass, Iditarod at least 1 million spent on bridges connecting Turnagain Pass, Johnson Pass. Closer to the road system, this was basically Ted Stevens working on getting that first national historic trail, cutting a foot trail right now right up turnagain pass... we as snowmobilers got a trail that cut through the trees.. bridges 10 ft wide... no railings. We'll see, there's no grooming plan in place down there yet

**BL:** I was contacted about ranger district down there about grooming and what equipment would work.

**AM:** They didn't understand the type of equipment they needed.

**WB:** Will the trail be operational this year?

**AM:** I think, yes, for the most part the trail was already cut in to trails that already existed, also on state land the forest service cut a trail down to Ingram Creek. Efforts to put it into an easement. Hasn't been used much, something we might be able to push.

**Ellis:** That's a recommendation that needs to come from this council

**SE:** I've said that probably the best thing that they could do down in Chugach NF is to build a loop trail... nice motorized experience down there. Usually they'll acknowledge the idea and that's about it. I feel like closer to anchorage it's those family style recreation experiences we're missing.

Also notice that we don't have any apps from rural Alaska. I know most of us right off road system and thinking about rec experience rather than life/death. Getting real passionate about rural areas and locals. Don't want to get into conversations where we miss how big the state is. Grooming out there is a foreign concept.

**MW:** In the past we've gotten a lot of rural requests: rescue gear, shelters... pretty much dried up, we need to fix that

**AM:** We talk a lot about seasonal marking on trail. Used to put reflectors, now we put stakes up... one question I posed in rural AK is that we need uniform signage. Put one stake by river and kind of go by stake. International standard is put two stakes to define trail within. Tripod system, etc...

**JG:** Well if they don't ask we don't know to give them the money. If the folks don't ask for it they're not going to get it.

**SE:** Quick thought on tripods... quick and less man power way in long run. Put it up some winters, it's coming down in spring. You have to really pick where you put a tripod. If it's in a stable condition... best in the long run. Stakes come down and have to go back up next year.

**TZ:** Maybe there's been a turnover of people who were involved in it, and no one knows about it now... maybe we need to get the word out somehow to get the newspapers out in western and northern Alaska

**AM:** The process is intimidating too.

**MW:** Our application needs to be 4 pages and we need to move along.

**SE:** RS2477... is that an issue here in the Anch; Mat-Su bowl area... we have lots of issues in the southeast with this.

**JG:** Probably most misunderstood mining law... people have so many ideas about what it is and most of them are wrong. DNR has good info on website. This can benefit us in a lot of ways... important fact for Alaskans

**SE:** Fairbanks North Star Borough tackling those issues...

**JG:** Where commissioner and state can help to push as RS2477s

**MW:** Lists trails that have been nominated... the more you find out about it the more excited you get and then you find stuff that isn't true

When we return we are going to go into the Big Lakes issue. We'll have a public comment session, so if you're here to talk about Big Lake you'll have a chance.

**MW:** Final decision on Big Lake is NOT A SNOWTRAC decision... more likely decision for State procurement office... this is the first time we've had competing organizations going for grooming pool money... not for profit vs. commercial business... learning process for you and for State Parks

**KevH:** We do have 2 competing grant requests... lot of history lot of people involved back and forth. Put down what I thought were goals for today. 1 define SnowTRAC's scope of responsibility 2 define Parks scope of responsibility 3 we have two strong reps from Big Lake and want to give them area and time to give their thought processes and proposals 4 SnowTRAC and DNR plan to get this resolved... not happening today, but we need decision process or plan.. get this done quickly as we can, but right 5 plan forward, put this process in motion... so the next time this happens there is a process and procedure in place for dealing with the grant. They've asked me to be the whipping boy, so if I choose a place to get beat on; this would be as good as any. Our advocates: you decide who wants to go first?

**DM:** Pat can go first

There were complaints/friction about performance (have documentation of good and bad performance). Doesn't seem to be a resolution... two somewhat familiar grants competing will go to state procurement process. We don't have a set standard for trails in Big Lake, Kenai, etc... that is a BIG BIG gap in our organization

**WB:** We have had competitive groomers... but in that case they were all commercial.

**KevH:** One of the gaps that keep us from getting to the EVALUATION or INSPECTION process is that we have no set standards. Grant scoring process is different evil system than grooming pool. Bad situation b/c somebody's going to lose, but good opportunity to deal with these larger SnowTRAC issues.

**KH:** Introduces herself. First of all, I have discussed this with our procurement officer -

**MW:** Excuse me, we have set out an agenda and we're going to stick to it. We have already outlined a time (towards the end of the day) for the state or financial explanations.

**KH:** Trying to save you time because it would save effort... some of this won't matter in procurement process

### ***Big Lake Discussion/Presentations***

**PD:** I'm a resident of Big Lake, property in Willow, came here in 2008. This information here I'm handing out, I've owned multiple companies in NV, have a general contracting and framing company... don't want to overinflate anything. I have my business resumes here. In NV I also have a race team that we race on. I also brought the rough draft proposal from last year that got turned around negatively to the community. I think we have been played against each other in manipulation. We had a Big Lake clean up in spring because the trails were so bad. We have trails that don't lead to nothing, that end on public roads. The entrances of our trails caution bad roads use at your own risk. I'm not the best at this public speaking thing, I'm a little passionate. Thank you for the opportunity. I'm probably over prepared and over passionate for some. As long as the information is coming out and being communicated it is good. I believe that this is more than free grant money. Funds came from fee from something or somewhere... grooming should come best quality, best price. Thank god we have room that's open, there are plenty of people that will step out of box to choose what is right, not which side, but what's best. I have supporters (names few). This is just a restart plan... should only take couple years, already working for multiple companies in Big Lake top ten points. 1= 2010-11 grant states "grooming practices and trails that are being ignored" for pres big lake trails, not a community club or non-profit organization. During the last Big Lake meeting he made it clear by saying to his wife as another member asked me a question, "he doesn't get to speak, he's not a member". As I left he said "where is your next AGS meeting, id like to attend" 2=maintenance, gas, etc. lack of time and plan for trail maintenance, trail slopes ravines, turns, brushing, etc. Trail trash cleaning and junk control removal. Real situation is it's not our land. Big Lake has comprehensive trails plan... BLT should do it as club, not because they have to. Miles of trails that could work with minimum work that could serve community very well. No equipment (brush saws, etc.) that goes out. Groomers with too much drag pressure, equip too big for time of year and snow conditions. By losing last 11,000 dollar match they have, they purchased another groomer this year through ORTAB. 2=Newsletter, picture posting grooming entire trail of 11, Jan 15..grooming and signs on trail 4, Id like someone to go to website and pull up pictures. All they did was put same picture on diff screen/diff date. Inspections prove its not being done. Were taking and submitting grants from the community and not providing them the quality trails they're paying for. Alaska State Trails Seminar, tried to address these issues again, we asked again to be considered for membership, part of the board, part of grooming standards and procedures to implement in Big Lake... I've got so much info 10 minutes doesn't cover it. Thank you very much. Three decades worth of maps, btw.

**DM:** Thank you for inviting us to speak today. Best the trails have ever been... main response we are getting from community. Lots of folks we deal with were part of writing the 'Big Lake Comprehensive Plan'. Identified lots of things we needed to do. Lots in danger, need to be preserved, lots didn't have agreements... figured was 10 year project. Work on specific needs... brushing, trail condition, education. Developed organization 2007-08, got official 501c3 designation in Oct 2008. Worked with Mat-Su Trails Org to get grant through them to get money for Big Lake bypass trail on Iron Dog... we were successful in completing that under budget. Big Lake trails present big plan unanimously endorsed by the assembly... part of our original plan. BL trail purchases – 2 groomers and 5 foot drags. Completed Iron Dog Restoration Process sooner and under budget. In May 2010 gave testimony to railroad to protect system from railroad work (also on plan) in July in coop with Mat-Su Borough, got funds for survey of trail system, they received money just last year, we assisted them with completing that. In Nov we bought a 2002 Skandic and 2 heavy equip groomers... Snow Cat and Bombardier. One of the things I wanted to mention is that of 2011 Big Lake trails is the biggest service organization in the BL area... we did not get there by not performing.. we got there by doing what we said we were going to do. Quick pictures of our equipment... Polaris, Tucker Sno-Cat, Bombardier Ski Dozer (some maintenance problems last year, refurbished now. We are really connected to community, esp. by the recreation plan, chamber of commerce, community council. Our board members work with an awful lot of people... cooperatively with other people. Members of community council, chair and members of water quality, land access, memorandum agreement to coordinate other comm. Groups, Alaska Trails, chairman of United Way, Red Cross, Mat-Su Parks and Rec.. point is obvious. Also local business operators, national corporate leaders... our group is volunteer group and we make a difference in other peoples lives. Concerns and solutions: signage last year (examples of signs, trail 14, 14, 6), last year we put over 200 new signs on trails 3, 4, 11, all those trails are fully signed, including red and green markers. We use the boy scouts to put up those signs. We found snowmachiners consider some stakes to be targets, so we put up Carsonite signs... no reflectors yet... easy fix, we'll put them up this year. We signed trail 14 to gas like. Quick example of signage plan for Houston Loop Trail. Quality of grooming seems to be big issue. Were towing around 3400 lb drag and that's what trails look like when you do that. We got a guy here saying he's been traveling trails since 60s said they've never been better, guy who lived there 30 years says never been better, etc, etc. Last year we had 34.7 inches of snow, we had strangers and neighbors alike who were content with trails. Have to look back at what Big Lakes was before. Those of you interested in conclusion there are print-outs on the table.

**KevH:** This part now opens for public testimony. Limit each person to 2 minutes please



**GW:** Live out at Big Lake and have couple businesses, avid snowmobiler, and race. I hear both sides of the clubs. I'm more familiar with DM side of it because of community prospect meetings. I see the comparison of the statements, but I don't know what type of grooming equip is going to be available for BL trails. Very specific on what type of grooming, signage. Both parties said this is not going to happen over night. Going to take a lot to make trails better... no reflectors... some have no signage... frequency of grooming. I volunteered and several other individuals to participate... training to go through (community effort) like the prospect of community involvement. Monday – Thursday schedule. Leaving no conflict between this and Snowmachine.

**VM:** Have rec cabin and go involved helping Big Lake trails. My basic philosophy was have place and don't like riding bad trails. Was there when a lot of grooming was being done as a volunteer. Seeing people riding trails and having nothing but good things to say about it. Something that hasn't been brought up is Iron Dog trail has a bunch of races, so as soon as they happen it's not groomed any more. I think they've been going through growing pains, I think the equipment is right for conditions, you can't use tiller, not enough snow. Dan would attest to passion about this... Big Lake has so much to offer... lots to connect together... connect Houston to Big Lake to Nancy Lake to Willow. Prior to Big Lake, rode in Willow all the time. Condition of ground underneath trail dictates how the trails going to be when people ride on it.

**CC:** Army National Guard, past director of Fur Rondy. Speaking on behalf of BL trails, they have improved over last year and will continue. Trails are best I've seen them in years... and you get value added when it's a non-profit it adds a lot of benefits... area businesses, local events, volunteers, community and chamber of commerce meetings. I would ask for your consideration of facts and longevity rather than presentation and passion of things

**WS:** Have cabin on the north shore of Big Lake. Can't overstate, the condition of trails around like are absolutely impeccable. Impossible to get my wife out on trails and this past one she enjoyed it! Signage was significantly improved. Would encounter grooming crew sometimes on trail, can't express how much crew has done... plan on keeping snowmachine in cabin and look forward to this year.

**OW:** First time I snow machined on Big Lake was 1970. Took daughter and was going to go riding but we had to come back because it was so bad. Now we live off grid in Horseshoe area, and when they started grooming I volunteered

**SM:** Also volunteer with BL trails... awesome what groomers did last year... looks like you're on pavement machine, beautiful. Trying to get kids from our lake to big lake, we put in a trail section between trees, now it's a super highway. There's many of us who are with the BLT

that are involved with other aspects of BL community volunteering, and we're all concerned about what's going on with this situation.. we don't think you would get same benefits from commercial company

**PD:** Not trying to offend, first person I would like to address: Vern has money to be made from Big Lake as public member, the other gentleman if he can second it doesn't really matter... you were the conversation that got interrupted in the meeting. Diff between non-profit and profit, don't know how that works. For profit means you've figured stuff out, it's your business, so you know stuff already. How do you get same quality from non-profit that only operates on weekends?

**DM:** I'm just going to take the opportunity to cover the last slides... wanted to touch on future of deliverables... one thing you can look forward to is a \$44,000 dollar grant for another groomer, so that will be an addition to our equipment.. and comes with a compactor, plus the hydraulics are set up so we can use our other drag. Also can carry 4 passengers. Extra value from non-profit: in deal where we're going to sign deal for big piece of land between BL and mud lake... the mental health trust will NOT allow a profit org to do this, only a non-profit. Work with railroad on impact of trails, safety concerns on Deadman hill, brushing plans on Iron Dog. Thanks!

**VM:** We call them trails, but much more than rec. trail... we use this to bring goods to our cabins

## **SNOWTRAC BOARD COMMENTS**

**MW, PD**

**MW:** You're not asking us to purchase any equipment, 2 snowmobiles

**PD:** As a business, my understanding of it is truly in business I would give scope of work...

**BL:** You've got bid for 18,000 dollars, all per hour over 500+ hour operation

**PD:** This is a minimum amount of time and minimum amount of hours that anything would be done. There's a catch here. A lot of the grooming that was done last year was done by me because they are non-reimbursed trails. I have this accumulated info and type that I donated to community because trails weren't reimbursable. Rightfully we would have put it in as a bid for a contract, not a grant.

**MW:** Two sibs and drag grooms is it possible to groom those trails with just snowmobiles

(room responds with negative noises, "not Iron Dog," etc.)

**PD:** I was going to fund the Tuckers last year for Big Lake. We can do that this year... I know that our system is in a big issue of snowfall, we don't have enough of it so small equip is the way to groom with, not big equip

**SE:** One of first things I got involved with in the board was understanding these grant requests... performance, performance... no one has an exclusive right to public money... when I look at these things I try to see what they want to do through poorly written grants on poorly written form... one of the nearest dearest things to me is public money.. and I don't get to look at performance, and it's a concern of mine that if I'm going to be a part of an entity that gives away public money, I want to make sure they are using it for what's intended... I don't care if it's for or non-profit... performance is what matters

**Tinker:** For Pat, how many hours with 2 sleds and drags in a week? How would you do this with many businesses?

**PD:** Don't have businesses anymore. Retired and blessed with time... summer I fly, winter I snowmachine

**JS:** What are the chances of dividing the area in half... N/S, E/W... that way if one operator equip breaks down the other could be contracted to keep the system up.

**JG:** Are you suggesting they get together, split the trails so they each get a portion of trails and work together to keep area open?

**JS:** Keep the trail system going

**AM:** Could create more of a conflict. Several operators could be grooming the same trail, but different groomers will have different ideas of how wide the trails will be, etc. It's hard when you have conflicting ideas on how to do it... but the main goal is to get the trails flat.

**VM:** Iron dog can NOT be done with snowmachines

**KevH:** State Parks, DNR, the floor is yours

**WB:** We would like to at least describe what the procurement process is. I'll let Karlyn speak first since she has more knowledge even though we

**KH:** Because there are two parties interested in the same area (same money). This group can decide what you want to say, how you want the work done... but you cannot decide who gets the job... not only are those 2 parties interested in it allowed to apply, when the public notice goes out, anyone could apply.. the 2 parties have to propose for the bid, but anyone else can too... basically it ends up being the same type of thing – kind of depends on what type of money involved.

**MW:** Who evaluates

**KH:** (names procurement specialist and producer) will basically select

**MW:** So it won't be based on the criteria this board sets out. We don't have the time or resources

**KH:** The trails coordinator will convey it and present it for you

**JG:** It's not you guys just sitting down yourselves

**KH:** Well it does involve the board, you're in here to discuss what you can give out and this one you can't do because it's become a procurement issue.

**SE:** If my obligation is to review grants... even if there's two competing grants I think it's our duty to score both grants

**Ellis:** You're more than welcome to score.

**SE:** Well I did

**Ellis:** What we're trying to say is that your ability to recommend is not there right now. What we're trying to say is that instead of scoring, there is absence of input from the advisory council. We will do the very best we can to scope the RFP. Joe is saying yes, we want as much input because we've never done this before and number two we want info from the user groups. If it goes forward and there are two competing requests, it is my responsibility to create the best RFP (if that's the vehicle). All we're asking is that if this council wants input we're asking for guidance.

**SE:** I've been in an RFP before years ago on the state side, but my follow up question is that you submit this RFP and everybody submits and you look through them all and you pick one. You go through the requests and you choose somebody. So are you awarding the grant?

**KH:** The procurement officer will award the grant

**JG:** Because it's not a grant anymore?

**KH:** it's a contract. But it still comes from the SnowTRAC grant

**TZ:** You're still going to allocate what the funding is from that area... when the RFP goes out; it will not exceed what you have decided... the bids cannot come in higher than that. Lots of talk about commercial vs. non-profit operator, one big factor is MATCH. Volunteer, time... like the rest of our commercial operators, they bill, and that is in-kind services. There has to be match provided,

**DM:** The merits of resetting the clock and opening it up again... to me, what benefit does that do... you might as well go to every one of these organizations as well. Both groups are being put back to the beginning of process. Is there an inherent prejudice against us?

**MW:** Every entity in the state had an opportunity to fill out app. For funds.

**KH:** It's all in how it's written

**JD:** Whatever contract you decide to award, how does the board know how much money is going out?

**KH:** We decide today and put the cap on it, and then it can't go over

**MW:** In the past, we've had a big grooming pool of dollars. If we've had a low snow area we can apply it to others, if we award any of these a contract, we lose that money. So can we take money away from the contract that's been awarded?

**TZ:** We can take money from other grantees; we can take grant money and add to contract, but not contract money from grant

**KH:** This one will still be a GRANT. We will have to go through a contract process, but it will be a GRANT

**KevH:** At this point the next issue we have is concerned participants in this issue

**DM:** I'm a little concerned that both of our groups will be disenfranchised from this process. The state knew about this months ago. Yesterday, I got an email saying we're doing an RFP. So we leave the whole community of BL hanging while we wait. There has to be a 21 hour waiting period. I would ask that you folks look at this scoring criteria to line up, look at equalization.

**TZ:** The scoring criteria will not be exactly like it is on the score sheets. And

**DM:** Last year we knew who was getting funding at the end of the meeting.

**TZ:** As soon as the board allocates the funding, the grant team will get together, I don't see why this wouldn't go to procurement by the end of September.

**TZ:** The Big Lake folks are going to get their stuff groomed, just don't know by whom yet.

**AM:** There's a lot of attention to the trails in BL. Lots of people involved, if we start doing this competitive business process and if we start bidding lower and lower were going to lose some of the volunteers and passionate people involved in the process.

**GW:** My concern also falls in with the volunteer process and the org is out there judging from past processes and becoming better each time. My concern is that by the vetting process of having two people... it would be unfortunate to the community on both sides. You can't use the vote from the committee... just by the paperwork in front of you. We're all here to contribute to say yea or neigh to each others sides and then the board forwards it on to the granting process, but it doesn't sound like that's what's happening this year

**TZ:** The procurement officer, he goes out and checks safety gear, past performances....it is a huge process and it takes weeks to pull all that information together. It's a BIG deal. Not just looking at the paper. Of course, it goes into his basket and gets dealt with in order, but he knows its going to be a long process.

**KevH:** I'm going to let the co-chair go, and then we can get on to the grants

**1--Define SnowTRAC scope of responsibility=** grading the grants per the numbering system that's in place now and assist DNR for writing the RFP to procurement for the decision on who gets to groom

--**MW:** Recommend allocation of funds to an area

**AM:** We don't have 2 grants in front of us, just one

**JG:** We have requests for grooming pool funds, not grants

**AM:** Had to ask Bill about this in the past... need application for new groomers

**JG:** NO, to add trails to the grooming pool, you need an application. If you just want to groom existing trails, you don't need the full application

**DM:** Bill did indicate that Pat had to fill a new proposal for entrance to the program

**2—Define States scope of responsibility=** write RFP to present recommendations to procurement officers, Procurement officer

**AM:** People forget that there's a telephone, too many assume we all check our email (directed to me)

**KevH:** I would like to see a time or date set, a time line for having that created for us.

**MW:** we ought to take the expertise from this board and have one or two of us guiding

**CM:** I have problem with BL being on committee since he has bias with AGS

***GROOMING COMMITTEE as source for RFP (Joe, Cindy, Tinker)***

**WB:** We will help you with procurement process, we'll take the big lake model that you've been doing for years, and we'll blend it in with the Hatcher Pass RFP scope. If you can get the scope to the p. officer, he can get it done rapidly.

**DM:** I don't know how you're going to resolve this, but you have an 11,000 lb. snow cat pulling a 34,000 lb. drag, how will you compare that with two snowmachines.

**(hubbub starts about bias)**

**KH:** (Gains order to room, threatens to clear out) Bill's not writing grooming criteria there are other members on this board, the state, there are many people you need to put your trust in that are making the decision. From this point forward, we need to look at the state for writing standards. Andre made mistake of asking what equip all groomers used....the performance and quality is what matters.

**TZ:** There is language built in to contract that says if the groomer fails to perform he will get deadline to improve, and if not, he will have the moneys and privileges revoked.

**MW:** On a personal note, I know Bill will be objective, no matter what side he's on

**DM:** We do have 30 years of empirical data that says Iron Dog cannot be groomed with sleds

**BL:** I can show you proof...

**TZ:** Regardless, he is SUGGESTING, the procurement officers and state will be writing

**KH:** We're back re-creating the wheel again, which we shouldn't be doing. There's a lot of attention in Hatcher. These will have to be inspected. They have to have somebody out there to inspect it... we can't take what he said/he said.

**TZ:** I get inspection requests and give them to rangers, who go inspect the operations... and no money goes to anyone until I get the results from them.

***8/31/11 is DATE DECIDED ON FOR BIG LAKE COMMITTEE MEETING***

**CH:** For two groups that are both passionate about the same area and activity, I think it's a shame that you can't get together and work it out. You both care about the trails at big lake and I would like you to try to work it out before we start this process.

**TZ:** Our committee here at the state didn't realize this was procurement... it wasn't until Wayne and I told them because they hadn't experienced the situation before. I apologize its going to take longer and you don't know who's going to get it, but it is what it is.

**KH:** I'll give both of you 2 minutes here

**PD:** Situation brought up, it has been addressed by me numerous times and they have all been turned down. Why is it that this issue is coming in front of the state? It's for this exact reason. I asked for a legit operating club that could do what is needed.

**DM:** I guess the way I can leave it with you folks is this: how would you feel if it was your organization? Put yourself in BL's shoes. I'm not going to go into what has happened between Mr. Daniels and the board and the community. Unfortunately it's turned into this... the board is very close to the community. We are the community... I can say we rep every single person. You cannot please everybody... and you def can't please someone with the motivation to not be pleased with what you're doing. If it was your organization, how would you feel?

**MW:** I want to personally thank everyone for coming out today. We've acted like adults and made some progress. We need to get moving and get these proposals started.

**TZ:** If more than one person or entity applies for a certain area... THIS IS GOING TO BE THE PROCESS... there shouldn't be a question of it from here forward

**MW:** I'd also personally like to thank Kevin. I think he was a little reluctant at first. At this point, I'd like to give everyone 10 mins to make contacts and talk around the room. Maybe layout the ground rules for grant scoring before lunch afterwards.

**JG:** Even if we get one bidder every year, this is good... we should be granting money for safety cabins, signage... requests for money to buy or do stuff... all grooming should be by contract like competitive bid

## **BIG LAKE**

**1-Scope of Responsibility SnowTRAC=** (assist criteria for RFP-grooming committee, allocate funds to area)

**2-Scope of Responsibility STATE=** (create RFP, write contract, finalize criteria, send to procurement)

***BREAK 10 MINUTES (BACK at 11:44)***

***BL: Makes motion to consider late application and make decision on whether to consider them***

***JS: seconds motion***

**TZ:** Denali Highway Club, Lower Susitna River/Yetna River, Trailmix, Hatcher Pass, Petersville/Trappers Creek

**CH:** On minutes from last year, because SNOWMADS app was late last year, we had big discussion about new forms and decided to give them a break last year because of that. But we



definitely had a motion after that to never accept late applications again... and that motion passed. (reads quotes from last years minutes... vote was 8 for, 1 against.

**TZ:** Emails were sent out, some of the emails were incorrect... he did call and ask why he hadn't received anything. Media release sent out April 1<sup>st</sup>... it is buried... difficult to find. My suggestion for the future is that the grant team (I have list of all groomers and what they groom – sent out to all groomers before season... we get card back, we know they got it, and if they don't turn it in, they're SOL)

**BL:** We have new people in DNR this year... and snowballing effect of problems, so I think we should consider it this year... no one to call and remind of letter of intent

**SE:** We have more requests than we had funds. We had to place in priority... I would agree if there were issues above and beyond someone's control... I think we should consider looking at the late applicants; maybe it would help to penalize the ones that were late

**JG:** We didn't nick anybody last time... we found the funds

**BL:** My reason is because the state had so many turnovers this year with personnel, and club leaders changed over, so sometimes the wrong people were being contacted

**Tinker:** I got an email, press release, and then follow up phone call from Bill, was I the only one

**AM:** If we do decide to take a look or include these grants, how are we going to look at them?

**TZ:** Echols called last week and asked when he was asking when someone was going to contact him about submission

**AM:** How did we do on utilizing money last year? We allocated a bunch... did we use it all or have some left over?

**WB:** Mat-Su hasn't been involved so much, so I went through and tried to find it on state parks website and could not find it

**MW:** Andy you had strong feelings against accepting late applications)

**AM:** I think I was aligned with Eric or didn't vote

**MW:** Eric are you deadest against doing it?

**EM:** I think we're in jeopardy if we set rules and don't stick to them

**MW:** Someone put it in a sentence whether we're going to include applicants into the grooming pool or not? And can state parks reach out to those applicants that have not submitted this year, like Denali Highway?

**BL:** Being the fact that we have a way out for next year and the states having all sorts of problems getting the info out this year.

**MW:** Understanding our intent is to eventually not allow late applicants

**MW:** *Makes MOTION this round we accept the late application into the grooming pool, and ask the groups that have not submitted yet and have in the past if they would like to turn in an applications this year (10 days from Monday)*

**A VOTE IS HELD:**

**8 for, 1 against**

**BREAK for LUNCH at 12:02... BACK at 1:07pm**

**SD:** A lot of you will check out tomorrow morning, some of you will have later checkouts, so ill come back at 1 tomorrow again. I'll come back several times tomorrow, and those leaving Saturday just give your receipts to me as soon as possible and the faster you get them to me the faster you'll get the money back

**MW:** Let's go over the steps for scoring the grant. They've worked well the last two years; I'm hoping we all have the grants scored this year. If anyone has a conflict of interest, name it first. If the state has anything to add (easement issues, etc.) (anything that would influence our decision), and then we will open it to public comment from applicants. Answer any questions that board members might have, and keep on subject of the grants. We now have new information and we can revise our scores. Jessie you may not know this but you get to change the scores as we go along. Each grant is individual. Any members of the public here to speak specifically?

---

**The following pages are brief overviews of the second round of new and existing projects submitted for supplemental funding through the Recreational Trails Grant Program that the Outdoor Recreational Trails Advisory Board (ORTAB) have ranked and scored. The summary of each project was created from information provided in each grant proposal for new grants. The initial project overview, coupled with the changes for additional funding, are summarized for each of the applicants with approved projects asking for more funding.**

Comments from the Board members and the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation (DPOR) staff are included at the bottom of each project sheet. Comments have been recorded to provide the Board's rationale for scoring a each project. Motions to fund or not fund a project are included in each comment section.

The following projects are listed in order by a reference number. The projects were not reviewed by the Board in the order of reference number. They were reviewed by their rank (Score of 1-100) and category (Non-Motorized, Motorized, Diversified). The final scores determined for each project by the Board can be referenced at the end of this document in an Excel spreadsheet. In the spreadsheet, Board member scores were the only points to be averaged to create the final ranking for each project. DPOR staff scores were not included in the averages.

After completion of the ORTAB review process, scores and recommendations were provided to the DPOR Director, Ben Ellis, by the State Trails Coordinator, Bill Luck. On [REDACTED] the Director approved the ORTAB recommendations, and on [REDACTED] tentative award letters were sent to applicants. Project applicants currently await the completion of State Agency Review and final approval from our funding source the Federal Highway Administration.

1. **Big Lake – Alpine General Services**

- **Pat Daniels, Alpine General Services**
- \$18,815 (requested) / \$6,271.67 (match) / \$25,086.67 (total)
- DIVERSIFIED
- Remove weekend grooming, consistent weekly schedule, heavy duty steel grooming drag, updating existing signage, 10 new winter kiosks
- Project funds will pay for equipment, fuel, maintenance, signage, labor
- **Land Owners:** Mental Health Trust, Mat-Su Borough

**Project Description:** To provide a higher quality and more frequency of grooming to the State trails in Big Lake. To provide more emphasis of safety for the users, as well as provide and promote a better riding experience to all visitors coming out to the Big Lake recreational area

***Discussed Above***

## **2. Caribou Hills Cabin Hoppers Trail Grooming**

- **Gary Anderson, Caribou Hill Cabin Hoppers**
- \$0 (requested) / \$0 (match) / \$0 (total)
- **MOTORIZED**
- New trails with permits established, no new funds, established grooming pool funds plus volunteer hours, membership dues and gaming efforts such as pull tabs
- No funding requested
- **Land Owners:** Kenai Peninsula Borough

**Original Project Description:** CHCH is not requesting any additional funds for these trails providing established trails funds request is approved at requested funds. LOST CREEK, GOLD HILLS, JESSIE'S EXTENDED, BARRELL TRAIL, DEEP CREEK DOME

### **SnowTRAC Comments:** (

**CH:** Moved application to Grooming Pool (9 for, 0 against).

**JG:** Any conflicts of interest?

**Tinker:** Conflict of interest (member of CHCH and volunteer groomer)

**MW:** DNR staff?

**SN:** I don't have any problems, don't think Teri does... they did get part of grooming pool last year

**JG:** Public comment

**MW:** Legal access on all these trails?

**Kidder:** Some are on application status but some are state land, others Kenai Peninsula Borough have signed off on them. It is one of the trail systems where establishing legal easements has taken years, and are getting to the point of getting the easement recorded is still in the books.

**BL:** So they still can legally groom that trail?

**Kidder:** Yes.

**MW:** There's a reference in here to Deep Creek Dome Trail for authorization only for summer non-motorized use.

**Tinker:** I can answer that, and yes on center plateau trail... Deep Creek Dome Trail... access fire cabins up there. The red line is the Deep Creek Dome Trail but Natives called it Center Plateau... Center Plateau trail is another trail already established. The non-motorized trail is the one that goes to fire access.

**Kidder:** That's an LHS, which is better than an easement

**EM:** So am I to understand you don't want to groom that fire trail

**Tinker:** No, guess she should put a sticky saying "not this one"

**EM:** So request to add trail to grooming pool

**BL:** With no extra money, actually cuts costs because it loops back... actually saves us money.

**Tinker:** Want to name them legally, add them to the state SnowTRAC Grooming Pool

**EM:** Do want to point out something to Tinker, know you didn't write the grant but there's no volunteer match on here. There's no value of grooming equipment that can count as a match. If it was rented, yes, but the value itself is not a match. You could claim the pickup truck cost as a match if you drove it there this way

**Tinker:** I think she listed it as value of what we own rather than needing the equip

**JG:** This brings up my? again about AHTNA. Does the easement clear riders; I just don't see it in the letter. You have an easement to groom that trail, but does SIRI also imply or add to that easement, because SIRI, like AHTNA, can shut off access to their land if they want

**Tinker:** Yes, because it's an LSH

**JS:** What about individual rider that goes off the trail onto individual land... riders restricted to trail?

**(all say yes)**

**Kidder:** Yes

**Tinker:** there are private property signs... river also limits where they can go. That's the other thing Cindy and I talked about in past years; this limits the trespassing issue on their other side lands. You get across the little piece and your right back on state land, just about ¼ of a mile.

**MW:** I'm fine with it

**Tinker:** Actually a lot of it has been signed by Snow Mads, Andre & Kidder

***MW MOTION TO ADD Lost creek, gold hills, Jessie's Extension, Barrel Trail, and Deep Creek Dome TO SnowTRAC GROOMING TRAIL LIST***

***(not counting it as a grant, but we're turning in scores)***

***JG Seconds***

***VOTE 8 for, 1 conflict of interest***

**BREAK... BACK AT 3:50**

**SnowTRAC VOTE:**

**Wilke:**

**Gauna:**

**YES: \_\_\_\_\_ NO: \_\_\_\_\_**

---

3. **Copper Country Winter Trail Grooming (Glennallen-Tolsona-Crosswind)**

- **Jerry Lesemann, Copper Country Snowmobile Club**
- \$6,000 (requested) / \$1,632 (match) / \$7,632 (total)
- DIVERSIFIED
- No detailed description but gives needed info, match funds from volunteer operator
- Funding to be used for tucker groomer rate of \$55/hour (includes fuel & maintenance), and snowmachines rate of \$15/hour (signage and light grooming)
- **Land Owners:** Ahtna, Inc.

**Project Description:** CCSC is requesting funds to groom winter trails located in the Glennallen-Tolsona-Crosswind areas. We propose to groom the trails 2 to 3 times a week over the winter depending on snow fall

**SnowTRAC Comments:** (

**MW:** Any conflicts of interest?

**(no conflicts)**

**SN:** We have never had them as a grantee before

**(no public comment)**

**MW:** Board discussion

**Kidder:** They have gotten permits on the AHTNA land before, since the BLM land is state selected, they get a concurrence from us.

**BL:** So all permits are in place for one year? As far as you can tell the permits are in place for the year

**Kidder:** Yes, they are covered

***(JM looks for any other support letters, etc. none found)***

**JG:** I see the permit for AHTNA to groom trail, but does that also allow them the use of the trail... riders

**JS:** When I was pres of anchorage snowmobile club, AHTNA sent us a letter that it was 50 per season, 10 per day, in order to ride on their land.

**MW:** Now they put signs up that say no trespassing

**JS:** So do we groom?

**JG:** Up in Cantwell and Broad pass, there are easements so they can't charge you... but the easement is on terrain that is so gnarly that there's a conflict because they can't stay on the terrain

**Kidder:** These trails being groomed are on that easement

**MW:** So AHTNA can't charge over the easement

**BL:** Your big parking areas are along the road or way... lots of access points

**Kidder:** Inspected Tolsona/crosswinds trailhead and there was an issue with parking at lodge, so they built extra parking next to a volunteer fire house. And there are signs for crosswinds/Tolsona at the access point.

**JG:** The easement satisfies me, but we have a one-year agreement, not ten

**MW:** But they can't because the land owner doesn't give those

**Kidder:** It's 10 years for public land, 5 for private

**MW:** If it's 17B then there's pretty much access forever

**Kidder:** But it's pretty much the drive-in and construction work access that needs to be permitted. 17Bs are purely access easements

**MW:** What about access across BLM lands, they don't address it in there

**Kidder:** In past years they worked with Glennallen, but now they're working with Justine McDonald at BLM. It looks clean from what I've seen... no right of way issues.

**SE:** When I was reading through, it is consistent with many applications... I just want to reiterate intent and experience (trying real hard for amateur group)... lets take into consideration spirit and intent... if they're trying to do something right, we should try to support it to the degree than we can

**MW:** Here it says 'detailed project narrative' they have nothing and there's 20 points

**EM:** Is this an application to add new trails to the grooming pool?

**MW:** I have to interpret as two-fold request... identify these as SnowTRAC trails, and give them money to groom. So maybe tell them send in returning grooming form next year. Add them to the trail list, which I have serious doubts about with the money we have



**MW:** last year we said we should concentrate on trails we have in pool, and not add more

**CH:** in 2001 we gave them a grant to survey trails

**MW:** let's assume then they do have legal access?

**Kidder:** yes. This is actually one of the easier areas, simple land ownership

**JG:** but they are not in the SnowTRAC grooming pool yet.

**MW:** have they proven to us these are legal easements? Are they going to be there year after year?  
Does anyone know these people at all?

**AM:** doesn't sound like many of us have been up there. Seems like we're getting quite a bit of  
volunteer match.

**SN:** actually match is wrong on budget sheet. It should be \$2,000

**JG:** 2 years ago we rode to crosswinds and someone had groomed it

**BL:** these guys have groomed it for free for years, hoping to get permits

**JG:** the benefit to the snowmobiler is most important. I'm not sure that grooming 3x a year is of max  
benefit to the general public

**SE:** if there's less of a population, it shouldn't matter. Riders are riders, just because they're not in a  
heavily populated area doesn't mean they don't deserve the use

**BL:** I think they could go into SnowTRAC, but what's the point if we can't fund them

**MW:** I remember discussion from last year about how if we add and add more trails it will dilute the  
quality of the grooming

**SE:** I certainly have a difference of opinion in this area... I'm still concerned if we're not looking at  
this in a fair play situation, then we're beginning to miss the point

**MW:** I don't think we actually need to score this one... we move to include these trails into the  
SnowTRAC pool... they are legal trails. The decision to FUND will be on a year by year basis. I  
would have no objection to adding them to the pool, and then we can see how many dollars  
shake out year by year, and what they do with the funding they get

**AM:** I think its bad to get clubs to rely solely on grants to groom... however they do it, I think clubs  
have lots of diff ways to raise money... taking a little more ownership of their own trails  
they're riding on. I'm not sure the reg fee increase is going to go over. I think a lot of people  
are putting up opposition to it... I think riders should support the organizations in their local

areas. When someone's putting effort into starting a volunteer organization. .. but maybe we need to pull some money out of Hatcher Pass... are they supporting themselves at all... or just riding on the state funds

***MW Makes motion to move Copper Country Trails (5 mile trail, Crosswind Trail, Mile 175 Trail, Ewan Lake Trail) into SnowTRAC Grooming Pool.***

***BL: seconds motion***

**JG:** my concern is that we as a group last year said we're not going to add any more trail... but if we add them in they'll come looking for more money

**MW:** what if we get in the situation where we don't get a drop of snow, and it gets dumped on up there

**AM:** I'd more push that we support the grant as is, and encourage them to apply next year too. We shouldn't penalize them because we're worried about future budget issues

**CH:** so we already added them to the grooming pool. (found file on her computer)

**JS:** page 18 of 22... description also includes signage. Are we buying signs or not?

***MW Withdraws his motion, since it was already in Grooming Pool***

***CH Seconds motion***

***VOTED 8 for 1 against***

***AM thinks that it should be included as a grant this year***

**BL:** so what do we do about the signs?

**CH:** it's to put the signs up though... gas and expenses

**MW:** I don't get the fact that they're asking for signs on here.

**JM collects applications even though we are not scoring as application**

---

#### 4. Montana Creek Groomer Purchase

- **Ben Barclay, Montana Creek Motor Musers**
- \$12,500 (requested) / \$4,166.67 (match) / \$16,666.67 (total)
- **MOTORIZED**
- Funding will be used to purchase new wide track snow machine, similar to 2008 4-stroke Viking
- **Land Owners:** CIRI/Montana Creek Native Assoc., Mat-Su Borough

**Original Project Description:** Purchase of a new Wide track snowmachine to pull groomers.

Currently have 3 machines and one is approaching retirement and extensive maintenance costs. This new machine will maintain our ability to groom with three drags

#### SnowTRAC Comments: (

**MW:** any conflicts of interest?

**(none declared)**

**JG:** DNR information?

**SN:** they were awarded grant last year 4,000 and it was the only grant from last year that has not been done. Bill said there were permit issues. Don't know specific details... but \$4,000 have been obligated and is still sitting there.

**MW:** so not wrong that it hasn't been requested for reimbursement?

**SN:** not out of compliance. But there is \$4000 a year later that has not been obligated by me

**Kidder:** from the research I've done myself, it's tricky. It's a state-held easement that crosses native land... so got pushed to even smaller level. The state was holding and saying yes you can do the work with a land use permit, but also get native permission. So yes, go forward do the work, but let the Montana Creek Native Assoc. what's going on.

**JG:** the south fork Montana creek gang should be pursuing... so to a degree it's separated from this grant. And you encouraged them to contact the Native Assoc?

**Kidder:** yes, told them to write formal letter informing the Native Assoc to let them know activities and specifics

**JG:** is it inappropriate for the state to write that letter

**Kidder:** no, not exactly... I can give Ben Barclay a call

**BL:** it sounds like to me he didn't understand exactly what he needs to do

**Kidder:** I'll do that, and talk with Cliff and Candy and those folks

**MW:** so, public comments?

**(no public comments)**

**MW:** board comments?

**JS:** nothing current, all letters copied from past grants... support letters from couple years ago, no quotes

**BL:** I hate to say it but Ben knows he needs three quotes

**EM:** and there's no match

**JG:** ***MAKES motion to approve or not approve request.***

**MW:** would prefer we all turn scores in. pass scores up please

---

5. **Mat-Su Trail Marking**

- **Bruce Paulsen, Mat-Su Borough**
- \$6,275 (requested) / \$2,091.67 (match) / \$8,336.67 (total)
- **DIVERSIFIED**
- Only paying for signs... equipment, volunteer labor, fuel, maintenance are match
- **Land Owners:** Mat-Su Borough

**Project Description:** Purchase trail markers and signs for multiple-use winter trails, primarily used by snowmobiles. Mat-Su Borough will distribute the markers and signs to those trail groups and organizations who have signed agreements with the borough under the Trail Care Program. The trail groups will be responsible for installation and maintenance of trail markers and signs

**SnowTRAC Comments:** (

**MW:** any conflicts of interest?

**(no conflicts of interest)**

**SN:** one of the best applicants to deal with, always timely with reports and documentation. No problem at all

**DM:** just having worked with Bruce, have to say he's awesome... all in order, timely, good records, really good program; I can't encourage you enough to approve it

**JG:** I pretty much echo what Dan said, great grant but no budget

**JG:** there is a clarification of all the signs going to organizations for snowmobile signage?

**JS:** couldn't this be a safety and education?

**BL:** he likes to do a match because he likes the clubs to have to produce a match. He doesn't want to be a safety issue as much as he wants to get people out to do it

(all scored low because only odd pages went out)

**BL:** another clarification is that he calls to all the clubs and asks what they need and why. I'm sure he has the information detailed for us somewhere

**CH:** well, I score grants pretty hard and it's a 95 for me, so everything's there

**MW:** take time to make sure that everything you dinged it for is actually in the application

(take time to look back over app with all the pages)

**MW:** to those of you who go out and put out markers, are these consistent with state standards?

**BL:** oh yes

**MW:** there are lots of other signs places out there

**BL:** he uses Borough rules that say you need three bids

**MW:** score him lower then, so he'll know next year to include the bids if he has them

**JG:** if we think he should just put it in as a safety thing, we should let him know that

**MW:** turn them in

---

## **6. Iron Dog Snowmobile Safety Expo**

- **Kevin Kastner, Iron Dog, Inc.**
- \$14,250 (requested)
- **SAFETY & EDUCATION**
- Project funds used for the cost of facility, equipment, project coordination, even communications and advertising
- Curtis M. Menard Sports Complex, Wasilla

**Project Description:** The primary purpose of the Annual Iron Dog Snowmobile Safety EXPO is to provide awareness to the public in snowmobile safety and education. Presentations and seminars have shown to be a strong means to accomplish this goal. With the inclusion of public safety organization, youth safety programs, industry vendors, and the distribution of educational materials, the EXPO reaches a vast and wide variety of the community. Iron Dog, Inc. will also conduct a public safety inspection of Iron Dog participant snowmobiles with required safety and survival gear. Strict safety standards are enforced for participant safety. The public will have the opportunity to gather educational information directly from the race participants.

### **SnowTRAC Comments: (**

**MW:** any conflict of interests?

**SN:** no compliance issues. This is a safety and ed grant again

**KK:** I am the executive director. First thank you for taking the time to review the app. Some of you are familiar with the expo. I'm the new guy, took on the org last year. That being said, I think we've turned it around significantly. Been through it without grant last year, I'm hoping what I've written in application as my vision describes that. One thing that is key to note: in the past, safety was an add on, I plan to have it as a central focus. There are going to be actual demonstrations going on onstage as far as what training programs are coming up. Some partners have thrown some weight, and so now we have safety cards to distribute to the villages. So we really want to give stronger emphasis to safety. We have had some injuries... first thing we talk about is safety in our board meetings. I would like to see this happen at the EXPO. We don't ask our partners to pay a fee for the table, so that's why we need

money to run the thing. SO that's it in a nutshell, I think most of it's in there if you have questions I'm all ears

**Am:** student exchange program

**KK:** pilot thing I did last year, it's an urban role exchange.. 5 from King Career Center and 5 from Tanana... they come in and get to participate hands-on.. get to work on start of race. Then we take city kids and send them to bush Tanana.. experience dog mushing and other daily lives..; purpose is cultural, regional, geography... but really getting people who don't know what bush is to have that experience and take it home with them. Very minimal help last year, most came out of pocket... I heard some of the things you were requesting from NAOI and this is a good year for us to collaborate... together I think we can do that outreach.. and produce evergreen products.. making the investment so it has long and increasing value. After this year, I think next year we'll be addressing that idea. Great attendance last year... want something happening that they're going to pay attention to actively and passively.

**AM:** I know Iron Dog in these villages is huge. Riding through villages with these people the kids respect handing them safety information

**KK:** we also did ambassador team last year (National Guard colonel, etc... main mission public relation.. went ahead of time to shake hands and reach out). Went to school in Nome and did youth-oriented classes. Trying to do something this year that can be in hands.. some of it will get mailed out, some goes to ambassador team

**AM:** one thing I've heard in the past that villages feel race just goes through and they're supposed to do things for them but feel a bit used

**KK:** the whole point of that was addressed last year with the ambassadors and outreach, to tell villages we need them. Trying to expand the exchange program this year... expanding to 20 kids... safety is a message that is very easy to apply, now that Doyon is helping we can provide more concrete materials that talk about basics of snowmobile safety.

**SE:** while you were talking I was thinking about Iron Dog over the years and I don't know if my perception is along with the general publics.. I just saw it as a snowmobile race.. had no idea of the trail class, and all the other things that go along with it. I started finding out more and the club that I'm with in Fairbanks supports it , I started taking more of an interest, and last year I found there was a safety expo. Iron Dog offers a lot more than just a race. I would like to hear more about it.. I think more people need to hear about the full aspect

**KK:** last year was the first time we had it on live television. This year we intend to fully expand on that.. a lot of build up, lead up, getting to know the racers.. spend an awful lot of money this year to address the issue of getting the news out that we have these things going on. There's a lot of information that gets transferred in this one day event, because you can still come do the rookie workshop if you don't plan on racing. Here's what's coming, when its coming and what it's all about

**SE:** it's held in Wasilla, it's from public money, and I want people in Fairbanks to know

**KK:** we had volunteers take t-shirts up last year.. this year myself, other staff, snowmachine, and put effort into winter show in Fairbanks so people up there can get wind. We'll be right next to

compos so we're flush with supporting this part of the state.. we have a lot more to going out there as far as participation and support

**MW:** who are your sponsors

**KK:** still in negotiation stages.. still National Guard as title sponsor, Donlon Gold, all transportation provided, everyone who was involved last year will be back

**MW:** have they made a commitment

**KK:** NG can't commit to multi-year, so we expect from past performance that the funding will come no problem, but have to wait each year

**MW:** how many people at last years?

**KK:** 3,500 approximately.. at the expo was north of 2400. Tried to keep track.

**MW:** I personally have a problem with paying for one day events. I think if Iron Dog would like to come to SnowTRAC for money, I would like to see you asking to take money to the bush rather than blowing all the money in one day in a matter of 8 hours. I was really disappointed to not see one letter of support from one single snowmobiler... if you want to win this board, we need to see individuals saying I went to this last year and it was a really great event

**KK:** to be honest, it wasn't last year.. there was no existing organization basically.. this year I would like to prove if you do invest in this this year, you will get those kind of comments

**JS:** I've seen both sides of this I can remember back in the 80s when the safety check was held outside in the Wal-Mart parking lot. There wasn't too much safety going on in the Denali center the next couple years... but over the years more safety interaction going on. Looks like this year is focused on safety and that's good. Do have a problem with the application.. anything over 1000 dollars you have to have 3 bids. Facility and venue 5,000.. quotes for PC system were from last year.. and only one quote. Did the price go up, down, we don't know..

**KK:** we have to hire the guy, it's not just a PA system. Everyone want me to commit to 3 year deal, but I can't because we can't get 3 year sponsors.

**MW:** for one, I don't think he's the only one who does the service in town. By state limitations, you need to provide us with 3 bids. If you turn in a grant application and you don't have those three bids it really terribly effects your scores.

**KK:** I think we did two but we ended up with Marty because he was preferred.

**JG:** to clarify then, its 1000 that needs the bids.

**SN:** We ask for three, in some circumstances depending on what it is there are not three sources. But the request is for 3 bids for over 1000

**MW:** so the letter addressing the fact that you can't get three bids would suffice

**KK:** yea because for some things in the bush, there is really only one

**SN:** yes it does say 500 here, but it is supposed to be 1000



**MW:** any further questions for applicant?

**AM:** thank you for coming in here, it sounds like you're doing some great things

**KK:** thank you for having us. It will be easier to address the issues you've raised this year that we know now what presses your buttons

**MW:** the average rider really doesn't think that safety is that big of a priority because it's an individual thing. The public perception is very important for snowmobile community to see that safety is important. Turn in applications.

**SN: (2:23pm)** clarification on bids.. threshold of \$1000 applies to supplies, materials and equipment.. there is nothing online right now saying it's needed for contractors.

**MARK CALLS FOR 10 min BREAK at 2:09pm**

---

**7. NAOI – Snowmobile Safety for Alaska**

- **Debra McGhan, North America Outdoor Institute (NAOI)**
- \$15,000 (requested)
- **DIVERSIFIED**
- Funds will be used to pay for labor, project supplies, program materials, marketing, and grant administration

**Original Project Description:** This project will begin with a statewide educational conference to attract and network snowmobile & avalanche instructors and those interested in becoming instructors. The conference will feature workshops and skills training for instructors to promote sharing and development of the most current and effective methods of instruction. This event will be followed by a public education training even which provides an opportunity for instructors to practice their sills and the public to learn from professional trainers. The goal of this project is to expand the pool of snowmobile safety instructors and encourage a culture of snowmobile safety.

**SN:** applicant is in compliance

---

**SnowTRAC Comments:**

**Debra McGhan:** what we are trying to do is bring people that are influential in the community of snowmobile enthusiasts, and try to encourage them to become snowmobile instructors. We have been using snowmobile safety people to teach sb safety training. The trouble is getting the info out to communities and organizations. When we do a project like this, we need to hear from you and get your input... we want to serve snowmobile riders. Snowmo safety conference, Alaska Avalanche info Center, Iron Dog, Arctic Man, APU... snow

conference in Nov before people get crazy... if you are snowmo riders interested in being an educator.. come to this conference and we can give the materials that can attract students through interactive fun lessons teaching the skills you need to be out there and safe. It starts with a conference, and then goes to events and communities around the state. The clubs and orgs that contacted us did get a program last year. So we want to hear from you. We've heard even from outside areas that want a snowmo program that is geared toward children. We need more riders as instructors so we can get these instructors out to these areas so they can serve the communities where they ride

**AM:** instead of reinventing the wheel.. come up with some consistency (curriculum).. something we can put out there that we can stand behind and put out there and provide for the public by a variety of means and information that is very cohesive

**DM:** last year we made a lot of progress towards a steady curriculum that meets that standard, and one of the measures we're taking this year is a peer review from around the nation... but we're doing these in a way where it is being effective. I'm here to rep the general public, I was born and raised in this state, and lost a lot of friends to snow accidents... I've been doing this for all the people I know and all the neighbor kids.. I don want to spend my time and the states money .. we need to look at what's being done around the world that we can adopt here in alaska.

**BL:** last year we were talking about what we wanted from the grant, and we were talking about getting people from these outer villages to come participate... so we actually asked her to produce this, we should remember

**CH:** what percentage of this money is going to the training?

**DM:** we've applied to Conoco Phillips and other agencies to do everything we need to do, we need 150,000.. to be effective and make impact we need the collaboration. Skidoo is considering sponsoring us, so that would make it stretch farther. We told Conoco we need to know by November, so we will know by the conference if we have enough funds and momentum to take it around the state. That's really the key is to get people in those areas to be in instructors.

**JS:** you did a great job bringing this.. its one of the best out of this whole bundle. I do see a little bit of problem. Now that I'm sitting on the inside, I have to protect the registration money. The users of the snowmobiles, it's their dollars. The type of users that benefit, you checked x-country skiers.. even went DIVERSIFIED .

**DM:** that's exactly the reason I did that because we noticed when we do a program for snowmobilers, we attract more users that use Snowmobiles even if they are not primary riders, if they sign up for specific class , they do the riding.. and get those techniques. The program itself is beneficial to everyone, not just riders.

**JS:** I'm going to have to answer to riders when they ask why their money is going to skiers. They see that you're applying for a grant that has the potential of skiers, dog mushers, snowboarders, which is good... but they may say why am I paying for that

**DM:** the program IS for snowmobilers, but if you are a dog musher that rides sb part of the time, it includes those that use them as means for other activities. What I'm saying is that this program is for snowmobilers, but if you ski or board you're going to benefit, but we're inviting the sb community to benefit from it

**AM:** I'd say half the snowmobiles going over turnagain pass have snowboards attached to them. Seeing a lot more diversified, mixed use.

**DM:** and if you're a skier on the back of that sled, you better know if the driver is taking you in safe places or not. The ultimate goal here is that we're trying to educate people so we don't have to fish them out of rivers or dig them out of snow banks. Ultimately if we had our way, we would be doing these for snowmobile clubs, that's our target here.. the communities and clubs that are snowmobile specific

**BL:** are you charging any fees for the class?

**DM:** unfortunately once we do the classes were at 0 again, so we're not getting ahead. We want to do it for free, but it perpetuates the program and if it's free they sign up and never show... it helps to have that commitment from the public.

**BL:** once they're trained are you going to help them set up classes and pay them to do that?

**DM:** yes, that's the goal of the whole program

**MW:** I've had a love-hate situation with safety education program. I do have to say you're getting closer to a program I can fully sign off on. Constructive criticism: still way too avalanche-focused (rates have gone way down), you need to concentrate your efforts on river travel, lake travel, collisions, fallen objects.. no material on open water crossings.

**DM:** that is in here

**MW:** what % are riding on glaciers compared to open areas, take some emphasis off avalanche. Build us a program that's catered to the average rider

**DM:** after the conference last year, we took all those suggestions and incorporated it in their, however when 2 people get lost in glacier, and Conoco loses two people in an avalanche we have to put it back in the program

**BL:** yeah those get better news coverage

**MW:** but it's not the real situation. Very focused on extreme rescue techniques, didn't see any one from native corporations.. you need to address getting people from outside areas into these conferences. I'm not seeing those people on the attendance lists.

**DM:** the list that you saw was the safety professionals doing the search and rescue, but I agree.. my goal is to bring those people in. I've been working on a list of people and as soon as we get the money, I'll call them in.

**MW:** we've had a lot of one-day seminars, conferences.. time to get the program out of the classroom and onto the field.

**DM:** my focus is community. We need a peer review to make sure the info, last year was very focused on addressing the things you brought up. Our key speaker is a head programmer from Canada. We want to pick his brain how he addressed their villages in outlying communities and figure out how he brought them in. That is the challenge, how do we get them here. Thank you

**JS:** just looked at the paper 2 weeks ago.. some rider tried to cross Susitna, ended up on an island getting hypothermic. Rivers are more of a focus

**DM:** would love for you guys to attend one of these programs, so you can see what we're doing. We do still address avalanches, but it was like a week long course, and avalanches were covered for half a day. A snowmobile safety instructor we have on board has been to all these villages and he said he wouldn't do it again out of pocket, but the stories are incredible from the different villages and what they try to do as far as riding

**AM:** who in the villages, once we train someone, where is the longevity? Is it the village safety officer? Can we identify a more specific person that might be in it for a career and have like a 10 year go at it?

**MW:** a certification program

**DM:** State troopers and public health nurses are really reaching out to us from the communities. But Andy's right, it's really important to identify people that are in it for the long haul

**SN:** this is a safety and education grant, doesn't require a match. Just pointing out that it isn't something she has to do

**MW:** turn in revised scores, and add

**4:16pm**

**Looking at final scores. CHCH and Copper Country were scored, but not considered Grants.  
Leaving: Montana Creek at 38.56, Mat-Su at 87, Iron Dog at 67, and NAOI at 76.**

**BL MOTIONS THE TOP 2 SCORES GET FUNDED, REST GET DROPPED**

**JG SECONDS MOTION**

**VOTE: 4 for, 5 against**

**SN:** there is no more Safety & Education requirement anymore

**MW:** we were funding applicants we didn't really want to fund because we were required to fund 25%

**AM:** so we are the most contentious of Montana Creek. NAOI scored fairly well

**EM:** not a big difference between the 2 safety ones

**Tinker:** partially fund both?

**MW:** can't split it, because we can't provide solid justification for the reason of underfunding

**JG:** remember, the director can override and fund everything if he wants

**MW:** I don't like one day things, but it gives us good rep, and if we deny a safety grant...

**BL:** also funding a race, not recreational snowmobiling

**MW:** has anybody been to Iron Dog

**CM:** we've been to the expo and it's a wonderful thing

**BL:** what I'm going at is if there's only that amount, we need to groom trails. Is it worth the 1400 dollars that we don't have to fund Iron Dog

**CH:** this should have come out in the scores. This is the only process we have to give as an excuse to the public.

**BL:** we can pick any number of grants.. can draw the line anywhere

**AM:** if we fund Iron Dog this year and sticks around and comes back.. he'll come back next year with more snowmobile stars to do presentations in area, more exchange programs

**SE:** I've gotten a diff perspective of Iron Dog over the last years.. I agree with the one day thing, but I think the Iron Dog is much more.. and they should market it. If they can continue making the Iron Dog the event that it is .. it is an even that is indicative of snow machining, a sport of alaska.. if we can progress it to being what it can be I'm all for it

**JS:** so is the board against partial funding. The way I look at it .. Montana creek off the board, Mat-Su is strictly safety.. have their act together.. the other two, didn't really have the whole app together.. partially fund those

**SN:** after the director has made the call.. then people come back in and ask why didn't you fund this, etc. We've had issues with people that are up there that have come back and said something about the process. I would fund or not fund.

**JS:** if the person has three quotes, we can pick the lowest bid

**MW:** lets say a grantee is asking for 2 diff pieces of equip.. one you think they need, one they don't. You can say we'll fund one, but not the other. That's a quantifiable judgment. In this, you're just saying take 10-50 percent off the top.. no quantifiable explanation behind the decision

**AM:** I think one thing that we're focusing on is the 99%.. 325. We've struggled with these safety & ed for years and now we're getting some that are trying and really fixing things.. while we're still working on state-run safety program or not. I don't care that much about grooming I'm in the mountains.. you get so caught up with grooming, you leave a lot of the state in the dark. I think one day events sends the wrong message... we need to send the message that safety is important

**BL:** we basically have 3 safety grants up there.. can we take 2 and fund them, and if we get extra money, fund the 3<sup>rd</sup>? If we don't there's going to be all sorts of problems in here, whether we're talking grants or grooming

**MW:** last year we were flush.. it's harder when you have less money than requests

***AM MOTION TO FUND IRON DOG, NAOI and MAT-SU***

***MW SECONDS***

***VOTE: 4 for, 5 against***

**SN:** I would suggest you table this for tonight.. I will contact fed highways and try to get a positive answer.. if I do it will become less mute. Worst that can happen is at 8:30 we'll be in the same place.

**SE:** Andy's not going to be there tomorrow

**(agreed we need vote tonight)**

**EM:** I'm going to get something closer to Johns or

***MOVES TO FUND MAT-SU at FULL, and IRON DOG and NAOI at 12,000 EACH***

***TINKER SECONDS MOTION***

***VOTE: 2 for, 7 against***

**MW:** Eric, do you have a justification

**EM:** I'd be happy to pick out what should and should not be funded, and can give Ben the reasons if he needs them. I've always had problem with Iron Dog because it's funding a commercial race. NAOI I've had issues with over the years, but I remind you all to re-read our mission statement and we're being hypocritical if we don't fund any safety projects. So, until something else comes along I think we would be very remiss in cutting them off. I know what Iron Dog did last year in Western AK was very effective and Debra's group tries very hard to promote safety in the state, but maybe they don't need all that money if we don't have it

**SE:** I thought trail grants and grooming pool were on the same level, and I'm hearing that people want to take care of grooming pool over grants. I don't think that the pool has precedence over the grants. The pool has to score accordingly as well. What I'm hearing about both S&E programs was lots of criticism from the public and board... I think they're making an attempt to improve their applications back to us.. so I support NAOI. I think what they did in Delta Junction last year was good. I don't think I was supportive of Iron Dog last year because of the reasons you've mentioned. But this year my opinion changed, I think we should fund upon the merits and basis of what they're trying to do. I come from military background.. you always ask for more money than you need because you know you're going to get cut... I don't think here we should cut anything. If there was a problem, you should have scored it accordingly. To say at this point you don't want to fund them and put the extra money to grooming is BS at this point.

**BL:** is Iron Dog more valuable than what NAOI is trying to do, I think so. Iron Dog will happen whether we fund them or not, these programs will happen whether we fund them or not

**AM:** maybe it sounds like NAOI funding full but take items off Iron Dog's budget.. like advertising at \$5,000

**JS:** at 12,000 there is enough wiggle room in your budget, and if they're short in one section they can move the money around to where they need it. They have 3,500 for a project coordinator.

**CH:** and it's not under admin

**JS:** Iron Dog.. 5,000 in advertisement. They already have publicity agreements with other orgs.

**MW:** I have seen in the past us take money away from the grantee, you have to understand when you make that decision there are implications to doing that.. that will force the grantee to ask why they lost the 5,000. When we're putting a third of a million dollars and put it into grooming, but we cant give them 2,000 extra for their safety program, that's not a good argument to give to the director. I think we either fund them or we don't.

**JS:** what happens if we get 20 safety programs and can't pay for grooming

**MW:** you guys weren't here when we didn't have enough money to fund all we wanted to. We are much better funding both fully than partially. The return would be better.

**SE:** I think it's relevant to talk about registration fees, we have to approach politicians.. if we're all about safety with our words but we don't fund them.

**MW:** and we can use that too.. tell Debra and Kevin to talk to legislators for us

**DM:** the last ORTAB board meeting I attended.. they established a threshold of grading before the scoring.. so the line in the sand determined whether each was funded

**MW:** we tried that before, and people graded their grants anticipating where that line was.. it was ugly. That's one of the reasons we chose this method for doing this

**AM:** also there is no grooming pool in ORTAB we are dictated how much money has to go to each classification of applications

**SE MOTIONS TO RECONSIDER VOTING FOR TOP THREE AND FUNDING THEM FULLY**

**EM SECONDS**

**VOTE: 6 for, 3 against**

**MW:** congrats ladies and gentleman we have a majority. So the total that will be funded is \$35,525.  
We didn't have time to go through grooming process, we'll start with that tomorrow.

**Kidder gives out materials on ANCSA**

**MEETING CLOSED at 4:54pm**

---

**CALL TO ORDER AT 8:40**

**Public Comments:**

**Ellis:** he was out of the city yesterday but he is here today

**Fogels:** I'm one of 2 deputy commissioners in the DNR. I get parks, agriculture and MLW and forestry and permitting. I love working with parks and land issues. I love meeting with the boards I have a meeting at 9 but its good to meet you. The commissioner has really charged me and Ben to look at access issues and we're really putting together this statewide program to give more access to Alaskans. More funds for transportation.. RS2477s fighting hard legally.. make sure Alaskans have their public land. We've got staff and arch. Out in the ? district so we can start asserting our rights legally. But also, very specifically, we want to be sure we provide more trail opportunities for all modes of transportations. But specifically we recognize there's a lack of motorized ops in Alaska right now and when I look back at this org I want to see more ATV and snowmobile trails. I'm a firm believer in that and it comes down from Commissioner Sullivan. Even broader, if you've got ideas that aren't related to grant monies we'd like to hear your expertise and hear where you would like to get more motorized recreation opportunities. I wouldn't mind just going around the room and hearing your names.

**Tinker:** down in the Kenai SnowTRAC board. First official meeting, but been to a quite a few of these in the past as a spectator.

**JS:** like tinker this is my first official meeting. Been with Chugach advisory board for 5 years, was president of Anchorage snowmobile club for 4 years and been doing lots of work in Anchorage

**SE:** this is year two of the board for me, been on other committees.. northern region back in the 990s, ASSA, along with the snow travelers in Fairbanks.

**BL:** with Willow Trail committee, my 3<sup>rd</sup> year, do Willow help out in others to.. create long corridor trail with other clubs.. riding since 1964

**JW:** trails specialist, alaska state trails program

**SN:** grant administrator for state



**JG:** like Bill, I've been riding since 1964 in Hatcher pass, pres of Anch snowmobile club. I just want to say now, if any of you are old enough or have been around enough, you'll remember Tony Knowles Access program (?) TRAC was originally put together with the SIMS money, now RTP, was TLU and all those different names fed agave to motorized recreation, each state had some board to distribute that motorized money. Unfortunately the first couple years it didn't help m users very much. It's good to hear motor users are back on someone's agenda. Other thing, great, BLM put in trails down in Turnagain Pass area and brushed them out and they're not motorized. Not a lot of cooperation with BLM, so at some point when it's an opportunity, it would be great to harden the ATV trail.

**Fogels:** one of the things that I've observed when you look at a situation like Rex trail, there might be resource damage on it, but really why you're having those resource damages is because there are very few opportunities elsewhere.

**JG:** like Boulder Creek Trail, it's a mess since its not hardening

**Fogels:** we're promising a lot, so hold me to it, hopefully 4 years from now they're not empty promises

**Wilke:** probably 12 years now, I've seen this go from the beginning. I'm from Juneau where we have 2 sb trails and no ATVs. So these issues are very important, even though we are a land of RS2477 trails, mine trails

**CH:** 3-4 years, live in Anch, have a cabin in Mat-Su where we spend most of our time

**EM:** I'm from White Mountain, been on board 6 years, one of the things I do is fire chief, search and rescue.. interested in late night uniform signage program

**BL:** transportation corridors

**MW:** what really needs to happen in AK is for some of these routes in between major pop areas should be designated as federal travel corridors

**Fogels:** we're really getting them tapped into Goodman in MLW, Brent's got most of the land (general state use) both of these guys need to work together and give us more room to play

**DM:** I'm co-founder and pres of Big Lake Trails.. helping to develop trails over the last 30 years

A lot of the trails that could be rode over RS2477 lands, but no one will ride on them because they feel that a USFS officer would be waiting for them. Would the state defend us, it seems like it would be within the states interest

**Fogels:** we have asserted those RS2477, but legally the way threat we get the ult authority over those is through the courts decision. So they will likely bust you for it. The strategy is to sit there and start fighting for these. We've only had 2 real fights and essentially lost both of them after spending millions in research and court fees... got a right-of-way established with the feds, but it wasn't a win for the RS2477 battle, but it was a win for access rights. There is so much detailed info that the courts ask for before a decision.. if you know where the tail is but not that there's a gap there it could effect their decision. .so were trying to hone in on it. We're starting with the 40 mile.. a bunch of routes together, so we can kind of hit the feds with a bunch of punches at once, maybe that will make them back of. Utah is coming up to

AK to explain what they did to gain access to RS2477 from the feds. A good thing for any of you to do is SCOTT OGAN (chief of Public Access and Social Defense Unit) AND DAVE SHADY (Lieutenant, CHAD.. second in command).. they can download all the dirty details and it would be very valuable for us to do this.. if there are RSs that

**MW:** one of the heartaches we've seen again and again is the backlog of easements.. we just hear that were working through them one at a time

**Fogels:** a huge commission is going on right now with permitting. The universe is huge... all the way to the permitting of big mines and gas .. in particular the Mining, Land & Water, they issue a zillion leases, permits, right-of-ways.. and they have been back-logged big time. DNR budget and staffing has decreased. Over the years for budget cuts reasons and fewer resources, plus workload is increasing.. more applications are pouring into DNR. We are a roadblock, we see that. Its imperative for not only the BPs to get their permits but the little guys too. Most of that back log is in water. He can hire a lot of new staff.. its not about the money, it's about the way we do business. We told the government we would eliminate the backlog in three years and were going to try out damndest so there's a push on getting that done

**BL:** Tangle Lakes area... it appears when I talk to people somehow that's rolled up in conversations for the last couple years... why is that being developed? Why is there resource development being looked at there

**Fogels:** its multiple use state land, general purpose, been identified for various resource values and

**BL:** haven't found anyone that supports it

**Fogels:** its just exploration for minerals at this point?

**Fogels:** pure nickel, it might be

**BL:** we got a lot going on with the new development, true north is just kind of sitting there

**Fogels:** working on the closure plan for that. Tangle Lakes, no ones discovered anything there yet.. favorable interest and interesting geology. A company is there and has been doing it for years. If decisions are granted to develop a mine it takes years.. so first they have to find something and then there is a real strict environmental process.. six mines all doing well... monitor both downstream and all fish are fine and happy. Can't let the mines hurt our fish, important to AK... make sure mining companies are tight. We have some of the best mines in the nation, some of the best for environmental reasons

**BL:** over the last 10 years Fairbanks has a good eco stability we haven't seen in the past so we realize the benefit

**Fogels:** nothing will happen without public involvement and giant process... have legal right to go in and explore, core drilling, collect samples, but all done by our staff.

**BL:** just from my own perspective, I know that personally, I like the tl area, I ride in that area to McClaron regularly.. the thought of seeing anything else there irks me.. .that 135 miles is very unique and id like to see it continue good access and stay just the way it is

**Fogels:** pleasure to meet you all, I'll show up to your meetings from time to time

**BL:** still waiting for transportation corridors to be recognized

**Fogels:** go visit with Scott Ogan and his crew.. really good at what they do and should get ideas from you as far as priorities for easements.. to Kyle Kidder

**(FOGELS exits at 9:06)**

**MW:** it's good to hear that somebody understands the importance of access issues as priority. So we left off yesterday having made it through the grant scoring process and the next step would be to determine the amount of

**BREAK at 9:22 for SUMMARY SHEET CONSTRUCTION of GROOMING POOLS**

**BACK IN SESSION AT 9:47**

**SN:** I emailed the federal highways gentleman and called him today.. he said he had submitted it to FEMUS.. which is a better yes than yesterday, not final yet, but he approved it and doesn't see any problems.. 99.9999999 there, the amount is 100,000.. not looking at any rescission on a fed level as far as this year. At the end of next week I can tell you where it is.

**MW:** are the programs required to have program audit..

**SN:** I will give some of this information to the feds so the state can be reimbursed. I get reimbursed from the feds for this amount. Does that make sense?

**MW:** I think we still need 2 budgets though.. it wouldn't be responsible for us to do just one. Do we want to approve some or all of the requests

**JG:** I MOVE THAT WE FUND ALL OF THE APPLICANTS AT A REDUCED RATE of REQUESTED AMOUNT TO MEET THE TWO AVAILABLE BUDGETS

**BL:** SECONDS MOTION

**VOTE:** 5 for, 3 against = MOTIONS PASSED

**JG:** all of the current requesters for grooming pool funds have a record for getting funds and here they are back for more

**SE:** I concur with the reduced rate.. I would like to look at what actually spent, and then use those numbers to decide on the reduced rate

**SE:** if they requested x amount of dollars and only used y.. who went over, who went under, who had things happen as to why they didn't spend the money

**SN:** Jess, I'm going to throw some numbers for the third column

**(PwrPnt table with requested and late scores, with column of last years expenditures)**

**JG:** so the two things that could happen with reduction are that the groomers could either groom all the trails less frequently, or leave out some trails and keep up with the schedule

**MW:** 332 requested, 196 available.. find out the percentage difference from that, and take that from the requested

**BL:** that's why I suggested funding 2 instead of 3 grants yesterday.. so we would have more money for the pool

**MW:** so we're there at the 196 basically.. I think we're close enough to begin a discussion as to whether we're fine with the reduced rate

**VOTED AT 10:20am to FUND ALL AT LOWER LEVEL**

**MW: if somebody wants to move dollar amounts around, I will entertain that motion.. pick one reduce**

**BL: MOTION THAT WE REDUCE PETERSVILLE AREA DOWN TO A REASONABLE AMOUNT AND REDISTRIBUTE TO OTHER GROUPS**

**JS:** I don't agree with Bill.. it's up to Wayne to decide where the money is shuffled over.. there's your reduction right there, there's already a mechanism in place. Say Petersville area gets heavy, he's just going to hit Wayne for more money. I say leave the area with blanket reduction.

**JG:** that's my backyard, all I can say is, I don't agree with Bill that it's out of line because of what's done. I think in the interest of fairness, if we reduce them we have to reduce someone else

**EM:** I don't really care how this plays out but I do want to point out that these numbers are arbitrary requests to begin with.. they may or may not be what they actually spent last year. Even if you decide to reduce, say Petersville.. don't redistribute it and it will go evenly

**SE** to be fair and equitable.. I think if somebody came to me and said why did we lose money.. I think a fair and straight across the board reduction is easy to accept for groomers that everyone had a fair reduction.. If we get that 93,000... that's still a lot of money.

**EM:** its only fair and equitable if the groomers are fair and equitable (using the money)

**SE:** lots of things could have gone into not spending the money.. just looking at the numbers that were spent last year verses the amount they requested this year. Without any favoritism or arrows pointed at any particular entity

**JS:** the request of a mile is basically a groomers anticipated costs. Take Petersville who requests 50,000 to request, even though he's been reduced to 35,00... his realistic bid to do what he needs is his requested amount.. give him reduced amount he's lessening his grooming season again

**BL:** just a little history on that.. Randy set up to ask for 35 last year and then asked for more funds in early march. It is reasonable to think that that area deserves to have that percentage of the grooming money for the state, I just don't feel comfortable with that

**MW:** reading from Randy's letter: this amount reflects what it took to groom last years trail and early season.. all the trails listed will receive some grooming.. extended or shortened by the amount of monies received.

**DM:** look at your biggest used areas.. Big Lake, Louise, Fairbanks.. recreational population centers.. balance where your populations going to play, and you'll get more bang for the buck in those areas

**MW:** I think if you actually charted out the number of riders for each area that # of riders would be pretty close across the board

**PD:** I think that we're setting up a condition.. that everybody's getting cut equally at certain percentages as an option.. Big Lakes is the only one that gets every thing they asked for.. not taking any hit on our reduction

**JG:** when we get bidders.. I expect the bid to be less than 25.000 depending on who bids

**SE:** we've already reduced it down from 60 with the two reductions

**MW:** if we do another motion to change a group, we apply it to another group in the first column to redistribute it

**SE:** I completely understand that, but it goes against the grain of what we just did

**MW:** let's get a solid motion and then discuss this. We have to move on here

**SE:** if there's anything that will rile me quicker than anything else, is that all the money stays in anchorage.. the legislature keeps all the damn money down here, it irritates the crap out of me that a piddly 13,000 goes north.. I'll be damned that because all the people are down here the money stays down here.. its crap and it's been that way for years

**EM:** and rural Alaska

***BL WITHDRAWS PREVIOUS MOTION***

**MW:** does anyone else have a motion to make about moving dollar amounts around?

**Tinker:** the Hatcher Pass, wasn't that a late application?

**BL:** they only requested 20 last year, but used 12 because of grooming problems

**MW:** there may be additional money coming back in and Wayne's been through this process a bunch of times and I feel confidently that he will be fair. I think we should live with these numbers

**BREAK AT 10:45**

**BACK IN SESSION AT 11:00**

**(spread sheet is updated by reductions of 58% and 89%)**

***JG MOVES TO FUND ALL GRANT REQUESTS AT RATE OF 58% or 89% DEPENDING ON THE FINAL AVAILABLE BUDGET***

***TINKER SECONDS***

***VOTE: 7 for, 1 against = PASSED***

**SN:** since André and Bill are gone and Darcy is yet to come up to speed with this, I don't want to speak as to where they want to go with these procedures. I don't know how relevant it will be

**MW:** let's not forget we had an amendment (meeting w director) and he suggested that we work on alternative wording and get back to this. Just a reminder, our policy and procedures set some requests on state parks to take our decisions into considerations. Mostly based upon the time requirement that he responds back to us, he struck that from the p and p. He was

probably okay with the thought behind it.. to seek our council as to why we made those decisions.. just the way it was set up I think is why he nixed it

**JG:** I think he wants to establish that he's still the boss.

**MW:** I'll craft up some new language and talk with the director on it. But our P and Ps are not done, we really need to work on some issues.

**CH:** did you let him know why we want him to come to us? Like when he decided to fund a grant we did NOT pass, and didn't know it was funded until people started asking me why it was

**JG:** that's why he said in the meeting he respects our advice but he has final say

**MW:** I say that we want to be consulted as to why we made decisions so he can know the information we made our decision with, so even if he still overrides it, we can at least understand why

**JG:** Luck is gone, I think we have an opportunity with Darcy to open lines of comm. And discuss that issue. With Bill and André both, they convinced James King to override our decision and he did

**CH:** I was under the impression that that's why state parks are here, so they can convey our reasoning to the director.. .in that case it was bills opinion that was expressed to the director

**Tinker:** and it should have been expressed back to us

**MW:** it was, the first point in that meeting was 'why the hell are we funding the helmets'

**JG:** I believe Bill reinforced his decision to give away the helmets to be the good guy

**MW:** I'll work with the director to figure out the language that we can both live with. To me, if a director signs a document, it's a commitment by the state. So let's move on, I'll work with the director. I'd like to take a few minutes to discuss something that's very important to me... how do we get more applicants into the pool of grantees. I'm embarrassed we only got 4 this year

**SE:** there's still other issues that have to be looked at, and there's still

**BL:** everybody's going to rec trails because they know we don't have any money

**MW:** I'm concerned we're not spending a dollar in the bush. How do we speak to native corps

**EM:** natives don't do things like that. There's a general lack of awareness and the amounts of money are small compared to the owners application process as well as the grant admin process. One of the grants from the old days was one I applied for and got, and it was not an easy process and turned out to be a lot more work than the amount of money was worth.. rebuilding shelter cabins around the country.

**MW:** it's a matter of reporting to those areas and then revising the application process

**BL:** it's got to go into the village newspapers and stuff like that

**SE :** many of you know the issues from Fairbanks, despite my efforts to change attitudes, still one of the things today is the process of sitting down and writing the grant, plus how much money

it takes having up front... the attitude is screw it were not putting in for grants we're just going to ride. I'd love to see improvements.. we don't need so much grooming as we need bridges and grants. The person who's going to sit down and work it out to get the application process done its just not that easy

**EM:** just to finish, much of what this group does, doesn't have relevancy.. there's no need for grooming, and I keep harping on trail marking, there's not that much that this program would fund other than trail marking.. and to go through the program for a couple thousand bucks worth of stakes isn't worth it

**JS:** back when Samantha was in charge.. you couldn't walk in, the phone numbers were wrong.. it is a tedious process. The grants you see now are wrote by professionals, its not set up for some common Joe coming off the corner that has problems spelling, maybe cant write that decent, but he has a great idea.. but it doesn't look that way from the states standards for applying. He's running around wasting time that wasn't required

**SN:** ORTAB or rec trails has seen a lot more participation from the west, cabins.. it wouldn't hurt to look at the rec trails applicants.. how can we work with that group to see if they want to come to us too. I only say this if you are willing to understand that these people will come in with maybe more grants of different types. But looking at what else ORTAB has might help, because they all have ongoing processes.. and it's not against the law to get money from RTP and this. Who are these players what are they looking at and how can we approach these people to gauge their interest in coming to SnowTRAC. It is complicated and hard to do these.. it becomes difficult, they get discouraged and they don't come back to the table. I think there are ways to get out that this is something you would like to see come to the program

**MW:** lets start with 5 recommendations on how we can increase the

**JS:** simpler form. More user-friendly. Case in point, anchorage falls into coastal mgmt zone.. lots of paperwork, whereas Petersville doesn't have to go through all of that

**MW:** 2 better public notice

**JS:** word of mouth or on the website.. nothing was sent to the clubs.. the clubs is what you want to bring in but we don't notify them by email

**MW:** email has become the standard for notification because you can make your message and hit one button

**JW:** so a phone call as well as email

**MW:** letters to clubs, local papers

**SE:** the issue that I see if we're going to get more entities is the disparity between well organized government agencies with the grant writing capabilities and expertise, but the clubs do not. How do you address that?

**SN:** you get little bitty orgs going against big agencies and there is no infrastructure for us to delineate between the little 501s and the big guys

**SE:** last year I asked and they said the state does give classes

**MW:** I think we've done it once is the reality

**JD:** they had a grant-writing class at trail Rony

**EM:** I think another appropriation. Way its done sometime is to have tiers of awards, so if someone like NAOI is applying for a 15000 grant then they go through a more rigorous app than if you want 5000. The clubs need to step up their game too if they want pub money.

**MW:** I think trail marking should be in the same pool of dollars like we're doing the grooming.. they're putting dollars in for staking or signing

**Tinker:** wouldn't that be more under safety, which actually increases the grant applications

**MW:** I think calling it into the pool attracts the local villagers and clubs. That's what I'm arguing here.. give the chance for those places to fill out the big app once and then every year after they fill out an easy application for some stakes each year. If grooming is important down here, staking is just as important out there

**JG:** to get on list of SnowTRAC trails, you need to do big app ONCE, after a trail is identified its already in pool.

**SE:** clarify staking?

**MW:** whatever's used in their traditional area.. identifying the trail, whether its tripods or single stakes. We should start calling it the grooming and marking pool. Back to public notice, add more

**JD:** when I was on alaska trails.. you can enter your email if you want to be updated.. that would be a huge help on the ORTAB and SnowTRAC websites. That would be something

**SN:** that would be beyond parks ability to implement.. we can control some of what goes on the website.. but as far as being able to link emails from a state website is big stuff.. maybe something we can look at. For media.. there is the public media release, anything else in advertising will come out of the admin budget.. anything that's not on the web.. not saying its bad idea but there is a cost to it

**JS:** what was the biggest shocker when we opened request formed... grooming requests are same as grant forms

**MW:** like new grooming requests to get trails listed

**JS:** simple form to break those two apart

**MW:** how many subscribers are there to the snow rider?

**JG:** 17 affiliated clubs.. 1500 every month.. an ad in SnowRider every month

**JS:** how about the coast magazine.. free at stores

**SE:** use ASSA as vehicle to promote..

**MW:** a letter.. invitation to apply to all snowmobile clubs in alaska

**JG:** Kevin has written articles in riding magazines about grant programs for years



**SE:** can we use ASSA in more ways than just Kevin writing quick letter. There's nothing prohibiting any of us submitting an article

**CH:** the octane international has a conf down here, and ASSA has a booth right beside SnowTRAC

**SE:** not asking for show, maybe use ASSA as vehicle to communicate to other clubs about what's there.. maybe I'll write an article and check with everybody to see if its accurate. I just think its widely used and reaches out to a lot for different folks out there.. there's nothing that prohibits us from submitting and saying hey this is SnowTRAC, this is what we are and what were looking for

**CH:** . SnowTRAC doing community outreach.. we as a board doing presentation at our local clubs

**SE:** I've gotten with parks and borough to let know we exist and care

**JG:** I think its incumbent upon us the board to contact your club, borough, magazines.. that's our responsibility.. not to come here for 2 days and this and that and forget it till next time around. Were supposed to be ambassadors to state parks and program all the time

**JS:** one quick comment on using SnowRider.. wasn't your main question get more applicants.. when the period is opened to accept applicants.. Full page or half page MEMO that we're accepting applicants

**JG:** why is there a period of application... why cant they apply for a grant any time instead of having set open period

**BL:** if we're going to sit down here today and make a decision we have to have a cut out point

**JG:** oh we'll have a deadline, just not a starting point

**MW:** if we had one good idea today, that may be it.

**JG:** I think though that simplifying the form and looking into the possibility of looking into MLW and weigh some or all of the requirements that are stupid,

**MW:** well talk about that in score sheet and application period. Dan, what's your perception about program and application?

**DM:** we got notified April 1<sup>st</sup> via email, but I also knew from years past that I better be totally sure of the opening and closing dates

**MW:** what would happen if you weren't there. So you actually have to go on website to find out about it?

**JG:** is big lake trails not an addressee of state parks?

**DM:** my email was on their list .. seal of alaska on it.. and got a media release.

**JD:** we obviously knew about it because of our familiarity with clubs, but otherwise we would not have known if we did not go to the website

**JS:** and these are people close to anchorage, your people are in the dark (indicating EM)

**EM** laughs

**JG:** extending the application period and letting them know about it more would help. But at some point if you don't ask and pay attention to what's going around you you're not going to get what you want. Cleaning up the website is a daunting task.. there are some things they can and cant do.

**MW:** any more ideas on how to increase # of grant applications?

**SN:** Darcy's coming in with fresh slate.. she'll be hit with rec trails and 2 million we're working with.. the future of it and ongoing things.. SnowTRAC is going to be bumped down if there is no advocacy on your part and state, in a pleasant way, how much you need to get her involved with it. They're coming in new, its going to take a year or two to get up to speed.. but if you wait 6, 9 months, you'll miss that window of opportunity the first year to make that point to her about how important this is to you... get it off the ground really quick before rec trails and other projects take precedence

**MW:** what would be the best way to communicate this to her?

**SN:** come in and meet with her.. not with 30 pages of stuff.. I would come in to break ground and say who you are and how important things are to you, and one or two things where you would want to see your views enlarged or changed.. if you come in with a sledgehammer right off the bat about how you want to see things changed you might turn her off. . but just an hour/half hour for her to know that SnowTRAC is more than just something that comes up twice a year and that's all

**MW:** we would ask you as second in command to present it to her as a program and introduce the idea to take the first step

#### **5 RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 1. *Simpler Form***
- 2. *Better Public Notice***
- 3. *Tiered Awards***
- 4. *Create trail-marking Program or Include with Grooming Pool***
- 5. *SnowTRAC Advocacy/Outreach***
- 6. *Extend Application Period (open to apply earlier)***

**MW CALLS FOR LUNCH AT 11:55am**

**BEGIN AGAIN AT 1:10pm**

**MW:** the score sheets are not a good reflection of the decision process we have to make on the allocation of funding. They are completely objective to where we cant use our knowledge and skills to make decisions

**JG:** we score some of them the way we want to score them so they don't do so well and that's were we use our judgment.. I can see where ASP wants to have an objective scoring system.. scoring things low when they look good on paper doesn't look good.. so I'm with mark.. we have to have a score sheet that allows both.. they need to get simpler and real

**MW:** I spent some time going over the score sheets and asked the board and DPOR with input. The score sheets that I proposed gave us an 'in the best of interest of snowmobiling' box.. and weighed it 55%, so it can pass mainly on the public benefit.. I think we've already been through the step where we have a new score sheet.. but what ended up happening is that the application tells which points were going to give what area.. but fixing this is relatively easy.. fixing this (application)

**SN:** There should be a way to do the transfer without having to communize these applications

**MW:** can you find the page with public benefit?

**SN:** that parks will have heartburn over (referring to 55 points)

**MW:** two reasons for point breakdown being taken away.. I think by giving individual scores for line items.. if they don't have it in the application you take away points and that's not fair.. by taking away the individual line items you have more leeway to make decisions on the quality of the project

**SN:** Bill had mentioned this before, I see it as if we go back and you could do a majority of the application based 55 out of 100 and its subjective.. parks will have a problem with it weighted and being objective. Maybe its just me.. but if it were less than half I don't think it would be as bad.. I think if you go that high that quick from ten people upstairs will have a problem

**MW:** lets look at what we're saying here: right now we're giving 25 points for a budget.. a quarter of the score is on budget.. too much. What's the most important thing? Is it primarily for snowmobilers.. so the primary weight should be on that subject

**BL:** can we bring it to an amount that parks will be ok with?

**MW:** in the past the score sheet was basically that weighting.. we were taking grant applications that were for a project that was not really for riding.. I felt that way about the NAOI grant.. mostly skiers show up for that class.. then we could give 0 score on public benefit and the grant would fail from that.

**BL:** 45 is still the majority of the point score.. if that's better for parks

**SN:** I think the problem word for Parks is subjective... I hate getting on the phone and saying any part of their grant was done subjectively and I don't have exact documentable reasoning as to what area they were weak in. It helps that you have 4 definitions rather than a blank space. In this would you put over the side 10 points for A or those 4 things are whatever would make up the total score. .

**MW:** they are the suggestive things to think about in giving the total score for each category.. with no numbers assigned for each line

**CH:** for an advisory board, it seems that we're not being very advisable that we're filling in two points because of one point of a budget.. the adversity towards subjectivity confuses me because we're an ADVISORY board. I think this project is not primarily for snowmobiles because... that would provide comments to provide when people ask.. more so letting us give the public commentary

**SE:** either I missed something, if I had to sit down and use that particular score sheet with the way the current grants are presented I already have a problem with scoring them... I felt compelled to give points toward things because they did what they were required to do on paper, whereas the whole project I thought was a load of crap. If I was using this 55 point rule right now for 2 of the 3 we dealt with on the grants, if I apply that to NAOI or Iron Dog in particular, I know I would have a diff outcome

**MW:** I scored them relatively high because of the scoring method as well

**SE:** I would have scored them significantly lower

**JG:** I would have too. I scored them low even following the form this year

**SE:** what I'm getting at is would this form arbitrarily

**EM:** I don't think its possible to come up with the perfect instrument. We need to at least project objectivity, even though we know its subjective.. if I knew that whoever was going to be scoring a grant I wrote was going to be completely subjective about scoring I probably would forget it because there's no guarantee of scoring. I think we should give each number of points for each section of score sheets.. and they should match the sections on the application, which they don't. that's a big fatal error in this process. 55 points is quite high.. never seen an applications with that high of a % of points in one particular section. Even if we lowered it down to 30, if we want to give someone a zero we will

**JS:** 55 is a little high, I can write a one-sentence grant with that info right there and get a grant. Meets all that criteria leaving out a lot of the rest of work.

**JG:** but as a board we would see through that and most of us would say ehhh..

**BL:** but if you're water-skipping you should be the ones that are eliminated from the gene pool

**JG:** or helmets

**JS:** I'd be happier if it was 45 or even 50

**JG:** I'm a forty guy myself

**MW:** this piece is already done.. this application, without the line item scores, and having more emphasis on public benefit we agree on. We just need more info from State Parks on the points and get the comment and opinion on this. I'm not stuck on 55.. it gives us the ability to reject a grant based solely on public benefit.

**CH:** I just want to make sure the application connects with the score sheet.. so lets keep that in mind while we do the application. Also, I don't know where the ADA will end up in the application

**JS:** item E, ADA compliance might not have to be on the score sheet at all, but there's 5 extra points if they meet the criteria

**MW:** what I would like everyone to do is grab out a grant application.

**JG:** to add trails to the SnowTRAC list, whether they are funded or not, I believe the general consensus is we submit a grant form?

**EM:** but should it be our procedure?

**JG:** application for trail maintenance, development, access, and adding trail to SnowTRAC list then.  
IF there is a trail that is already on the inventory of some other list, can it automatically be put on .. if a groomer person wants to be a groomer, all they really need to do is identify a SnowTRAC trail and show intent to groom it

**MW:** so first section is fine, number 2 page "dear prospective applicant" we're going to have to change Bill Luck at Alaska.gov to the new trail coordinator. We don't need to put instructions in the application

**JG:** page 3 and 4 can go away.. that's RTP.

**MW:** page 5

**JS:** one A.. is it a snowmobile grant..

**BL:** take out 'businesses are not eligible'

**MW:** at least the qualifying criteria.. we need A but we can scratch out everything but the 'snowmobile grant funding'

**CH:** do we care if they're non=profit or private

**MW:** I don't mind them asking, but its not qualifying material

**EM:** native corp. or gov... native has nothing to do with it

**MW:** number ones gone.

**CH:** number two: does the applicant need support from the following organizations?

**SN:** I don't know that right now.. that needs to be looked at

**MW:** safety grants don't need to be a part of them

**CH:** I scored one application this year low because they weren't a part of one of these orgs, if its not a qualifying criteria we should get rid of it

**JS:** I think this should stay

**JG:** all of section 2 on page 5 should stay (A,B, C). When we turn to page 6 and look at section 3, that's the public benefit

**CH:** In the whole community section in section 5 these questions are asked again in more detail.. so its redundant.

**JG:** but what I'm thinking is, this is here to disqualify an applicant

**CH:** and the reason for that is why?

**JG:** to weed out applicants that are just trying to get some bucks

**MW:** if you're going to ask the three big questions that would disqualify you off the top, what would they be?

**JS:** do you have legal access?

**EM:** the first page should be the minimum requirements

**MW:** Access.. if you cant show me legal access, don't bother applying. Item 3, top of page 6 is the primary snowmobile question. So we got land owner authorization, primarily for benefit of snowmobilers, and some kind of local support requirement

**JG:** this is where we should tell the applicant.. you should have these three. This is one element, and we'll go over them in detail later

**JS:** some of them go to ORTAB and apply for a bridge, and then come back to us and apply for more

**JG:** they might have applied but the cycle takes longer so they might not know if they will get funding or not by the time they apply for SnowTRAC

**SE:** if we're looking for qualifying criteria I don't think that needs to be one

**MW:** so A B and C on page five would all be qualifying.

**JG:** we need to decide if we REQUIRE the applicant to have any one of these

**Tinker:** why would you want to limit it to one out of the three

**JG:** some applicants may not have local communities or boroughs

**MW:** do we want for a land management plan to be a criteria of funding

**SN:** A needs to be legally defined.. are you allowed to be on there for legal reasons

**MW:** if its not required , we should get rid of A. C though I might feel pretty strongly about. How many applications do we get without one letter of support

**CH:** I think the local government should go to

**JG:** trail maintenance, acquisition, assessment, and condition

**CH:** land ownership.. how did you word it?

**MW:** permission from *all* land owners.. private and public

**EM:** getting perm from all land owners is going to be an issue for many applicants, and there will be vetting from the state. Take the Iditarod trail.. anyone can go stake that trail.. and I don't want to need to go to DC to get the permission to do that

**JG:** before we can give state money to an applicant to groom, mark, or develop.. we need to have specific permission from the landowner to do what you want on that trail. On the Iditarod.. BLM doesn't say do that or don't do that but they don't stop them.. but if someone asked them if they can go mark the trail I think that they would provide a letter easily

**MW:** some access rights would allow you to access the trail but not be okay for heavy equipment.. would need special rights. One thing that frustrates me is that applicants will check the box that they have permission for legal access, but don't provide documentation.

**JG:** do you know if it's a matter of law (Steve) that before we give people money to do things that they have set permission from the underlying ground owner

**MW:** its common law.. if you went sticking stakes on private property someone would have a problem with that

**CH:** how would this work if someone was developing or surveying a trail?

**JG:** you get permission from landowner to go on land to survey

**MW:** and some landowners don't want you on their land even to survey

**JG:** just like the email notice for the opening.. Bill Luck supposedly had all the stuff to send to people, and Kyle kidder vetted them.. but somehow the documentation doesn't get to us

**SN:** when the application first comes in the coordinator filters them through a checklist.. so if that documentation is there.. it will move on without a comment

**MW:** so there's other people looking at the application and we need to consider them to

**JG:** I know I have seen grant requests that had proper easement letters attached to them

**JM:** this year was an exception.. sometimes (gives CHCH as example) it's the State's mistake documents don't get out, but also there are so many different types of easement (only good for one year, etc.) that you need a state rep (like Kyle) to verify those are the steps they need

**JG:** if it isn't attached when states see it, we won't see it. If it is, it will be copied and sent to us

**Tinker:** one quick question here; to tie up pg 6, item 3.. is this application to benefit A: snowmobile activity. Is that a little too liberal to say anything about activity.. or should we say community.

**MW:** I suggest we change it to "this is an application for snowmobiling?"

**JG:** even if its checked, there's sections later that will back it up or prove it wrong.

**CH:** this is all doubling up again..

**BL:** but now we're getting in to the attachments, which you need to tell them they need the attachments

**MW:** on page 6 I like the idea of listing all the landowners.. who all has an interest in this land. There's a condition 'must be valid for more than 5 years'.

**JG:** depends on what grantee is requesting.. if they want to develop the trail and get one year access

**JS:** even if they apply for a grant for one year to build a bridge... who's going to own it the 5 years after that

**MW:** but what about the corps that only grant up to one year? We saw it in the Copper Country this year. Is this a legal requirement?

**SN:** we don't know

**CH:** so lets let this go until we find that out

**JG:** on page 6: remove item 4

**CH:** section one.. compare it to section one in application

**JG:** page 7

**MW:** this should really be the front page

**CH:** I think the reason this was first was because it's a legal requirement.. if we cant get past this its not worth looking at this kind of thing

**JS:** drop it all off (types of use)

**JG:** if the applicant wants to add other users it will benefit, they can add it in the description

**JS:** the organization type is good to be in there for statistics

**CH:** if you leave it right there its fine

**JG:** as long as there's nothing behind it that's needed by the applicant

**MW:** and we can deal with the township meridian stuff in the instructions. Joe what else do you want to hack out of page 7?

**JG:** all that stuffs alright. Since this could be for development, I think a few short descriptions of what does need to be filled out for each project category

**CH:** redundant to me again.. planning and constructing same thing?

**JG:** page 8, asking for easement information again

**BL:** looks like this whole page is a repeat

**JG:** lets take 8 away. Page 9.. rec trail grants gets removed.

**MW:** they're asking for summation of the grant dollars here.

**JG:** change title from snowmo trail grants to 'funds requested'

**JG:** project summary... change to what do you want to do.. or identifying trail to be put on the list.. so far that's only in the title. If this is going to be the vehicle to identify a trail to add to list we need to ..

**MW:** lets take out what we don't need and then come back and put in what we do

**CH:** you could have that summary of funds on the same page as the detailed narrative (10)

**SN:** I would favor one summary

**MW:** just the detailed project narrative

**JS:** do we have to have a limit? Strike the character limit

**JD:** that info was helpful to us as grantees.. we could count characters and words and check it against the application

**MW:** we're not going to do away with the online version right now, so if that's a technical problem we'll change it later

**JG:** the timeline gives the inspector or visitor how much should be done by what time

**MW:** but when I vote and put numbers out I give almost no weight to the schedule

**JG:** page 12 'snowmobile trail grant budget sheet'



**SN:** administrative costs may not exceed 20% of match (RTP, can go out). If you inflate the match.. the fed highway looks at that and decides to give them less money because they don't need it. That's not the state.. even though we don't like telling people to inflate that.. I go by the minimum of 20%.. but that's something with feds. I don't like exaggerated match

**MW:** lets leave it in there. Lets keep the budget sheet

**JG:** page 13 goes away (RTP budget sheet)

**JG:** checks all project types against budget sheet... if the trail is going to submit landowner position and all that crap along with their thing here its going to cost them zip... and cost us zip to add ABC trail to the list

**MW:** we need a separate form for that I think is what its going to come down to. I'll want pictures of the trails and other things for that

**CH:** it says admin costs, but there's no section for that

**SN:** people usually put it under other

**MW:** if we put 'admin' on there, it will encourage people to add that amount

**MW:** labor is really what admin is.. we should strike the word out of the whole application

**CH:** can we do that?

**SN:** no.

**JG:** page 15, project funding and sponsor match

**CH:** that tells you where they're getting their funding from

**JG:** tells you what local business and companies are supporting and funding the project

**MW:** we've asked them in their budget where its going and what their match is..

**CH:** (reads from description on current application) doesn't make any sense

**MW:** I think we need something besides a budget line to know the names of organizations, club funds going in,

**CH:** just needs to have some explanation of what it is that's going in the budget

**EM:** some applications have 'budget justification sections' where they can explain the budget lines

**JG:** item 3 on page 16.. I'm good with leaving it in.. doesn't hurt anything

**JG:** page 16..

**MW:** number 5 needs to come out because it is assumptive that it provides a new rec opportunity (something you should consider, not NEED)

**JG:** how many users or riders.. do they get to count all the mushers and skiers too?

**BL:** so what? I just want a count

**JS:** I more or less want to see how many snowmobilers

**JG:** I may not want to fund it if its 12 snowmobilers and 700 skiers

**MW:** how does this project improve snowmobiling opportunities

**JG:** part a; how many snowmobilers, part b; total use

**CH:** now the next 3 questions to me are totally redundant (6,7 and 8)

**SE:** if we took em out I don't think it would hurt either

**MW:** so 6,7, and 8 all go

**JG:** this is RTP language here, I don't see a problem with asking if your trail provides a missing trail link

**SN:** the final thing DNR wants as far as a recreation plan .. I think they're going to want the rec activities to go into score.. I think they're going to want things to fall in line as close as possible with SCORP (number 8)

**JG:** number 7: trail links are real important. Lets take 6 out, leave 7 and 8 in

**CH:** they're not getting points on this

**MW:** 9 we'll put 5 bonus points on this? 10 goes away

**JG:** 4,5,7,8,9 stay

**CH:** it's the same up front as we are repeating back here

**JG:** up front it asks for land management, etc. All of page 17 goes away then

**MW:** where are we going to ask for letters of support from local communities and businesses?

**SN:** I need to know public posting locations

**SE:** we need to back up on 17..

**MW:** Explain any project 'opposition' (strait forward language) should be asked one time.

**SE:** got to keep the public notice

**CH:** here's the example of public notice. What is page 19? I don't get this page?

**SN:** I can tell you why I use it, but it has nothing to do with you guys. I know I can go to this page and find his phone number, etc. Not telling you not to change it though.

**MW:** is the long term maintenance plan beneficial for this application?

**CH:** if we're going to do it, I say put it under the project narrative?

**JG:** and how long is long-term? 3 months? 10 years? Past grant experience should definitely stay.

**MW:** now as much as we hate this, some of this might not be so bad.. just how do we let the applicants know which agencies they are supposed to go to?

**JG:** should this be farther up front?

**SE:** the reality is, you're not going to fill out a whole application without reading through it first?

**JG:** lots of people..

**SE:** then they should be at the bottom of the pile anyway!

**JG:** I think we should pick out what isn't required and then decide where to put it

**MW:** in the past years, not many grants have had to go through any of it (90% don't)

**CH:** please check the top of the instructions to see which of these are needed

**MW:** I say we rip this out of the application and put it in the instructions... what would you have to do to need to contact these organizations

**JS:** back in the beginning we had 3 things: access, public, permitting... if you need a permit, you better check to see if MLW has their act together... they would know in the beginning what they need/whether they want to apply

**MW:** there's a way around this, its going to take some clever though and rearrangement but my thought is we take it out of the applications and put it in the instructions as "if your project does this, they need to do this".

**JS:** need to give them a tool to get there

**JG:** what do we not need? Number 1. Coastal Mgmt's gone

**JG:** does your project require a fish and habitat permit? If you're crossing a creek you may require a permit. Two will be needed at some point. What we're looking for is everything we know absolutely isn't needed. Hell, who knows if my land is a water conservation site.

**SN:** typically Bill would take these over to Jean to check

**MW:** that's what we used to do..

**JG:** but State Parks cant do it till they get the app

**MW:** we provide info in the instructions "if your projects doing this...you will need a permit.. here's where to go to get it.. get started on it and apply anyways.. you can still get funding but you wont get it until your permits are in place". Going to take some give and take between us and state people who are not in their positions yet.

**SN:** rec trails if you don't have your permits in place we're not taking on the app. So it would be a change between programs

**JG:** if we fund someone and they don't use the money it doesn't go through

**MW:** most of the time the permits people are going for here are relatively easy to get. Don't think I've seen one grant that's gone through here that needs an ACOE permit. My experience in the Juneau area anyway was having a fish and game person come out and tell you whether or not you need a permit. I'm going to go back to this idea that we will have the little guy that wants to build a bridge over his creek, make it easy for him to apply.. get the application in, score it and grant it.. and have him securing his permit while his app goes through the process.

**JG:** if the money doesn't get spent, we'll get it next year

**BL:** if you're talking 30 days to less than a year that's doable

**JG:** what do we do with page 21? How is there any other way to say does the trail cover wetlands or water?

**CH:** keeps going back. I think its redundant too. Number 10, Johns talking about specifically

**JG:** page 22 change it to state trails coordinator and change email name

**BREAK AT 3:05**

**BACK AT 3:26**

**MW:** registration fees. We have a set of circumstances right now that make it the best time to stop talking about it and start doing something. I am urging this board to move forward on the fee increase. I think its in the best benefit for snowmobiling in the state of alaska to increase the money in the pool. I think we need to get this in the next session of the legislature

**SE:** I have not been in support of fee increase. I will support it if we have a good number we can all agree to, so if I'm going to go to the locals and reps up there, and say here's the story from the SnowTRAC guy, this is what's going on, because I think that numbers important if we want that increase. If we go too far, they're going to fight it with all they have

**MW:** when we started getting pretty serious about the increase, what number makes sense came up... and I did research on how many sbs are registered in the state , and 20 dollars seems like a reasonable amount to ask to take us forward in the future

**SE:** the bugaboo in my opinion, is what is the legislature going to give us? Because it goes through the federal fund.. so we have to ask for an increase along with that increase in registration fees

**MW:** the only argument we have is to look at the amount when it comes through each year and make sure its in there

**JG:** the leg would agree off the record that the amount we will be allotted will be close as possible to what the registration fee total is. I think we have a better chance of asking capital budget to increase. Somebody in State Parks says put in 20000 for the SnowTRAC program, so we need to convince them to ask the gov office to bump it up to 30000 or whatever. I think we have more of a chance of that than increasing the registration fee

**SN:** I think Karlyn could put in the budget and ask for 500000 but that requires some sort of justification

**JG:** its an unofficial agreement among legislators that are dead or gone, and it was supposed to be for a couple years and after SnowTRAC got going, Stratton was supposed to start pumping that up a little and it never happened

**MW:** new admin, new capital budget, one new mark from the governors red pen and SnowTRAC gone. The registration fee gives us a dependable amount. I addressed the ? with a local legislature that temp language can be added to the legislature for INTENT to dedicate to SnowTRAC

**CH:** it is a statute.. 28.01 or something. The actual 5 dollar amount is in there

**JG:** so it requires public hearing, notice and legislation to change.

**MW:** all it takes is one little line to change the statute and increase the fee

**SN:** since I've been here, there hasn't been a registration package change. I'm sure you still have to go through law and all that. It can be done, but its not as easy as it sounds. I've done ACC packages with health and social services and it was a long process

**JG:** where is that local law maker that will introduce a bill?

**SE:** there was a publication of law makers that are favorable?

**JG:** I got a representative last year.. and they were somewhat receptive, but nether one of them really .. what do we tell the bush? What does the bush get out of it?

**MW:** opportunity to build rescue shelters, signage programs

**JG:** they asked how many registrations out in the bush and I said not any new ones and they made their decision off that

**SE:** I based my request off an improper survey conducted at an octane show.. and they happened to get great benefit, so we went around and got the real public opinion off the internet and took it back as to why we don't support it. We have to be wiser and be sure that we give good representation across the state or at least attribute the benefit they could get. I bet we could find a legislator if we all agree on the plan and message we want to carry forward, we can find one to write the bill

**MW:** the bills already written.. I just haven't felt like I've had enough support to take it forward

**SE:** if we have a consistent message to carry.. the same one we all carry and support.. then you're not doing it by yourself

**MW:** as long as I feel like we have buy-in. not just the SnowTRAC board but ASSA as well.

**SE:** I know Kevin's not here but he's been a supporter. If the message is not just about a 20 dollar increase, but from the people I'm representing, and it's a good message and meaningful.

**MW:** define what you think is a consistent message?

**SE:** I didn't know if there was a consistent dollar amount that's acceptable. For a guy that owns 5 snowmachines.. 40 dollars every 2 years is expensive. A lot of people don't ride as much as they used to because of the price of gas.. and its still 40 cents cheaper down here than up north. There is a trend on registration right now.

**JG:** because its not point of sale, its re-registration. New sales are still happening.. registration trend is going down because they are forgetting or ignoring or saying the hell with it. A 300 dollar ticket comes from not having a registration..

**SE:** up north, the only place they check registration is Iron Dog.

**BL:** the only place I know in south central was in Hatcher Pass

**JG:** one of the things we talked about last year was get away from fix-it tickets and give the bust tickets

**MW:** but see that's the wrong solution. We have a much better chance with public information. The riders in those areas need to understand that the money goes back into SnowTRAC, and then to the clubs and individual areas

**Tinker:** you got the bush that doesn't pay registration, and there's still money that trickles up there

**JG:** well Dan Cruze was saying its 50 bucks in Montana because most land is private and there's a threat of losing access. There's no threat of loss of access or reinforcement here so people don't give a rats ass

**SE:** if I'm going to carry a message I would like to carry one like this: we'd like to increase registration fees because we're working our butts off to develop a state-wide signage system, and a safety and education program, and the only way we're going to be able to do this is with more money. Legislators will take this because you're talking their language

**MW:** one of the strongest arguments is understanding the economic benefits

**SE:** there's lots of statistics out there that show where Alaska sits worldwide, and US and Canada, and we're not at the top.... So this is an economic opportunity that we need to implement for the future of alaska. And I think it would be stronger in proponents for this particular thing if we had those three bullets out there that that is a good message to be carried out

**BL:** a few dollars would create such a huge economic system you're going to see your money come back through the state four to ten fold

**JG:** put those points in a letter to us, and we can all read it and memorize it and spell it

**SN:** I'm almost playing advocate against the state but if you came to me and said you wanted to increase it, the first thing I would ask is what are you going to do with this money.. grooming and funding projects is not specific enough.. I would have some sort of structure set up where you can say we're going to put in some sort of safety program and secure our grooming for a number of years at a certain ratio.

**MW:** so we need to dictate we're going to spend this much on grooming, this much on safety, etc.

**SN:** yes, what are you going to do with that money that you cant do now? Something to look at as opposed to you just asking for money

**SE:** I don't think grooming is a big enough argument in itself

**SN:** I hope rec trails stays around, I hope we get the money, but if I was anybody on this board I wouldn't count on it. We can't guarantee we're going to get any further federal funding on this.

**SE:** what's the benefit to north of the range? It goes back into the safety and it might be the one item we bring up regarding the bush and say too many people die!

**JG:** provide safety programs and much better support for those communities

**SN:** they're hitting the RTP grants.. there's a need out there that could be helped by SnowTRAC if you had the money. It would take some work letting them know that its here

**MW:** too many people are dying out there.. it started in Oct last year.. that's an argument there's no escaping.. if you look at the numbers its really bad. 15 people a year are dying on snowmobile accidents and avalanches are maybe 1 or 2. You've got them trapped at that argument because there's no refuting that information

**SE:** we had 2 people, one was a kid, on the Chena river. I know the EMT that almost lost his life going out to save him. We were lucky there was only one fatality

**MW:** another one that breaks my heart.. somebody went for a ride at night 15 miles from town and broke down.. they found the snowmobile and a mile away they found the body. That doesn't have to happen anymore,, they have spots that cost about 99 bucks and you push it and the coast guard comes and rescues you. I guess we're down to a half hour here. What I'm really hoping from this discussion today is an agreement from the board that we move forward on the fee increase. Lets either DO it or NOT do it. Lets make a plan, lets do it right, identify people and legislators

**JG:** Steve will identify points, we'll just have to

**MW:** I know that this means nothing to you and where you live (Eric) and I understand, but I need the rest of you on board to agree with me that we're going to move forward. Ben and his staff can do nothing until we talk to a legislator (Dennis Egan).. senator, and used to ride snowmobiles and is absolutely pro-access, pro-snowmobile, pro-business and if I said I need him to call the gov and raise the fee he'd be all about it. And here's the problem, he's a Juneau legislator, the bill would have to be introduced by someone in Anchorage or Mat-Su.

**(everyone besides EM nods to signify their compliance and support)**

**SE:** I know that we had some good people favorable to snowmachines in the past, but I think we lost all but one rep. I would have to update my contacts, but I can start going down the list

**MW:** I'll make a meeting with Senator Egan but I think we need to identify another person to introduce it. I have it written, in the right language, and it looks like a bill.. .but my contact who wrote it doesn't think it will pass if she introduces it. It says something like 'a bill changing snowmo registration fees to 20 dollars a year'

**BL :** is the intent in there

**MW:** that is something that the bill's sponsor would have to help us with

**SE:** so we need a presentation we can give to state leg and senators and then use that to find that person that would be willing to introduce. Although I can be sure no interior person would introduce but I can still ask them.

**MW:** as soon as I get back I'll call my contact and get a sit down with him and gets that piece out of the way. At least that gets the director moving forward, and can talk to the commissioner on that end. He thinks that's an excellent idea already

**JS:** say this doesn't work, can we still get a line item increase

**MW:** 2 ways to do that... director adds item into his budget. The legislature approves, not suggests, the budget. Then it goes to the gov where he can either add subtract or change it, then to the legislature where they can do whatever they want with it.

**JS:** even if it doesn't get bumped up he has the justification

**SE:** even if we don't get a legislator to represent the bill, they will hear about it

**SN:** the park puts in a budget every year, and that's about 250

**MW:** the legislature can amend the governors budget. So you could ask the legislator too if he can add money to the budget. You're going to be looking for a senator or representative that sits on a finance committee. They are the only ones that would be able to add new line items into the budget.

**JG:** how granular is the budget, is there a line item that says 'SnowTRAC funding 200,000'?

**SN:** say if we got 250 authority, and the budget comes back as more... if our receipt authority is only 250, then there would be a problem spending the rest. My fear is, we need to make sure we have receipt authority

**MW:** I think that that may be true about money coming into the budget from somewhere else. I think on capital budgets, legislature can change whatever they want to .

**SN:** then we just need to figure out how that would work. And if I'm wrong, I'm wrong and that's fine. Karlyn would be able to explain it better

**JG:** so I guess though that it seems that for so many years the DMV income has been linked to the 250 line item.. what I would like to see is to unlink that. State parks puts in a budget for trails or whatever it is and receives it for summer tourists and such, and then during the winter all the closed signs go up and the residents and snowmobile riders have to struggle to get money from that pool to survive

**SE:** the only way we'll get that separation is if we have other people contributing to the funds.

**MW:** if we go and ask for too much, it would mess up our message

**JG:** I think that might be the best thing because then we would have to stop grooming, people would be PISSED. But that could be the best thing that happens by getting people into action. It would send the clear message why we need the money to get those trails groomed

**SE:** I almost think what you're saying is equally important as an increase

**JG:** as I said earlier today, and yesterday as well, we're going to have to make some tough decisions that are really going to piss off some people in order to keep the quality

**SE:** it would piss off a bunch of people, but get their ears bent

**MW:** I think we limit it to one thing right now. If you ask for both, you're not going to get either.

**SE:** we should look at other alternatives in the long range. I tend to think we might have out best opportunity to go forward with the registration fee increase legislation, but we cant count on it



**MW:** we go to the intent language.. that link becomes permanent if you have the link in the legislature that that money goes to SnowTRAC. If someone argues you don't need that money, you refer back to where it says exactly what the money is for. I think we've beat this one to heck. I'll reach out to senator Egan and see what he says, but I guess I'm hoping we can lean on each other to get this passed. I think once the ball gets rolling and Kevin sees us moving forward and getting things done.

**JS:** if this does get improved, when would we see it

**SE:** leg meets next spring and makes the budget

**MW:** it might take 10 years before the whole pool actually comes in

**SE:** so we would start seeing incremental increase

**MW:** and as riders see it's the registration fees that are paying for the projects happening in their areas, we'll get more people paying their fees

**JS:** that's a good idea.. threaten to raise the fee and maybe we'll get an influx of people signing up

**SN:** as soon as I find out from fed highways I will email you and not a moment later.

**MW:** can you make some code words to make it fun? Like "the chicken has laid the egg"

**SN:** or the "Titanic is sinking"

**MEETING ADJOURNED AT 4:30pm**

# SnowTRAC Meeting

## December 10, 2010

### ATTENDEES

Bill Luth – SnowTRAC Advisory Board  
Cynthia Hite – SnowTRAC Advisory Board  
Dan Mayfield – Big Lake Trails  
Eric Morris – SnowTRAC Advisory Board  
Greg Shaffer – SnowTRAC Advisory Board  
Joe Gauna – SnowTRAC Co-Chair  
Kevin Hite – President, AK State Snowmobile Assn.  
Kyle Kidder – South Central Region, Easements  
Mark Wilke – SnowTRAC Co-Chair  
Stephen Enochs – SnowTRAC Advisory Board  
Gary Anderson – Caribou Hills Cabin Hoppers  
Glenn Swann – Curry Ridge Riders  
Pat Daniels – Big Lake Resident  
Kit Jones - Mid- Valley Trail Club  
Deborah McGahn – NAOI

### DNR STAFF

James King – Parks Director  
Andre Kaeppele – Trails Program  
Amanda Stevens – Admin. Asst II

### Meeting Called to Order at 8:35 a.m. and introductions made by all

Kaeppele: As you may be aware James King's last day will be on December 15<sup>th</sup>. We need to rethink strategy on the registration fee increase campaign.

Wilke: We need to add to the meeting: Discuss Board Members that should be nominated and Board Members not attending.

Wilke: I have a question. James, what do you think on fee increase with current Governor?

King: The Governor is most likely not interested in fee increase unless the public or other individuals are supportive.

Wilke: Have you have a discussion with the Governor?

King: Key outdoor councils have his ear. Ron Arno, Bill Stoltz should be asked what they think. There is strong resistance from the Bush. They don't want to register machines, but interested in having the trails signed.

Wilke: Do you have any criticism with the Board Members, Staff? Is there anything we could do better?

King: We have had great discussions, redoing operation procedures, making grooming standards fair, distributing money equitably throughout grooming pool. You are making progress. I encourage the progress with grooming and signing standards. People may complain about paying groomers the same. We may get complaints while working through standards. Everyone is doing a great job on moving forward.

Shaffer: I have a question of fees. Do we have a tracking method on new sales and resales? Is there a quality control? Question on raising fees both renewals and new ones.

Kaeppele: DOT would have the information. Point of sale is higher than renewals. People don't bother renewing as there is no enforcement and people don't know where the fees go.

Gauna: Fees should be simple.

Shaffer: Online system doesn't work.

Kaeppele: Need to call DMV. They will email information.

Shaffer: Fees important. If no enforcement it messes up system. Renewal should be better.

Wilke: We will discuss fees later.

C. Hite: James we enjoyed working with you. Great job!

Wilke: I second that.

King: I appreciate the opportunity. Good luck.

Kaeppele: Now it is time for Public Comment. Are there any Public Comments?

Mayfield: I am disappointed with the Trails Adjudication on Houston Loop as it has not been quite resolved. The positive side is that Big Lake Trails have purchased new equipment and will hit Trails this evening with a large volunteer force. We are in the process of finalizing the force and have a Tucker, Bombardier, and Ski Doo. Funds have been donated and a public member gave good financing. We got 20 new members and were able to purchase equipment.

Kaeppele: Thanks for sharing. Adjudication will be included with nomination and we will discuss the process. Kit have you got new grooming snowmachine?

Johns: Not yet, we will have soon. We have a machine that is in the process of getting a new heater.

Luth: In regards to Grooming and Nominations, it has been hard to get Trails Survey and get everyone to agree and adjudicated.

Kaeppele: When dealing with multiple resources this affects different areas. The process of going through this is difficult with agencies (Fish & Game, etc.)

Gauna: That I why local trails groups need to develop trail plans.

Kaeppele: We have been discussing with Lake Louise Trail Plans and adopting plan for Trails.

Wilke: Appreciates all the work that has been done.

Gauna: Believes the high priority is Design Agreement, rates with adjustment made for variable trails. How much money can we spend?

Kaeppele: This is on the calendar and we will stay in touch. Are there any other Public Comments? None okay we will move on.

Wilke: Gauna needs to know the Grooming & Nominations have been pushed up.

Kaeppele: We will be discussing safety later. We pushed up the Grooming due to the fact Deborah had a radio show to discuss the new snowmobile safety curriculum, she will be in afterward.

Gauna: Trails Discussion and Nominations will begin. Glenn Swann will be in later for meeting if we need trails to groom and people need to be nominated.

Wilke: We have had many discussions on the nominations. We don't have a nomination process. How does someone get to be nominated to do a trail? You get nominated to a Trail Plan through governor via a Letter of Intent.

Gauna: If user wants to be doing it, is there a process?

Wilke: All requirements need to be met. I believe a process is there.

Anderson: I believe there might be a misunderstanding.

Gauna: Let the folks follow the process.

Kaeppele: Kyle is here.

Gauna: Trails need to be identified which should be groomed.

Kaeppele: I learned easement adjudication is a difficult process in trying to get all involved parties communicating. It requires extensive researching of records and agency contacts to determine public access status. Kyle has done an excellent job of summarizing the access status of our trails with list.

We need to develop a method to prioritize trails, this way Kyle can focus on the most important trails. Some trails require extra effort due to their complexity. Bottom line there are inconsistencies, legal action issues, access issues, trail development problems, and it is an extensive process to secure access.

Gauna: We have heard all of this before. We need to start moving on it. The groomers need to identify trails.

Wilke: We need to check with groomers to pick one major trail.

Kaeppele: We have been discussing with the Public the easement application process and there are several resources available. Often time the projects get held up by Public because they have missed a step.

Gauna: The Public has to be responsive. We need to set deadlines for Trails.

Kaeppele: We are working with the Public and Kyle is working on it too.

Luth: Willow Area's list doesn't include what needs to be done. Willow Swamp Loop says no survey – but I went out personally with the surveyor while he surveyed the land.

Kidder: I will need to speak with the surveyor to find the plat.

Luth: No easement? I have question...why is it so hard to read list?

Kaeppele: How do we prioritize or nominate the Trail. Joe says we need to let groomers do but we need to figure out a method.

Mayfield: We have been having a problem with Mental Health in the direction of Houston Loop Trail. The contract isn't going anywhere and we have been having a problem getting it signed. Why can't the state agencies deal with it?

Gauna: Can Kaeppele speak with the committee?

Kaeppele: Do we want to deal with Mental Health?

Luth: We probably have to deal with this in Willow too. Most of their land isn't buildable as most of it is swamp.

Mayfield: Trails has been passed but Mental Health has the Trails locked up.

Kidder: Mental Health is for profit. Their major sources of dollars is Land Sales and Development. Can you say Trails will be an improvement to Development?

Gauna: Hopefully Kaeppele can talk to higher ups regarding Mental Health.

Kaeppele: I will look into it and maybe educate them.

Mayfield: Is there a group we can talk to regarding Mental Health?

Kaeppele: State Management doesn't really control Mental Health.

Mayfield: Somehow we would like to get the signature on the contract.

Kaeppele: Does anyone know what Trails need to be groomed?

Gauna: They should be able to identify them.

C. Hite: I think going to the groomers should be ok, but we should look at main trails and go from there.

Gauna: I agree. Su Valley Trail's main trail and work from there. Some trails are not heavily used and we have had no public comments.

Wilke: We do represent Public. As Gauna is chair he should take Top Trails and give to Kyle the top five trails. Keep it simple.

Gauna: I accept.

Luth: I will go to Bruce to get finalize on easement from State.

Gauna: I want to know about conference room for groomers. Can we arrange for one.

Kaeppele: If you want Gauna to take care. We need to focus on all areas. Bill and I have been discussing Financial of growing groomers. Maybe if Fee increased we can grow. Do we want to grow Grooming Pool?

Luth: I believe we should always take applications.

Gauna: I agree. When they apply we should take their applications and encourage applications.

Wilke: We need backups for the Trails.

Gauna: I agree.

Luth: If Fee increases it should be based upon the first to apply and they are able to groom.

Kaeppele: We should be cautious of putting resources to take care of trails and then if it is abandoned. We should focus on trails we will use long term as it wouldn't be good to put our resources in and then five years later abandon the trail.

C. Hite: We should be proactive of getting Statewide Trails.

Gauna: I agree.

C. Hite: The goal is statewide. We should not chase trails. I have a question on applications. How many agencies are involved?

Luth: It depends on how many trails and public meeting.

Gauna: Yes/No. Nobody knows how many agencies. South Denali crosses borough. Mental Health can be done. We need to let Public know where to go to provide information.

Kidder: When talking about Agency Trails crossing Borough or State. If they don't want the trail to cross their land then it stops the trail.

Luth: Can the trail be moved?

Kidder: Yes, we can work with re-routes.

C. Hite: We should work in our own areas and adopt trails.

Kaeppele: Deborah has arrived to discuss the NAOI snowmobile safety summit.

Gauna: Cindy would you let us know what happened at the summit safety.

C. Hite: Yes. Deborah and I attended the 2 day summit. There weren't a lot of people at the summit but it was interesting.

McGahn: The goal at the summit was to do in training on safety and get it out to the community. It gave a platform of knowledge identifying key elements: Develop online programs, rider responsibilities, packing the right gear, mechanical inspection, writing a trip plan, considering being a trail instructor.

C. Hite: Attached from Kaeppele. This is a great took program in the making.

McGahn: It was great for snowmobiling training, networking all around, schedule posting online, data collection. The efforts are in the works. I will give a full report of where we are at by the end of the year.

C. Hite: Everyone is interested in safety. With local safety and a lot is going on. There is not much between local clubs and NAOI. What role are we going to play in the safety area? Does the state need to develop a program? As a board we need to figure it out.

Mayfield: Last meeting we discussed the Safety Program. There is no safety in Big Lake area. We have heard of safety programs though.

McGahn: We have connected with other entities to do safety programs. People don't know and we are trying to network with others regarding safety. The two most important ways are getting public informed. Communication is key, also, a safety video. We need to develop games for kids with safety information in a fun and interactive way.

Gauna: We would like give to NAOI to everyone. Cabin hoppers didn't get information on summit. Why didn't this go to AMDS?

McGahn: We sent it to you.

C. Hite: We got it.

Kaeppele: I would like to comment on SnowTRACs role in safety. Boating is heavily funded by Coast Guard. We don't have the funding or the staff to get the information out. That's why NAOI is important as they are dedicated to the mission of safety.

C. Hite: Boating isn't relying on grants – they are heavily funded. What is the outlook on funding for safety?

McGahn: Sustainability is an issue. We have looked at individuals, manufacturers, state. We have looked at video or movies, different sources for a steady stream of revenue.

Kaeppele: We will discuss with Jeff to channel funds.

Wilke: Boating Safety program was put together 10 years ago as it was required by law. It is funded \$1m/year. We don't have the money unless we raise revenue.

Luth: I agree with that unless the registration fee is good.

Wilke: How about getting people using trail to pay fees?

Luck: How about trying to get dog sleds registered with DMV?

Wilke: How about getting other people who use trails to pay fees?

Anderson: To dog mushers?

Kaeppele: Funding is limited and should be dedicated for safety and continue to work with NAOI.

Wilke: We have thrown money at safety and we are not certain we got results. We are not going to get results due to \$15,000 budget. We need avalanche training. We should abandon safety program until we get more funds.

Swann: NAOI safety should be handled at club level and not SnowTRAC.

C. Hite: We are not seeing benefit. We have been funding and don't believe we should have to pay for final project. What is the role going to be?

McGahn: The materials we have produced in the last three years you don't have to pay for it. We have been trying to work with the clubs. Some money has been allocated for helmets which have been distributed. We have spent \$200k. If you want it at the club level they will do it for trainings, Arctic Man, Eureka, and Iron Dog.

C. Hite: Do we want instructors? Books? What do you see SnowTRAC doing?

McGahn: We have pamphlets. You need an instructor. But there has to be a way to pay for the instructor. You should give money to the clubs to hire instructor.

C. Hite: SnowTRAC should be used to pay instructor and pay clubs.

Gauna: If you were to apply for a grant?

McGahn: It would pay for instructor to teach and clubs to distribute.

Gauna: What do you determine to send out to people to teach?



McGahn: From people contacting them directly. We make the decision on the greatest need. We are sending out instructors to Koyuk.

Joe: Is Koyuk providing funding?

Luth: Would bringing 1 or 2 people in to train work better and then send them out?

McGahn: No. They wanted two people to go train. They are funding. We got contacted by Big Lake to do a community program. Communication is key. We need information to provide to contact.

Kaeppele: Eric as a Villager if a snowmachine class was provided do you think a group of Anchorage instructors or a local resident would be better?

Morris: A local resident would be more effective.

C. Hite: I agree. But how would you get a local trained?

Mayfield: Big Lake could use a Safety Expert on a day to day basis.

Anderson: We have our own. We are working with all entities.

McGahn: Eric, how do you educate locals?

Morris: Our people don't have teaching capabilities. They would have to be taught.

McGahn: Let's train – Statewide. We hire top instructors with certification.

Kaeppele: How about annual training? We could find funds to fly people in outlying communities to Anchorage, to attend a trainers training.

C. Hite: There should be two roles for SnowTRAC: Monetary to fund instructors and fund the whole thing or booklets.

Luth: Obviously we should fund a piece. How much do we need to request? Do we educate the Public or provide the information to clubs?

Daniels: The program is valuable. But, no one is paid for the safety program. Leadership of community should meet with if club was involved. Member could get training. Should isolate area to safety side for one year. I took input of community meeting: sums 2008 – 2010 (\$45k grant). Application was turned in grant required helmet safety training for children. I believe people shouldn't have to pay for classes and helmets. You need to isolate the funds to one direction.

McGahn: Classes are free.

Daniels: Class is free, but helmet is \$25. You should work out deal with manufacturers to get deal on helmets. Some manufacturers may even give helmets for free with mention. Training may have different standards for snow machine riding.

Wilke: To the Board Members – any statewide will \$15k make a noticeable difference? Should we make the clubs have the trainers? A brochure won't be able to do larger scale.

Shaffer: We should have a basic program set up for each region. Each region has different conditions. Should we have a quality control to funnel through Advisory Board?

C. Hite: How do you believe it should be done?

Shaffer: Basic fundamentals for region, plus more complex trails. Local clubs do standard training. We should have a say on basic trails and advanced trails – providing advanced instruction.

Luth: Any way to do that must have a grant.

Shaffer: We need to have a basic program.

Kaeppele: That's why the summit occurred. We should go into contract with NAOI. Do a contract from 1-3 years. What type of product do we get?

Daniels: A portion of grant money should cover safety for community.

Kaeppele: We should be careful of losing help from Deborah. They may turn to a more secure funding source. It is a lot of work to organize safety courses and curriculums, especially if there is no guarantee of funding.

Anderson: It should be handled at the club level.

Luth: Deborah should write a grant for funding like everyone else.

Kaeppele: We should have one lead organization (NAOI) providing snowmobile safety. Club should contact them for information.

Daniels: If NAOI writes grant for safety, they should decide most important class and have clubs get the training.

Wilke: Board Members what do you think should be done?

C. Hite: Are we going to fund product, instructors, or clubs? I don't believe SnowTRAC can do it. Or should we fund a piece instead?

McGahn: Bill and Mark make a good point. Local clubs should put in requests and every year NAOI will prioritize. Funding a piece isn't a good idea.

K. Hite: What clubs have asked for safety items?

Daniels: Has SnowTRAC ever given requirements?

K. Hite: I believe we are trying to put requirements in place that we can't do.

Mayfield: This summer we talked about a statewide safety program. We need to leverage NAOI to provide level of funding and the best source for safety.

C. Hite: We need to develop a program and need to figure out what to do. NAOI provides safety information that is beneficial. Should the clubs reach out to them?

Luth: No, definite answer. The grant request for clubs is not a good idea. NAOI should provide information, but I don't see a way to. NAOI needs to contact clubs.

Shaffer: I believe we are behind a statewide program for basic training.

Luth: We need to have one problem solved per year by going to all the clubs and asking them.

Kaeppele: I believe we have steps to work toward to continue. We talk more about it next meeting. Now it is time for Registration and Fee increases. I believe the Governor's office is behind if the Public is okay. I believe it's time and the Public is aware and okay with it.

Gauna: Glenn has talked to the Governor's office regarding the increase. Let's let him tell you.

Swann: I have talked with the Governor and he is adamantly against raising taxes on it as he wants the voters to vote for him.

Kaeppele: If we can show him the Public is supportive would it help?

Enochs: The Interior is not supportive for Fee increases on the trails. A moderate increase \$5 to \$10 is okay but \$5 to \$25/year won't be acceptable. If you raise fees, snowmachiners shouldn't be the only ones responsible.

Wilke: I specifically asked James King regarding the fee increase to speak with the governor. The fee will be increased if it legislative approved.

K. Hite: Fee increase administrative is action. We lost strong advocates when Mike Kelly wasn't elected. We are sending out SnowRider about SnowTRAC in February. The perception is changing regarding SnowTRAC. We will be supporting the fee increase from \$5 to \$20. The increase is eye catching to snowmobilers.

Shaffer: The registration fee is sent to DMV regarding registration renewal. I am looking at website right now. From 2005-2009 there have been 54,328 registrations. With it being \$20/year that would generate over \$1M. I don't believe there should be a raising on fee until State can enforce renewals.

Luth: Amounts aren't correct. Money is being spent for program with no money being left over.

K. Hite: Since 1994 SnowTRAC has been around. No state enforcement required for renewal.

Shaffer: I have been to one event the Arctic Man where the State Troopers were enforcing registration and snowmachines need to be registered.

K. Hite: They possibly had been required to be registered as it is on State land. Private land doesn't need to be registered. Public land and public events need to be registered.

Kaeppele: If dealer selling new and resale at point of sale – these need to be registered but a private sale you can't enforce.

K. Hite: The information regarding registrations can be found on DMV.

Wilke: What you do you think SnowTRAC can do to help with increase?

K. Hite: We need to approach legislation, speaking with outdoor lobbyists to get updates on who to approach.

Morris: Zero support the fee increase in Rural Alaska.

Anderson: Kenai Wild Refuge are checking and enforcing registration. Dollars have gone up.

Daniels: Can patrol be sent out to enforce? Alaska Park Rangers are strapped for time. It could be given to Troopers but dollars and acknowledgement would have to be given to them. What are fines for not having registration?

Gauna: \$80 - \$300 plus a one day suspension from riding.

Enochs: What is the purpose for raising fees?

Wilke: Grooming, Safety, Development and Marketing. This should be \$1M/year.

Enochs: What is message? Do we have a presentation?

K. Hite: We will be laying out bullets in February from ASSA and we will address in issue.

Enochs: What is SnowTRAC position?

C. Hite: There are three points: Sell it/Sales (Safety program), letters from clubs, go to legislature.

Gauna: I think we are on the right track. I have talked to clubs and they are for it.

Enochs: We need to work on positions.

Wilke: Why don't you put into a motion?

Enochs: SnowTRAC should put out a motion we support \$\_\_\_\_\_ for increase for Registration Fee.  
1. The increase should be used to develop a Statewide Trail – village to city.  
2. To continue to develop a Statewide Trail System – increase grooming  
3. Signage program

Wilke: I second that.

C. Hite: We need to put on SnowTRAC website. Can we support the Fee Increase on the website?

Kaeppele: I believe we should be careful about putting on website. We can do it though. It could be stated that SnowTRAC board support.

C. Hite: Will it provide a powerpoint with slides regarding fees? It would state our names and a letter of intent.

Luth: We could provide an 8½ x 11 laminate on trails. Give the basics to post what fees will be used for.

C. Hite: Steve, would you put the motion through email and send to Andre for stamp of approval?

Gauna: Steve, do you have objection to withdraw motion?

Enochs: No, I don't have a problem.

C. Hite: We need to put out to many sources.

Kaeppele: One more topic to address. Sounds like Public Education fees in Political area?

Gauna: When we pass resolution every legislature needs to get information.

C. Hite: Public support needs to be included.

Gauna: Agree. I represent the Public.

C. Hite: I believe letters should be included. One letter from me doesn't mean as much as 100 letters from the Public.

Enochs: Yes, letters should be included.

Gauna: I will meet with club and have them write letters.

C. Hite: I don't like how things were left with Deborah and NAOI. I call for a motion to safety. Andre can we contract with organizations?

Kaeppele: Training instruction for safety based on curriculum. It should be stated funds should be dedicated to club. We would need to talk to contracting to figure out the words.

C. Hite: I motion to fund \$15k next year to NAOI as a board we should fund or not.

Enochs: I second that. I believe we should fund now.

Wilke: I don't support. NAOI needs to go through grant process.

Luth: I agree.

Kaeppele: I'm concerned about not giving them the funds. For the last couple of years we have been working with NAOI. I'm afraid we may lose their partnership.

Wilke: There is no direction in the program.

Gauna: We have been through this. My vote is no.

C. Hite: I will work with Deborah regarding Funding.

Kaeppele: Okay we will do a count on the forum:

1. Gauna – No
2. Luth – No, would need to see where the dollars are going
3. Wilke – No
4. Enochs – Yes
5. Morris – No
6. Shaffer – No
7. Cindy – No

Kaeppele: Now we will discuss the delinquency of Board Members. There are 10 members in the regions of the state. There are few not active at the annual and other meetings. Janet Athanas represents Western Alaska. She hasn't been attending due to work conflicts and I believe there is a lack of participation. Ozie West represents Disability. I haven't received scores from the annual meeting and he hasn't been active at the quarterly meetings.

Wilke: What options are available?

Kaeppele: Removal of attendants. I recommend removal by majority vote. Section 9 deals with attendance.

Gauna: I recommend removal of Janet Athanas based on non-attendance and Ozie West.

Wilke: This is open for discussion.

Luth: I believe it is okay to remove Janet Athanas but Ozie West needs to be different.

Kaeppele: I brought up Ozie West due to not receiving scores.

Luth: There is a definite reason to deal with Janet Athanas.

Wilke: I believe we need to deal with the Janet Athanas issue, but Ozie West should be handled differently. I will personally call him and speak with him. I propose to remove Janet Athanas.

Kaeppele: Okay we will do a count on the forum:

1. Luth – Yes
2. Gauna – Yes
3. Hite – Yes
4. Shaffer – Yes
5. Enochs – Yes
6. Morris – Yes

7. Wilke – Yes

Wilke: Andre why don't you give me Ozie West's number.

Enochs: Several Board Members are soon to expire. How can we handle re-nomination?

Kaeppele: No term expirations on seat. Any application should be considered. Board Members need to apply.

Gauna: What would qualify to be on the board?

Kaeppele: A letter of intent, resume, summary of experience.

Wilke: Do we need to qualify? Can we have a letter of intent?

Gauna: Yes, I believe it's okay.

Wilke: Can you give me dates of renewal?

Kaeppele: Bill Luth – March 1<sup>st</sup>, Eric Morris, C. Hite, Joe Gauna – are all coming up in March. We might possibly switch seats around. Three key members are coming up. We will recruit in 1-2 months. Board Members would need to submit a Letter of Intent.

Wilke: I would like people to reconsider their times on the board.

Kaeppele: Actually there are 5 seats available, as Janet's is coming available.

Gauna: I intend to return on the board. Bill are you signing on?

Luth: Yes.

Gauna: I believe area should be in regards to location.

C. Hite: Where would you apply – the website?

Luth: Western Alaska will be hard.

C. Hite: So do I send people to Andre or the website?

Luth: Andre would be the one to send them to.

Kaeppele: I have all the information and can give it to them.

Gauna: I believe the meeting is over.

Wilke: I motion for the meeting to be adjourned.

Luck: I second it.

**Meeting Adjourned at 12:40pm**

# SnowTRAC Advisory Board Meeting

## August 26-27, 2010

### Advisory Board

Mark Wilke – Co-chair; Southeast  
Joe Gauna – Co-chair; Anchorage  
Eric Morris – Rural Alaska  
Stephen Enochs - Fairbanks  
Ozie West - Disabilities  
Bill Luth – Kenai Peninsula; PWS  
Greg Shaffer - Interior  
Cynthia Hite – Mat-Su/CRB/Valdez  
Andy Morrison – Inter-Board Liaison

### Park Staff

James King – Parks Director  
Andre Kaeppele – State Snowmobile Trails Coordinator  
Sally Davies – Parks Administrative Assistant (note taker)  
Steve Neel – Parks Grant Administrator  
Kyle Kidder – Mining, Land and Water—Easement Section

### Public

Dan Mayfield – Big Lake Trails  
Erin McLarnon – Exec. Director, AK Trails  
Bruce Paulson – MatSu Trails Program  
Pat Daniels – Big Lake resident  
Jennie Daniels – Big Lake resident

## August 26, 2010

Meeting called to order at 8:30 a.m. and introductions made

### Finalize and Sign Operating Procedures

Kaeppele: This is our second annual meeting. There is good potential for growth in what this board is doing and we are on track with our goals. Let's look at the Operating Procedures. The changes from the old 1990's procedures made for lots of revision.

Wilke: I believe that we adopted the procedures at the last annual meeting.

Kaeppele: We will then have the Director sign the official Operating Procedures document.

Wilke: Any last minute changes?

### **Operating Procedures Signed**

### Public Comment Period

Kaeppele: We have thirty minutes for public comments.

Daniels: Is there a request for snowmachine helmets?

Luth: Yes

Hite: Why do you ask?

Daniels: I am concerned on how the grant is being used.

Wilke: Do you have a particular issue?



- Daniels: The grant that has been awarded money last year charges different rates for the helmets. Safety classes are held at times when most people can't attend. There is no internet access to take safety tests. There is already a safety program at BigLakeTrails that has everything that the grant program says they are doing. I would like to see the funding for the grant help out BigLakeTrails. NAOI has no information for winter safety programs specifically for snowmobiling and winter sports.
- Wilke: I have spent a lot of time on NAOI's website and I find it is pretty easy to find what I am looking for. We awarded the grant to them because we are trying to put money in a program that is non-profit.
- Luth: But is it worthwhile?
- Enochs: Is there an accountability/responsibility in place for the funds that we distribute? Who is ultimately responsible to make sure they follow the rules?
- Kaeppele: These grants are on a reimbursable program. Administrators review the receipts and reimbursement request to insure they match the application. It is a pretty through accountability process. If a grant applicant doesn't meet the requirements they don't get funded again until they are in compliance.
- Shaffer: Do we have access to reports that the grantee send in? Can we see their tracking method?
- Luth: Let's continue with the public comments.
- Kaeppele: When the board reviewed the grant application with the helmets, we amended the grant to say that the money from the sale of the helmets go back into the program. Helmet sales are only a small portion of what NAOI does in their program. This program does do a lot of good for the community.
- Morrison: Perhaps we should talk to them regarding what is going on. We know this is not a perfect solution, but what do we do? We discussed as a board not to fund lots of small institutions.
- Hite: This is a big issue. We do need safety but we don't have funds to give everyone.
- Wilke: Thank you for coming today. We are out of time. We as a board felt compelled to put money where it would do the most good.

### **Review of New Grant Scoring Process**

- Wilke: Let's review Operating Procedure #21.
- Kaeppele: I didn't receive scores on some applications from some of the board members.
- Wilke: Make sure you get Andre the information on time.
- Kaeppele: If you didn't turn in scoring on some grants you should not vote on that particular grant.
- Morris: Let's go back to Operating Procedure #1 before we start on #21. I object to electronic copies of the grant applications. It took my computer several hours to download the information. I also can't print out all the grants to read them. It is hard for me to read all the applications on the computer screen.
- Wilke: As a grant scorer we really need a paper copy because we have to go back and forth between pages to score.
- Hite: Ask each board member if they want paper or electronic.

- Luth: Have the grantee send in 10 copies like it used to be required.
- Kaeppele: When we receive applications we are trusting applicant is honest in their information. It has only gone through a light review before it is sent on to the board to score. The applicants will go through a more thorough review before grants are awarded.
- West: What about a pre-review of the grants?
- Luth: If I have a question on the grant submission I just call up the applicant and get my answer.
- Wilke: If you are doing that then you should include all board members to the email so we all see the question and the answer.
- Gauna: If you do ask applicants questions then the board needs all of this information before the annual meeting starts.
- Wilke: When we discuss the grants and a board members score changes after the discussion, we need to change the scores on the page that has change and not just change the front sheet. This way we know which item changed.
- Gauna: I am for all funds go to grooming.
- Enochs: I don't want to see all the money go to grooming when funds could be used elsewhere in more viable program demands.
- Kaeppele: Is it better to look at scores, then grooming pools, before deciding on funding. We have double the grant applications and less funding this year.
- Morrison: I think that some of the grant funding should go to ORTAB.

### **Discuss and Score Grant Applications**

- Wilke: Do we accept a late application?
- Kaeppele: I go through last years grants and phone applicants to see if they are re-applying. I do this a week prior to the deadline.
- Morrison: What happens if the grant deadline is missed?
- Gauna: They don't get the grooming funding.
- Kaeppele: Last year we required a letter of intent to file an application. I don't think we should continue to be tolerant with late applications.
- Hite: I think there should be some leeway because it is a new application process this year.
- Enochs: I think everyone should be responsible for themselves.
- Luth: There was some confusion with the new forms.

Shaffer: If these organizations were always organized in the past and this time they submit a late application, I think they should still be looked at in the application pool.

Gauna: We should let late comers in this time but make it clear that it won't happen again.

Wilke: Let's have a motion on the lateness of the SnowMads application.

Hite: I motion we vote on accepting SnowMads application in the funding pool.

Luth: I second the motion.

Wilke: All those in favor?

For 6                      Against 3      MOTION PASSED

**Project Name:      Alaska Snowmobile Safety**

- **Applicant:** North America Outdoor Institute (NAOI)
- **Funding:** \$15,000
- **Project Type:** Safety and Education
- **Land Owners:** N/A

**Project Description:**

Host a workshop with snowmobile stakeholders to review and comment on the safety curriculum developed from past projects and intended for use with this project. The final curriculum will be posted on the web and followed by a minimum of four live training sessions in southcentral and northwest Alaska. Participants will be eligible to purchase a discounted snowmobile helmet.

**Board Discussion:**

Wilke: Are there any conflict of interest?

Neel: They are pretty good on timeliness for quarterly reports, etc. They have two grants to finish up. There are not problems.

Wilke: What about the safety program?

Neel: When helmets are bought the money was put into a separate account to go back into the program. The effort was made to show the separation of dollars.

Wilke: Pat, have you seen the grant application?

Daniels: No

Wilke: They are asking for \$15,000 for a seminar on snowmobile safety.

Luth: She is moving money from one spot to another.

Gauna: There are lots of testimonials. I am not impressed one way or another. I don't want to see them take money from our funding.

Daniels: Why can't the funds be reduced and have them be required to fund some Iron Dog safety classes.

Hite: They already do that.

Gauna: We have to score the application and have them stand on their merit.

Morrison: We have to be careful that we aren't putting our entire safety fund in racing safety programs.

Daniels: It seems like Debra McGhan's program and her husband's business interests are double dipping in the state funds.

Kaeppele: The money isn't free. They have to provide services.

Mayfield: This group has never shown up to any meetings in the Big Lake area.

Luth: Or contacted any of the clubs. I feel the money is not deserved because of lack of outreach

Hite: We need some kind of safety. The board does not have time to start a safety program. We need someone else to put this on. That is why we use NAOI. I feel we need to fund this grant.

Gauna: Maybe they can request a grant next year and start putting a program together a safety program in the summer months for next grant application.

Morris: They remain suspect but they are the only game in town. We have to judge them on what is submitted in the grant application.

Morrison: I don't think we can question this too much. We need a safety program.

Kaeppele: This grant is a direct response to the board at the last meeting stating they want a statewide safety program.

Wilke: This application gives us a seminar and not snowmobile safety curriculum.

Enoch: What I am hearing is that there is no comprehensive safety program. Can we state what we want to see happen with this grant? What I am hearing is a lot of questions with this group. Is it a good use of the money?

Wilke: If we pull this grant, then there are no safety programs going on.

Hite: SnowTRAC needs to put out guideline goals of a safety program.

Kaeppele: Having the state do a safety program in-house competes with private enterprise.

Wilke: Curriculum and training is what the grant is asking for. Should we split out these two different programs?

Morrison: Are we required to give a certain amount of funds for safety?

Hite: No.

Wilke: Now is the time to change the scoring.

**Project Name: Iron Dog Safety Expo**

- **Applicant:** Iron Dog, Inc.
- **Funding:** (\$16,450)/(\$6963)/(\$23,413)
- **Project Type:** Safety and Education
- **Land Owners:** N/A

**Project Description:**

Free EXPO will promote safe outdoor recreation for snowmobiling, x-country skiing, etc. through presentations, seminars, and booths. Iron Dog racing sleds will be displayed along with safety and survival equipment required for the race. Numerous booths will educate the public on safe winter recreating, and provide educational materials and demonstrations.

**Board Discussion:**

Wilke: Any conflicts of interest?

Neel: They have a new project manager. There have been a few issues with timeliness of payment. Those issues have been worked out. Historical reporting shows there is no problem with grant reporting.

Wilke: Any misuse of funds?

Neel: I haven't seen any misuse from the documents turned in for reimbursement. There have been no additional line items added.

Mayfield: This event reaches the most public. There is a great return for the money spent.

Luth: This group doesn't care where they travel and whose property they ruin. I have a problem with this. Let's be real. With this grant we would be funding Iron Dog race and not the Safety Expo.

Kaeppel: there is room for improvement. The Iron Dog race is benefitting from the grant. However, the race does pull people into the Safety Expo.

Morrison: I don't feel that funding a building is a good use of our funds.

Gauna: People are going to the Expo to see the racers and not the safety programs.

Wilke: The return on investment of a one day event is not something we normally fund.

Enochs: Arctic Man has a safety program that has raised safety somewhat.

Shaffer: Iron Dog draws crowds. If a safety Expo is there, it will be seen. Is it worth the investment?

Hite: Do we continue granting applications on safety because this is all we have? Why don't we use the money instead to create a safety program?

Morrison: Why aren't we approaching a university for an intern program on safety?

Gauna: Let's find a group like AK Trails for a program.

**Project Name: Haines Winter Trail Equipment**

- **Applicant:** Alaska State Parks
- **Funding:** (\$29,700)/(\$7,425)/(\$37,125)
- **Project Type:** Trail Maintenance and Development
- **Land Owners:** State of Alaska

**Project Description:**

This project is for the purchase of two snowmobiles, two groomers, fuel and associated safety equipment to provide groomed trails at multiple locations within the Haines area state park units and portions of adjacent Haines State Forest Land, enabling for improved and increased access for winter recreation.

**Board Discussion:**

- Wilke: This is a State Parks grant. There is a new ranger wanting to maintain trails with new equipment to ramp up their program for public benefit.
- Luth: This is a perfect grant for ORTAB. I motion this to be given to ORTAB.
- Gauna: Second.
- Wilke: Let's withdraw motion until we have had more discussion.
- Luth: Withdrawn.
- Wilke: Haines is the only area in southeast with riding trails like us. You can ride trails all the way to Yakutat. It would benefit even Canadian riders. This is becoming a large riding area.
- Luth: Can we fund a partial grant?
- Enochs: Shouldn't this money be going to non-profits and not to a state entity?
- Wilke: You are not the first person to bring this issue to the table. Many Parks grant application have merit.
- Kaeppele: A third of state budget funding comes from grants. We do not have internal funds to maintain the parks.
- Hite: I didn't see anything about snowmobile trails. All I saw was for ski trails.
- Gauna: Even a private business can request grants. It has always been allowed that Parks can apply for grants. I feel this should stop. They are very good at the application process. I think is a good application but I think this should be an ORTAB grant.
- Kaeppele: After the equipment is bought the trails will always be groomed at no extra expense to SnowTRAC.
- Wilke: this application has an economical effect for the City of Haines which is a depressed area.
- Luth: I motion that this application be passed on to ORTAB.
- Gauna: Second.

**For 8                      Against 1                      MOTION PASSED**

**Project Name: Winter Trail Grooming Glennallen**

- **Applicant:** Copper Country Snowmobile Club
- **Funding:** (\$4,800)/(\$1,632)/(\$37,125)
- **Project Type:** Trail Maintenance and Development

**Project Description:**

Trail Grooming and Signing for approx. 73 miles of winter recreational trails. These trails are from Glennallen to Tolsona and connect to crosswind and Lake Louise areas.

**Board Discussion:**

- Wilke: They are requesting to be included in the grooming pool for specific trails. Are there enough users on these trails? Are there any conflicts of interest?
- Kaepple: They have all the legal documents in the application. This group has been grooming these trails in-house for many years. This year they have applied for funding.
- Wilke: They also made reference to signage but didn't ask for any funds for that.
- Gauna: Grooming the trails twice a year is better than nothing.
- Morris: The trail is going to cross Ahtna land. This is not much of a permit from Ahtna.
- Luth: this permit expires Dec. 31<sup>st</sup> of this year.
- Gauna: I don't see where the designated Ahtna land is on the map submitted.
- Wilke: I need a motion to approve these trails to the grooming pool.
- Luth: Do we let them into the grooming pool?
- Gauna: Not today. They haven't proved that they have access for 5 years.
- Wilke: When we look at these grants, how many have actual access?
- Gauna: SnowTRAC requirements say 5 years access. Not a 6 month permit.
- Morris: I motion to include these trails to the grooming pool as stated in the grant application.
- Hite: Second.
- Gauna: I motion an amendment to the motion that it is clear that there will be a 5 year access permit. And do riders need a permit from Ahtna to ride on permitted trail.
- Wilke: I second Joe's amended motion.
- Kaepple: I am concerned about the trails in general. If the trails are only groomed twice a year there may not be many users.
- Morris: There has to be a priority list on what trails get groomed.

Gauna: Even though these trails get added to the grooming pool does not guarantee they will get funded in future years.

Wilke: Let's have a vote on Joe's amended motion to add these trails to the grooming pool if they meet the stipulations.

**For 8      Against 1      MOTION PASSED**

**Project Name:      Grooming Pool Administrative Snowmobile**

- **Applicant:** Alaska State Parks
- **Funding:** (\$8,000)/(\$5,000)/(\$13,000)
- **Project Type:** Trail Maintenance and Development

**Project Description:**

This funding would allow the state snowmobile trails administrator access to the statewide snowmobile trail system through the purchase of snowmobile. The snowmobile would be used to conduct trail site visits for a variety of purposes including to identify access issues along trail, inspect trail systems for proper maintenance, distribute trail resources such as signs, make public contact to discuss trail related issues, etc.

**Board Discussion:**

Wilke: Are there any conflicts?

Kaeppele: I pretty much laid it out in the grant the need for a snowmobile for the grant admin staff. If there is a trail issue this is a good tool for the administrator to get to the trails.

Luth: The administrator needs a snowmobile to do the duties. Why a Ski-Doo?

Kaeppele: The state uses this manufacturer. We are familiar with this machine.

Shaffer: Renting one is \$200 a day. For \$8,000 that is 40 trips. Also, renting doesn't have maintenance.

Kaeppele: We have staff that can maintain the machine.

Morrison. I have rented snowmachines. They are not consistent in quality.

Morris: I personally want to know what is going on with the trails and conditions. I think a snowmachine for the grant administrator to use is a good idea.

Wilke: Didn't Parks purchase a snowmachine and trailer last winter?

Kaeppele: We purchased one with ATI funds.

Wilke: Why aren't these types of purchases put into the capital budget? I think it is a good idea for a snowmachine. I just think it should come out of the capital budget.

Mayfield: I am concerned with what message you are sending the public if a snowmachine is approved for the state and not a public entity.

Wilke: The Director has sole authority on how this money is spent.



Enochs: Andre should have a machine to do his job and I think the state should provide it. But earlier I heard that anyone can apply for a grant so this is not out of line.

Gauna: I think this should go to ORTAB. I am opposed to using funds that are not for trails.

Shaffer: If there are more requests than there are funds then I think the funds should go to help trails.

Luth: We as a board have asked Andre to look at the trails and let us know what is going on. This is not a requirement of the state. If we ask him as a board to supply us with information, then we need to provide him with the tools.

Wilke: Carefully consider your score on this grant because it is an unusual one.

**Project Name: Repairs and Maintenance to Snow Cat**

- **Applicant:** Lake Louise Snowmachine Club
- **Funding:** (\$10,920)/(\$2,730)/(\$13,650)
- **Project Type:** Trail Maintenance and Development

**Project Description:**

This funding would allow the Lake Louise Club to purchase parts needed in order to repair their Bombardier 400 Snow Cat used for grooming area trails.

**Board Discussion:**

Wilke: Any concerns?

Kaepple: The machine is old and worn out. It needs a lot of maintenance and the club doesn't have a lot of money to pay for repairs. They need this equipment because of the width of trails in that area.

Morris: They haven't met requirements. They don't have a 25% match. There are also no supporting letters.

Luth: The volunteer mechanics are their match.

Morris: They have no hours, wages, etc., listed for the match if they are using volunteers.

Wilke: There are no quotes, no list of parts and just not enough information. How much will the grooming program suffer without this grooming machine?

Luth: It is pretty important.

Gauna: It is the only machine they have.

Luth: This is an accident maintenance request not a regular machine maintenance repair.

Gauna: There should have been quotes. This is a poorly put together grant.

Enochs: I concentrate on the intent of the grant.

Gauna: The grant application clearly states in the instruction sheets that you need 3 quotes. I don't think there should be much leeway if you don't go the minimum.

Wilke: We can discuss this more tomorrow.

## **Project Name: South Fork Montana Creek Trail Safety Improvements**

- **Applicant:** Montana Creek Motor Musers
- **Funding:** (\$4,000)/(\$1,333)/(\$5,333)
- **Project Type:** Trail Maintenance and Development

### **Project Description:**

The proposed project will fund the rental of a small dozer to correct site distance problems to improve safety on the trail. Additionally the trail we be widened along portions that have been narrowed into a tight gully due to erosion.

### **Board Discussion:**

Wilke: Any conflicts of interest?

Kaeppele: It requires permitting. The safety issue is a reasonable request. Are we spending funds for year round use?

Luth: This trail is degrading.

Morris: This is this the type of trail that SnowTRAC should be funding. Where is the match in the application? They are crossing CIRI land. There is no permission from property owners. Their Corp of Engineers permit expired in 2007.

Hite: Don't they need all of this before the grant was brought to us?

Morris: If they want to get funds to pursue legal access, then yes. But they shouldn't be asking for funding before this is done.

Wilke: Work is not being done on CIRI land. There is an easement in place on the road which is CIRI land.

Kaeppele: Most of the trail is a public easement on state land. We will need to look on the ADL to see what can be done with this trail.

Gauna: This is what Kyle will be looking into.

Luth: Even if we approve this grant it doesn't mean they will get funded.

Kaeppele: I think more information should be coming with these grants.

Morrison: Did they complete the application in a timely manner?

Gauna: Parks staff used to get us more information with the applications before they were submitted to the board.

Hite: We are asked to make judgments before we have all the pieces to the applications.

Gauna: I want the applications to be more thorough before they come to us.

Wilke: I think the requirements are good just the way they are. If after we approve funding and the applicant can't get the permits, etc., then they don't get funded.

Kaeppele: Will this erosion control have to be done every year?

Luth: No.

**Project Name: Caribou Hills Trail Grooming**

**Board Discussion:**

Wilke: Any conflicts?

Luth: Their grooming pool and adding trails to groom are two separate requests.

Hite: I make a motion to move this application to the grooming pool?

Luth: Second.

Wilke: Discussions?

Gauna: Tinker will have to get permission from the Borough for 5 years for grooming.

Wilke: Those in favor of moving this application to the grooming pool?

**For 9 Against 0 MOTION PASSED**

**Project Name: South Fork Montana Creek Trail Groomer Purchase**

- **Applicant:** Montana Creek Motor Musers
- **Funding:** (\$12,500)/(\$4,167)/(\$16,667)
- **Project Type:** Trail Maintenance and Development

**Project Description:**

The proposed project would fund the purchase of a wide track snowmachine to pull groomers. Currently the Motor Musers have three machines and one is approaching retirement and incurs extensive maintenance costs. The new machine will maintain the club's ability to groom with three drags.

**Board Discussion:**

Wilke: Any conflicts?

Kaeppele: This trail has been inspected. They had adequate equipment to do the job.

Luth: How many machines does it take to groom 10 miles of trail?

Gauna: There are no bids and the title is misleading. They don't need this.

Wilke: If there are no other comments then turn in your scores.

**Project Name: Mid-Valley Trail Maintenance Project**

- **Applicant:** Mid-Valley Trail Club
- **Funding:** (\$11,672)/(\$18,909)/(\$30,581)
- **Project Type:** Trail Maintenance and Development

**Project Description:**

The Mid-Valley Trail Club grooms and maintains approximately 60 miles of winter trails and trailheads within the mid-valley section of the Susitna River. The funds requested will provide the club with a four-stroke snowmobile dedicated to the grooming effort.

### **Board Discussion**

Wilke: Any conflicts of interest?

Kaeppele: This is a well written grant. There is a genuine need for equipment. They have shown that the equipment will be put to good use.

Luth: They have never requested equipment in all the years that they have been grooming. They do need an equipment upgrade.

Morris: The match is the re-sale values of club owned equipment? I don't understand this. It is a good application though.

Gauna: I motion to move this to ORTAB. We shouldn't be buying equipment.

Morris: We have been inconsistent in our funding. Until the board finally decides what we will fund we will keep getting equipment and maintenance requests.

Gauna: We have to stop buying equipment. The money should be used for grooming.

Morrison: What I am hearing is that you want the applicant to buy their own equipment and we provide the grooming funds.

Gauna: Yes. Have the business man buy all of his equipment and then come to us for grooming funds.

Kaeppele: I think requests should be allowed to include equipment and maintenance.

Wilke: I motion to move this grant to ORTAB.

Gauna: Second.

**For 1      Against 8      MOTION FAILED**

### **Allocate Grant Funding**

Kaeppele: Program funding is \$235,000 this year. Twelve percent goes to administration and this leaves you with \$206,000. Add in the leftover funds from previous years and SnowTRAC's budget this year is \$342,865.

West: I make a motion to approve the 5 highest scored applications.

Enochs: Second

Wilke: Those in favor of funding the 5 highest scored grants?

**For 4      Against 5      MOTION FAILED**

Wilke: Any ideas on how to rank these grants?

Enochs: I feel it should go with the score. The score reflects what we like about the application.

Hite: This conversation has gone on every year. We have to grade according to scores. It is the most objective method and defensible to the public.

Morris: I suggest we revisit the requests and see if we need to reduce funding.

Hite: I motion to fund the top four average scores.

Morrison: Second.

Luth: We should consider partially funding the NAOI grant as we are less concerned with the courses than actually developing the curriculum. I suggest we fund them to develop the curriculum, but not to teach the courses.

Wilke: Is it really worthwhile to dissect a project by changing the funding amount?

Hite: We should fully fund the highest scored projects, it is our process.

**For 6          Against 2          MOTION PASSED**

### **Allocate Grooming Pool Funding**

Kaeppele: This year we have a deficit of \$34k in our grooming funds.

Luth: The Snowmads should be penalized for submitting a late request.

Wilke: Make note that the Big Lake Funding request has sky-rocketed from last year.

Mayfield: Last year was our club's first year grooming and we were learning the ropes. This year after seeing the trails and talking to the public, we've realized that we need to provide much more extensive grooming and maintenance of our heavily used Trail System. This year we will be hiring contractors with the large snow cat equipment. These are some of the reasons our requests have gone up.

Gauna: I suggest we adjourn for today and take this up again tomorrow.

*MEETING ADJOURNED 4:30 p.m.*

## **August 27, 2010 Meeting**

Meeting called to order at 8:40 a.m.

### **Allocate Grooming Pool Funding (continued)**

- Wilke: Floor is open to discussion on what we will cover today. I will start with my issue. The 5 ft. rule for trail width is not working for snowmobiles/grooming. We need to work with DNR to change this rule to a wider width.
- Morrison: If we are going to increase registration fees we need to get a comprehensive map of Alaska 's existing trails. Do you have any maps at this time we can see?
- Kaeppele: Yes. They are on the website.
- Gauna: We need to talk about prioritizing trails for grooming.
- West: How many trails are RS2477?
- Kaeppele: Very few. RS2477 trails weren't incorporated in the trail system because there were better routes available.
- Gauna: We need to finalize yesterday's grooming scores.
- Morrison: Are we still allocating funds the same as prior years?
- Wilke: We used to do them regionally.
- Luth: We really should give a dollar amount for each request.
- Morrison: Do they have to perform the work before they are paid?
- Gauna: State Parks checks paperwork and then writes the reimbursement check.
- Morrison: the amounts are just a guideline to start the process.
- Luth: Teri Zell and Wayne Biessel request a guideline to start the process.
- Hite: There should be a cut from the board for each group that is applying for grooming funds to make up for our shortfall.
- Kaeppele: It might be worth taking the time to consider each area. I think it is fair to take a percentage from each group but some areas perform better than others.
- Gauna: Let's look at the history of each one.
- Wilke: We have a duty to look at each grant with reason and thought.
- Kaeppele: We have to make a decision today.

## **Public Comment Period**

- Daniels: I need more clarity on how grants are scored and decided. As a business person the numbers need to make sense. Shouldn't a committee also make the numbers make sense? How can we get a safety program started? Why are we wasting time to let certain groups override decisions of small group applications? I want a veteran a veteran's program and a children's program. I am willing to donate the first \$5,000 today. If we continue to sponsor maintenance and equipment purchases, the previous grantees will start changing their applications to get accommodated for funding because SnowTRAC keeps changing their own Operating Procedures.
- Wilke: AK State Snowmobile Assoc. is a program that can accept your money to help create a safety program that meets your needs.
- Morris: Why don't you put in a grant application to start a safety program and you can use your money as match?
- Gauna: I think ASSA is the group that can help you.
- Morrison: There are other good associations and clubs that can help you.
- Daniels: NAOI gets money every year and I am upset with their safety courses and helmet program. They say they cater to children, but all of their courses are at inconvenient times, and children cannot attend.
- Kaeppele: NAOI always provides the services outlined in their grant. I have attended their classes, have purchased helmets, and in the courses I have attended, there were children present.
- Hite: Are you willing to donate money and time and work with NAOI to make sure they are providing a safety program you agree with?
- Daniels: They already get money from the state and only provide minimum programs.
- Hite: As a public entity, why don't you go to NAOI and find out why they are not providing you what you need for your complaints?
- Gauna: Asking SnowTRAC to fix the problems you obviously have with NAOI is a request we can't grant.
- Wilke: It takes lots of funding to develop a comprehensive safety program. It is not a simple task. It is going to take years.
- Daniels: This group puts in for money year after year.
- Kaeppele: The opinion of the public from the surveys gathered so far, is that safety programs have the lowest priority. We need to put the funding where the public wants it.
- Morrison: There is a lot of safety that needs to be done in rural areas first. We know it is a great challenge and we are trying to work it out.
- Daniels: I am just trying to bring more awareness to the safety program and the unfairness of granting funds to only one applicant.
- Gauna: No one else has applied. We have no other options.

Kaeppele: If you are serious about funding a program, I can put you in contact with someone that can help you set up a safety program that meets your needs.

### **Allocate Grooming Pool Funding (continued)**

Wilke: It is time for us to get back to grant scoring from yesterday.

Luth: The first 4 grants have been approved. Big Lake was shorted last year. Petersville gets lots of snow. Caribou can be reduced and Hatcher Pass should be fully funded. Overall, most groups used less funds last year because of the lack of snow.

Gauna: Can you say everyone who has gotten money met grant requirements?

Kaeppele: There was some difficulty in getting everyone to send in their reports.

Gauna: What are the requirements?

Kaeppele: Reports are due monthly. Some businesses aren't as organized as others.

Wilke: If we take money away because they are slow in reporting, is that fair if they are providing good service?

Gauna: Who knows when reporting is late?

Kaeppele: Teri Zell and Wayne Biessel. We provide them \$11,000 a year to do this.

Wilke: We never discussed a 30 day reporting period. It was an arbitrary number thrown out.

Kaeppele: Reporting is very important. If we get a heavy snowfall late in the season and the groups have not provided their reports and reimbursement requests, we don't know how much money we have left to move to the groups that need it.

Shaffer: Maybe in the future we should penalize the late reporting, but until we get everything worked out we should only penalize lightly.

Luth: The paperwork that needs to be turned into Teri is very simple. It takes about 10 minutes for do.

Kaeppele: I hate to start penalizing groomers that are late with their paperwork but are doing a good job grooming the trails.

Morrison: We are progressing as a club because now we are questioning the lateness of the reports. Let's use the prudent reserve for filling in what we need for grooming.

I move that we approve the grooming pool requests as is and use the prudent reserve as necessary.

Wilke: Second.

Enochs: I think we need to see where we need to cut without using prudent reserve.

West: Yukon Quest and Chena River Area will be requesting more money in future years.

Shaffer: Andre, do you have last year's grooming request amounts.



Kaeppele: There was about \$30,000 left over that was not used.

Morrison: The amount requested by Yukon Quest is small considering the amount of trails they groom.

Hite: Call the question.

Wilke: There is a motion to use the prudent reserve to fully fund all requests. Let's vote.

**For 5                  Against 4      MOTION PASSED**

## **Review of Generally Allowed Uses**

Gauna: Let's review the regulations.

Morrison: Why are some trails 10,000 pound limit and some trails 15,000 pound limit?

Wilke: Snowmachine versus vehicles. Large vehicles need a permit to be on trails. Groomers need a permit for their equipment.

Kidder: When easements are written it doesn't state summer or winter use.

Kaeppele: The easements allow the same activities as what is generally allowed.

Shaffer: What would be helpful in the permit to state the PSI of vehicles.

Morrison: Who is the person to make these changes? Maybe there should be a paragraph that talks about winter vehicles.

Kaeppele: Instead of changing general allowed use permits how about changing easement agreements to meet groomer needs? That process seems much easier.

Wilke: The Commissioner of DNR has the authority to change the statute. Changing each trail easement is time consuming.

Morrison: Only 10-20% of the trails are affected by this. Single easements make sense.

Gauna: Changing the 5 ft. width to 12-16 ft. widths make more sense.

Kaeppele: Twenty foot swaths of cleared land for trails across any state lands would not be supported by Parks or most of the public.

Wilke: What about the width of a snowtrack grooming machine? Are there any examples of trails where we can't get the machines through the trails?

Gauna: Petersville, Deep Creek, Big Lake.

Luth: Also Corral Trail.

Kaeppele: The problem with public access easements is that they don't allow for any additional use or public activities other than what is stated in the generally allowed uses.

- Kidder: If we took a list of trails to the Commissioner that we have a vested interest in and that are being constricted by the 5 ft. rule, we could get an exemption.
- Hite: Would it go to public comment?
- Kidder: I am not sure.
- Gauna: The Commissioner might not need to go to public comment with a categorical exemption. The exemption would be attached to trails already in existence. We are not asking exemption on trails that are not established.
- Kidder: If we do exemptions it is only on easement. You will still have to negotiate with other agencies.
- Paulson: We have borough easements up to 20 ft. A state construction easement should allow this.
- Wilke: Let's make suggestions to change the allowable use document and not get side-tracked on other issues.

### **Prioritize Trails for legal Status Research and Easement Adjudication**

- Gauna: Let's look at this list of easements to see which easement needs to be worked on first.
- Kidder: Many of the trails cross multiple land sections. Some don't have a file or applicant. The ones listed in green have been completed or partially completed. Easements are in yellow.
- West: There is a fair amount of BLM trails pending in the Northern Region.
- Gauna: Let's get this easement list cleaned up and send it to the SnowTRAC/Groomers Board with all information so they can prioritize which easements need to be completed first.
- Kaeppele: We can do another review after the groomers have seen the list and we have their input.
- Morrison: We need to start looking at this for the future on how we can start connecting these snowmachine trails that are now in existence. How do we get maps to start looking at this issue?
- Kaeppele: All of our trails have been locally adopted that lead to different areas. They didn't think about how the trails could be connected. We now need to plan the connecting of trails with the system that has developed these trails.
- Shaffer: Maybe we hire a consulting firm to figure out how to look at the big picture to see how the trails can connect.
- Wilke: We lack time and resources to deal with this issue.
- Gauna: It can be done but small groomers don't want to lose what they have.
- Shaffer: I am getting the feeling that we love this idea but no one wants change. We have to change to make progress.
- Morris: Our stated goals are for a statewide trail system. We also need to connect rural communities to the trails.

Hite: People need to see maps on trail connecting to get people on board for fee registration increase.

Enochs: Trails easements are a big issue in the Interior areas.

Wilke: Kyle, how many state workers are working on easements for the state?

Kidder: Two.

Morrison: I don't think it is too far-fetched to identify inter-connecting trails as one of our future goals.

## **Review Grant Instructions Applications and Score Sheets**

Morris: In what way is a native corporation a government? On the score sheet they are under government. To make the score sheet less confusing is a goal.

Kaeppele: Applicants have no problem navigating through the paperwork.

Hite: Advisory has been taken out of the application. Why can't we give our advisory opinion on the grants?

Kaeppele: There are key elements of application that can't be ignored. And that is the support for the grant from the public,

Hite: We should have 25 points as an Advisory Board member where we can advise.

Shaffer: Identify the grants with a code number. The titles are confusing if group names are similar. I do agree we need a section where the board can comment on the grant.

Luth: I go with Cindy's and Joe's idea that the score sheet needs a section for the board to make comments on the grant.

Gauna: There needs to be a place to score on the return of investment and benefit if awarding a grant.

Kaeppele: We don't want to lose the importance of the score sheet.

Enochs: A document that explains how to fill out a grant is needed.

Kaeppele: I'll put you on the list for the next grant writing workshop.

Morrison: We really need to go through the instruction booklet. It helps to get an understanding on how the grant works. We need to be accountable to the credibility of the scoring. We need to read between the lines on the applications. We don't need our own section. If we make changes with the score sheet the changes should also change in ORTAB scoring.

Morris: There are threshold requirements that applicants have to meet and we don't need our own section on the score sheet.

Wilke: Our experience in these areas should be used in scoring the spreadsheet. That is why we were elected. Let's not be afraid to use our knowledge when scoring.

Mayfield: Everyone who applies for a grant should be able to write one.

Daniels: Would more people attending the meetings change your way of scoring the grants?

Morrison: I would like to combine grant application and score sheet together. In years past I got the score sheet with the comments. It was a great learning tool.

Kaepple: Those are on the website with the minutes, the awarded grants.

Mayfield: There needs to be better instructions in the application portion for adding trails.

Wilke: What are some of the procedures we can fix?

Enochs: We should discuss timely grants.

Morris: It is spelled out clearly as a requirement, but we keep accepting late grants.

Morrison: While constructing the new application there were a few missed deadlines. If we are hard about timeliness we will lose applicants.

Shaffer: A process to suggest is a “3-strike” method. We are helping the community build a service.

Morris: Rules apply to the future. We can’t ask the public to have their ducks in a row if the board can’t do the same.

Kaepple: One solution is to create a deadline one month prior to final deadline for review. That way there is time for applicant to fix what is wrong. If they miss the final deadline then they are out of consideration.

Gauna: I think they should meet requirements or let’s change the deadline rules.

Wilke: I motion that our policy as the Advisory Board is to not accept any late applications.

Hite: Second.

Luth: I call the question (Question is read)

Wilke: Let’s vote.

**For 8 Against 1 MOTION PASSED**

Morrison: When we make a resolution like this, where will it be documented?

Kaepple: All motions are documented in the minutes.

Gauna: Mark has some questions on the score sheet itself.

Wilke: Some of these questions don’t apply. Let’s start with the safety/education score sheet.

Shaffer: Can we start on page one?

Wilke: There is no match for a safety grant. It shouldn’t require 2 points.

Shaffer: There needs to be a group name and a project name to avoid confusion.

Hite: There should be more points for Safety and Educational Projects.

Morris: Part of the issue is putting score points on a narrow detail project narrative.

Morrison: A good goal would be to make our score sheet mimic our application.

Wilke: Can we keep this simple and just change the score sheet?

Kaeppele: As we improve the score sheet we have to keep in mind what the application instruction states.

Wilke: Section II has too many points. It should only have 5 points. Section III has been asked to score labor hours.

Gauna: There is no point per line value.

West: Take out some of the descriptions and condense it to 3 or 4.

Shaffer: Can the match be something they own?

Morris: Match shouldn't be something the club already owns.

Wilke: Match should be sweat equity.

Kaeppele: If applicant meets the requirements then they are submitted.

Shaffer: It isn't up to the state to confirm the legitimacy of the match. They met requirements and it is up to us to decide in our scoring if we want to fund.

Wilke: Section IV has some comments that should be in the application.

Hite: Two of the questions are pretty much the same.

Wilke: I will take time to go through the score sheet and present it to everyone at the next meeting.

## **Registration Fee Increase**

Gauna: I don't know what else to say about increasing registration fees. We have been discussing this for years.

Enochs: I don't see it being thought out to where it is presented in a way that everyone can understand.

Wilke: We all see things from our own experiences. I have a tough time understanding the resistance to a \$5 increase. The benefits will be for everyone.

Gauna: DMV collects the registrations and the Legislature allocates to the State Parks the requested funds. If you ride a snowmobile on a state or federal land your machine has to be registered.

Shaffer: The Interior doesn't see a lot of the money so that is why they are so against the increase. My job is to help them understand why the increase so I can educate.

West: A lot of people won't pay it because of the belief that most of the money stays in Anchorage.

Enochs: Not all of the registration money collected has been given back to Parks.

- Kaeppele: There have been some years that we were given more than 100% of the money. But 100% of the money is allocated every year.
- Wilke: By state law, if you collect taxes the money has to go into the general fund. Parks asks for the line item dollars from money totals provided by DMV. Our purpose is to make sure we get our money each year. The state makes sure it is in their budget request from the Legislature.
- Enoch: We need a plan to make the fee increase a reality.
- Morrison: We need to find out why the majority of the public is saying no to the increase. Maybe we need to look at other possibilities, like gas tax portion for snowmobiles.
- Shaffer: Does DMV give us reports on new machine bought versus renewable?
- West: Increase the fees and tell the people where the registration dollars are going. Example: so much for grooming, so much for safety programs, so much for signage. Do the increase as a phase-in program.
- Gauna: We have suggested this. The resistance is coming from the Fairbanks area. The board members in that area need to educate the snowmachiners.
- Wilke: Knowing the program is a good one should be your argument for raising fees. Ignore all the negative responses and focus on the positive responses and grow from there.
- Enochs: Because the majority of grant money goes to Anchorage, the Interior sees no benefit to raising fees.
- Wilke: We were getting lots of grant applications in the past from the Interior and we awarded many of them. Then they stopped coming in. There were no new grants from them again this year.
- Mayfield: the vision for a statewide trail system starts with the Advisory Board. You can't do this unless you have funding. To get funding, let the vision be communicated to the public for support of the increase.
- Kaeppele: The major of surveys returned stated that a \$20 registration fee per year was a reasonable amount. Some even suggested \$40.
- Hite: We need to push the survey to all the clubs as an action item.
- Wilke: What would be the top 4 priority task for fee increase for SnowTRAC to implement?
- Morrison: This is something the Legislators will vote on. What is our timeline to put this in front of them?

#### **Top 4 Priorities for SnowTRAC That Fee Increase Will Support**

1. Comprehensive Safety
2. Rural/State/Trail Marking, Stakes, Tripods/GPS
3. Statewide Trail Program to Connect Communities
4. Expand Trail Grooming Program

Wilke: There is some confusion with the instructions and the application scoresheets. I have found some inconsistencies.

Gauna: A couple of years ago SnowTRAC decided that it would be easier to have one form for application review between SnowTRAC and RTP.

Wilke: The scoresheets don't always match what is included in the application. The result is that some scores become unnecessarily inflated. The scoresheet should be revised to better represent the overall public benefit of the project to the snowmobile community. Right now the majority of the scoring emphasis is on how well a project is written, instead of the inherent value of the project for the sport.

Gauna: I suggest the scoresheets are inherent with the application so that scores can be directly tallied as the application is reviewed.

Additionally we need a better and more streamlined process for adding trails to the grooming pool.

## **Meeting Wrap-Up and Task List**

Hite: Before we wrap-up the meeting, I would like to make a motion to fund the Lake Louise Snow Cat Repair Project. This is one of the most heavily used trail systems in the state, and they need properly maintained equipment to provide safe, well maintained trails for the public.

Gauna: Second Motion.

Enochs: I disagree, we have already decided on the funding line for the grant applications, and this project was not included.

Shaffer: I feel the club should be able to cover the maintenance costs, the membership is as high as 54,000. That seems like enough membership dues to take care of items like equipment maintenance.

**For 6            Against 3    MOTION PASSED**

Gauna: Motion to stop buying machines for grooming.

Hite: Second

Morrison: Maintenance costs should be included in the club's hourly rate. This is the direction we will have to go to get towards a model of professional contracting.

Hite: I am concerned that contracting would cut out some of the smaller businesses.

Enochs: I agree, we should be supporting the trail clubs, not state administered contracting.

Morrison: We need to spread the word that we would prefer professional contractors (with equipment) for grooming, and get away from purchasing equipment.

Enochs: If we go to contracting, we run the risk of having to pay Davis Bacon wages.

**For 2            Against 7    MOTION FAILED**

## **Task List**

- 1) Memorize and recite the 4 priorities that the fee increase will support. Approach your representative and relay this information. (For Board)
- 2) Approach Division of Lands Commissioner about a categorical exclusion to the generally allowed uses for snowmobile trails. Among other things, exclusion should allow grooming and maintaining trail to 20ft in width. (For Kyle Kidder)
- 3) Identify disabled snowmobile user groups and relay information to Ozie. (For Board)
- 4) Encourage SnowTRAC applicants to also apply for the Recreational Trail Grant Program. (For Board)
- 5) Schedule and organize videoconference for the Reg Fee increase and involve ASSA. (For Andre)
- 6) Prioritize trail lists with groomers and send to board. (For Andre)
- 7) Review application scoresheet and revise as needed. (for Mark)





# Grooming Pool & Snowmobile Trail Grant Expenditures

2010/2011

## GROOMING POOL

### Southcentral Grooming Areas

	Requested	Appropriated	Final Score	Comment
Big Lake	\$ 22,287	\$ 22,287	N/A	Recommended
Petersville	\$ 40,000	\$ 40,000	N/A	Recommended
Lower-Susitna Drainage	\$ 7,000	\$ 7,000	N/A	Recommended
Mid-Valley Trail Club	\$ 16,640	\$ 16,640	N/A	Recommended
Lake Louise	\$ 23,939	\$ 23,939	N/A	Recommended
Willow Area Trails	\$ 19,000	\$ 19,000	N/A	Recommended
Caribou Hills	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000	N/A	Recommended
Denali Highway	\$ 18,000	\$ 18,000	N/A	Recommended
Hatcher Pass	\$ 32,235	\$ 32,235	N/A	Recommended
Snowmads	\$ 20,200	\$ 20,200	N/A	Recommended

Copper Country	\$	4,800	\$ 4,800	N/A	Recommended
Montana Creek Motor Musers	\$	5,000	\$ 5,000	N/A	Recommended
Admin	\$	11,000	\$ 11,000	N/A	Recommended
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>250,101</b>	<b>\$ 250,101</b>		

**Interior Grooming Areas**

Yukon Quest	\$	15,000	\$ 15,000	N/A	Recommended
Chena River Recreation Area	\$	12,480	\$ 12,480	N/A	Recommended
Admin	\$	1,000	\$ 1,000	N/A	Recommended
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>28,480</b>	<b>\$ 28,480</b>		

**Southeast Grooming Areas**

Juneau Snowmobile Club	\$	10,000	\$ 10,000	N/A	Recommended
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>10,000</b>	<b>\$ 10,000</b>		
<b>TOTAL GROOMING POOL FUNDS REQUESTED</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>288,581</b>	<b>\$ 288,581</b>		

**Snowmobile Trail Grants**

Mid-Valley Trail Maintenance Project (MVTC)	\$ 11,672	\$ 11,672	83.57	Recommended
CHCH Trail Grooming	See in Grooming	See in Grooming	N/A	See In Grooming
S. Fork Montana Ck. Trail Safety Improvements (MCMC)	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	80.43	Recommended
Alaska Snowmobile Safety (NAOI)	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	72.43	Recommended
Grooming Pool Admin. Snowmobile (DNR)	\$ 8,000	\$ 8,000	70.43	Recommended
Winter Trail Grooming (CCSC)	See in Grooming	See in Grooming	N/A	See In Grooming
Repairs and Maintenance to SnowCat (LLSC)	\$ 10,920	\$ 10,920	50.57	Recommended
Haines Winter Trail Maintenance (ASP)	\$ 29,700	\$ -	68.71	Sent To ORTAB
Iron Dog Safety Expo (Iron Dog, Inc.)	\$ 16,450	\$ -	54.43	Not Recommended
South Fork Montana Ck. Groomer Purchase (MCMC)	\$ 12,500	\$ -	54.43	Not Recommended
<b>TOTAL GRANT FUNDS REQUESTED</b>	<b>\$ 108,242</b>	<b>\$ 49,592</b>		<b>TOTAL GRANT FUNDS APPROPRIATED</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL FUNDS REQUESTED</b>	<b>\$ 396,823</b>	<b>\$ 338,173</b>		<b>GRAND TOTAL FUNDS APPROPRIATED</b>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE</b>	<b>\$ 342,865</b>	<b>\$ 342,865</b>		<b>TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE</b>
<b>PRUDENT RESERVE FUND</b>	<b>\$ (4,692)</b>	<b>\$ (4,692)</b>		<b>PRUDENT RESERVE FUND</b>
<b>FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR ALLOCATION</b>	<b>\$ 338,173</b>	<b>\$ 338,173</b>		<b>FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR ALLOCATION</b>
<b>DEFICIT</b>	<b>\$ 58,650</b>	<b>\$ 0</b>		<b>DEFICIT</b>

2010 - 2011 Available Funds	
\$	
206,800	Program Fundling 2010-2011
\$	
85,987	RTP Funds
\$	
50,078	Rollover Program Funding
\$	<b>Total Funds</b>
<b>342,865</b>	<b>Available</b>

FUNDING BREAKDOWN	
\$	
288,581	Grooming Costs
\$	
49,592	Grant Costs
\$	
<b>338,173</b>	<b>Total</b>

## Snowmobile Trail Grant Program - 2010/11

				Scores											
Ref. #	Project Name	Funding Request	Funding Allocated	M.W.	J.G.	B.L.	S.E.	A.M.	C.H.	E.M.	J.A.	O.W.	G.S.	Average	Cumulative \$
1	Mid-Valley Trail Maintenance Project (MVTC)	11,671.96	11,671.96	90	70	92	85	90	74	84				<b>83.57</b>	\$ 11,671.96
2	S. Fork Montana Ck. Trail Safety Improvements (MCMM)	4,000.00	4,000.00	85	69	77	90	79	83	80				<b>80.43</b>	\$ 15,671.96
3	Alaska Snowmobile Safety (NAOI)	15,000.00	15,000.00	73	31	80	75	94	75	79				<b>72.43</b>	\$ 30,671.96
4	Grooming Pool Admin. Snowmobile (DNR)	8,000.00	8,000.00	95	1	63	83	85	75	92				<b>70.57</b>	\$ 38,671.96
5	Repairs and Maintenance to SnowCat (LLSC)	10,920.00	10,920.00	65	57	74	55	70	33	-				<b>59.00</b>	\$ 49,591.96
6	Iron Dog Safety Expo (Iron Dog, Inc.)	15,000.00		65	23	46	56	80	43	68				<b>54.43</b>	\$ 64,591.96
7	South Fork Montana Ck. Groomer Purchase (MCMM)	12,500.00		68	31	67	35	77	63	40				<b>54.43</b>	\$ 77,091.96
8	Haines Winter Trail Maintenance (ASP)	29,700.00		92	47	72	97	84	45	44					\$ 106,791.96
				SnowTRAC Board											
<b>Total =</b>		<b>\$ 106,791.96</b>	<b>\$ 49,591.96</b>	Conflict of Interest = *											



# SnowTRAC Groomers Meeting

## June 25, 2010

### ATTENDEES

Ben Barclay—Montana Creek Groomers  
Alan Eccles—Denali Highway Groomers  
Corky Matthews— Lake Louise Area Groomer  
Dean-Lake Louise  
Wayne Christianson—Lake Louise  
Dan Mayfield—Big Lake Trails  
Randy Crosby—Petersville Area Groomer  
Glenn Swan—Curry Ridge Riders President  
Jack Kreinheder—Juneau Area Groomer  
Vern Epps—Mid-Valley Trail Club Groomer  
Bill Luth—Willow Area Groomer, SnowTRAC Advisory Board  
Kevin Hite—President, Alaska State Snowmobile Assn.  
Cynthia Hite—SnowTRAC Advisory Board  
Mark Wilke—SnowTRAC Co-Chair  
Joe Gauna—SnowTRAC Co-Chair

### DNR STAFF

James King – Parks Director  
Andre Kaeppele—Trails Program  
Bill Luck—Trails Program  
Wayne Biessel—MatSu Park Superintendent  
Kyle Kidder—South Central Region, Easements  
Sally Davies—Admin Asst II, Note taker

### Meeting Called to Order at 8:45 a.m. and introductions made by all

- K. Hite: We are here to discuss the Grooming Trails Program and to see what is or is not working and how we can improve it. One of the things I hear is the public want good maps of trails for safety. The communities using the trails want the grooming program to function correctly. If the grooming project works then the citizens have no problem having trail fees raised.
- King: Thank you all for coming. How Parks guides the program and to keep a consistency on the trails depends on the input from the groomers. You are the front line that sees what is going on with the trails in your grooming activity. We value your views and input.
- Wilke: Is there a possibility of Parks matching the groomer's funds from the grants?
- Luth: Or matching funds with other user groups?
- King: We would be supportive of matching dollars but the matter is funding. It needs the support of users before the Legislature will look at the issue. I am willing to make the attempt for more user funds but I need the users support.
- Wilke: No one seems to be checking trail registration. How can enforcement be increased?
- King: The problem we have with registration enforcement is that Alaska trails are there for all Alaskans. There was a constituent who received a ticket because his snowmachine had no trail registration. He complained to his Legislator. We need to focus on an education process. We need to start with a possible 3-year program where years one and two focus on education and in year three the enforcement starts.
- Gauna: If you have any more registration enforcement complaints to a Legislator, let us know and we can help in educating them.



Kaeppele: Grooming trails uses the greatest portion of the grant funds. We need to come up with a plan to make the best use of those funds for the best grooming of trails.

K. Hite: Users need to see improvements to the trails for registration fees to increase. Our job today is to discuss the issues the groomers are having.

Kaeppele: Let's start with the public comments.

Kreinheder: I am a groomer program coordinator in Juneau. Groomed trails are extremely popular with the public. Our short trails get bumpy without grooming. I would like to advocate for smaller committees for more funding dollars for grooming. I am concerned about the groomer's reimbursement for smaller trails. I want to make sure any trail adoption regulations in the future don't exclude smaller operations. Registrations fee increase down here may meet resistance because there is a lesser amount of trails. I would also like to thank DNR Trails and SnowTRAC for their work on the grants. You are doing a great job.

K. Hite: Any questions for Jack? Thanks for your input.

Crosby: I am here to make sure we are progressing in our goals as groomers and that we are moving forward. I think we are doing the right thing with the standardization of the requirements. We are donating a lot of our time/money for grooming the trails. I want accountability be we need a system on data for true operating costs of each groomer for reimbursement.

Kidder: The public comments I get are regarding easement permit process timeframe, trails needing lots of maintenance, and Moose Range trail marking that may encourage too much usage into their neighborhood. I have also been asked about widening the trails for grooming. DNR has to go by state statutes on what can be done on the trails. If the trail is groomed wider than 5 feet, then an easement permit is needed if vegetation will be disturbed.

K. Hite: If we are not disturbing vegetation, we can use our groomer equipment?

Kidder: Yes.

Luth: If equipment does disturb vegetation, is that a problem?

Kidder: If the public complains.

Barclay: If we apply for a permit, how much weight does public comment carry?

Kidder: We have to address every public comment that will affect the public.

Kaeppele: We have to acknowledge the fact that the groomers maintain 1,000 miles of trails on a \$200,000 budget. The reason our budget is so constrained is because our registration fees are so low. There is a lot of room for improvement to the trails and there is a need for more fees. At the end of the season if there is a heavy snowfall we may have a lack of funds. We get requests for additional funding so groomers need to get their bills into the state in a timelier manner.

Mayfield: Big Lake Trails is a newer organization. We assumed the trail grooming from Big Lake Chamber of Commerce. We inherited a lot of headaches with the trails. We need more equipment, better signage, but we do have great community support. We need more funds to groom the trails properly. We also would like input and support from SnowTRAC and DNR. We have the Iron Dog using our trails so we have lots of holes that need fixing. The Big Lake groups do support a raise in registration fees.

Biessel: Who is rating these trails?

Luth: You need to ride with Andre and see them for yourself. The state needs to ride with the groomers and talk about the conditions of them.

Swan: We have very little trees on our trails. Our needs are for more signage to keep the public safe and not get lost because our area is treeless.

C. Hite: We always talk about raising registration fees. I don't want the higher fees to come with more regulations.

Mayfield: My area is in favor of higher registration fees. The general public loves our trails and they understand needing higher fees.

Wilke: It is time for Alaska to have a modern grooming program. The people here are dedicated to this. Let's start making a good program. I hear lots of complaints about the current rules. Let's put our heads together to change them.

Luth: If registration goes up I don't want paperwork to multiply or constantly change.

Swan: A trail doesn't have to be groomed to be a trail. The problem is lack of signs. We need to come up with a sign standard. We build trails for multi-users and it is only fair that we have funding backing. The state funds the single use trails so why not us? We are the only group that charge ourselves to get funds for everyone to use the trails.

K. Hite: We feel the money that we gather should be used for trails grooming and signage programs.

Barclay: Does registration prove that it helps when your snowmachine is stolen?

K. Hite: If it is registered, this has helped the Troopers in returning the snowmachine back to the owner.

Eccles: Mark mentioned widening trails from 5 ft. to 20 ft. What if we cross from state land into federal land?

Kaeppele: The federal guidelines will have to be followed.

Wilke: Is there a state statute that can be changed?

Kidder: If it is over 5 ft. you have to get an easement.

Luth: All trails should have a 20 ft. corridor.

Crosby: When MatSu Borough started creating trails, the state got involved and said easements were needed. We were under the impression that when easements are granted that we were ok to groom a wider path.

Kaeppele: You can stipulate what your needs are in these easements to take into consideration on what you have to do to groom the trails.

Luck: I feel the biggest issue you are having is ML&W is overwhelmed and under staffed to deal with a faster easement process. The state has the same problem with BLM not wanting us crossing their land.

K. Hite: Is there a list of sections of the trails competing with the groomer dollars?

- Gauna: We need a list of potential easements so we can see if any are relative to our group. We can help make the process faster by providing the required paperwork or questions answered.
- Luth: From the funds that were allocated, what was used?
- Kaeppele: We started with a fund total of \$237,443. Of those funds, \$202,000 was used for grooming. While the remainder was used for other projects. This winter we ended up with a surplus of grooming funds due to lack of snow.
- Biessel: We had very little snowfall in the Mat-Su that created the surplus. We could have spent it all if the surplus could be used for requests other than grooming.
- Crosby: It would be better to get denied for extra funds for grooming in Nov./Dec. instead of in April when we have large snowfall and have no money. We need to have the option to use the reserve at the beginning of the snow year instead of at the end.
- Wilke: If we don't use our reserve we need to have a back up plan to spend it. Whether it is for signs, education, etc. If the legislature keeps seeing this surplus they are not going to keep funding us.
- Crosby: I would like to see the clubs getting the grooming funds.
- Mayfield: I would like to see the reserves used for equip if it isn't going to be used for grooming.
- Gauna: I would rather rent a dozer or hire someone to do the trail repair work.
- Luth: A local guy charges more.
- Gauna: Fine. Then the job is done and we can move on.
- Barclay: The problem with hiring others is that they need a plan.
- Kaeppele: The Wyoming groups have built groomer sheds at major trail heads to house equipment that was purchased with registration funds. Trail users can decide where they want their yearly registration fees to go and which trail to groom. It is a large initial investment.
- Wilke: How much is the registration fee in Wyoming.
- Kaeppele: Around \$24.50 a year.
- K. Hite: Wyoming, Michigan, Wisconsin have million dollar budgets. We aren't there yet but we might need to work toward that direction.
- Wilke: After initial investment, then we only have yearly maintenance. If it is a matter of money, let's work towards getting more.
- Luth: A good Groomer Shed storage area would be the Willow area.
- Wilke: Can we talk about how much equipment we would actually need for a state operated equipment house.

### **FINDINGS:**

<b>Kenai</b>	<b>MatSu/Petersville</b>	<b>Denali Hwy</b>	<b>Fairbanks</b>	<b>Lake Louise</b>	<b>Valdez</b>	<b>Haines</b>	<b>Turnagain Pass</b>
3 pieces	3 pieces—MatSu	2 pieces	1 piece	3 pieces	2 pieces	1 piece	1 piece

- Wilke: If these were all new pieces of equipment with sheds it is about 4 million dollars.
- Kaeppele: A good starting point if this is done in stages. It would be wise to start with the Willow station.
- Crosby: I would rather have a portion of the money we are talking about. I could work wonders on the trails.
- K. Hite: Instead of buying new state equip, we could contract out the operators that already have this equipment.
- Luck: It seems it might be a better use of state funds to utilize the skilled and competent businesses that already have the equipment and know how to work the trails.
- Barclay: If we could get the trail easements in place we can generate more usage.
- Swan: The state needs to put in place 5-year contracts for the groomers instead of yearly contracts.
- K. Hite: We need the help of state backing to implement this. We also have to knock on doors, talk with legislature to push this forward. We don't have enough equipment in place to do everything we want to get done. An immediate fix would be to contract out the grooming and ease into the housed equipment at the trailheads. If we had more funding we could do a much better job.
- There are 2 major issues we need to work on and they are right-of-ways and adjudication. We have to work out these issues so we can move forward.
- We have to set expectations for the regulated groomer's guidelines. We need to be better at getting the paperwork done, the billing need to be on time in for getting the trail problems fixed.
- There has to be more money available to the groomers to do the trails properly and we need a multi-seasonal contract. This contract needs to include minimal grooming services.
- Eccles: What is the drawback of having a 5-year contract?
- Kaeppele: Our funding is yearly and is given by the Legislature.
- Wilke: Isn't all state funding annual?
- K. Hite: Any contract has "out" language in it. If a groomer is not meeting contract stipulations, they can be let go.
- Luth: Wouldn't it be less paperwork for the state with a 5-year contract?
- C. Hite: If we got a 5-year contract for grooming we wouldn't have to spend SnowTRAC time every year on this issue.
- Biessel: A 5-year contract to be renegotiated yearly and standards met in the current grooming year.
- K. Hite: Groomers need to tell us what the price per mile each section of the trail costs.
- Crosby: It would be nice to know at the end of the fiscal year what the next years funding will be so the groomers can plan the year's expenses. For things like new tires, blades, grooming, etc.
- Gauna: I'd rather see some good trails groomed at higher quality all year versus a lot of crappy groomed trails.

- K. Hite: Decisions need to be made by the state on which trails the majority of the funding needs to be used for grooming.
- Kaeppele: We are collecting data by survey to isolate the most used trails to make the grooming decision. We need this for trail classification.
- Wilke: Let's just make the decision now on what trails are high priorities and not wait until 2-3 years down the road when all the data is finally collected.
- Luth: The groomer already makes these decisions on the lesser used trails.
- Crosby: My complaint is all the paperwork. Because there isn't a set document in place, we lose small data—i.e., changes of address. Make the paperwork document on a spreadsheet that can accept information changes. There is just no easy way for the state and groomers to get all that paperwork done.
- Biessel: Once grant agreements get out then the paperwork process gets smoother.
- Kaeppele: This is the way it is set up for processing. We get the request, we set up the paperwork for the grant and then we give the funds to the areas for dividing up.
- Wilke: In the grooming contract the businessman and the snowmachine clubs should be paid on a different scale and not the same across the board.
- Kaeppele: It is going to take a few years to revamp this program. What can we do now from an operator's standpoint to make everything go smoother?
- Mayfield: There have been existing trails for 40 years. Why do we have to go through the grant process?
- Kaeppele: the grant process application lets us see if we have funding for grooming.
- Mayfield: On the existing trail application, DNR still reviews older existing trails?
- Barclay: How about an addendum to the application to add an older existing trail so we don't have to go through the entire application?
- Mayfield: There is a difference between an existing trail and establishing a trail.
- Gauna: There is always going to be paperwork even if it is an existing trail.
- K. Hite: Big Lake area is a separate area that we won't be able to fix today. We will help you as much as we can because Big Lake is a huge recreation area. So much paperwork has been lost from the change-over from the Big Lake Chamber to the Big Lake Trail Club.
- Kidder: I am pulling all the Big Lake easement documents and working on them to get them to Andre.
- Crosby: On the new paperwork there should be a line stating how many miles total you are grooming versus miles one-way.
- Luth: The new paperwork doesn't say how many miles it is to the trail that needs grooming.
- Crosby: Cost per mile can't be only one-way. Some groomers only go one-way, but others go different directions that overlap.

- Gauna: You can up the linear mile and assign an arbitrary price per mile.
- K. Hite: How about a structure for grooming and preparation?
- Kaeppele: Users of the trail want to know the trail conditions and how many miles are groomed.
- K. Hite: do all groomers have documents for how long it takes or how many miles that they groom to set a standard price per mile? We need to figure out an equitable way to pay everyone.
- Swan: I see two problems. You have grooming and you have maintenance.
- Kaeppele: I feel that the contractor should figure out the cost maintenance. We want to know the bottom line of cost per mile for the trail.
- Crosby: Glenn has a good point. Some trails have different grooming tasks that have to be done. I think man-hours need to be figured in the per mile cost. To get more money we need to show the Legislature that we can't continue to groom 1,000 miles of trails without more money. We need to pay equitable wages to the groomers and only groom the miles of trails that the funds can provide. If we can only groom 500 miles with the amount of funds, so be it. There needs to be more funds.
- Biessel: We need one person to do the grant process dedicated exclusively for allocations. I would also like your input on the surplus at the end of the year. If you want me to release more of the allocated funds, let me know. How do you want to handle this?
- C. Hite: Are you holding back funds for a certain reason? Have you denied special requests for the funding?
- Biessel: Yes and then we re-allocate if there is a need for more. We don't give them the full amount up front.
- Gauna: I think they should get the full amount of allocation up front. If you run out of funds at the end of the grooming season, the extra funding should come out of the prudent reserve.

### **Defining a Statewide Winter Trail System**

- K. Hite: What do we see as a beginning of establishing a winter trail system? As we work toward a system we need to make sure the trails are the main point.
- Kaeppele: What is a trail system? How do we define a trail system? Didn't State Parks start a trails system and are there maps?
- Luck: There is a document and it has all trails – municipal, borough, and state trails. A state system for SnowTRAC is a start and then we can branch out.
- K. Hite: We have to define a statewide trail system before we discuss it
- Kidder: A winter trail system for transportation or recreation is a simple explanation.
- Swan: It is out of the scope of this group to take on.
- Wilke: We can't leave off trails that are eligible.
- K. Hite: At a minimum, we need to define what a statewide trail system is.

Crosby: It is an inventory of recreation trails throughout the state.

Wilke: Do we have a map with just the current groomed trails?

Barclay: Could RS2477 help us in the listing?

Biessel: What is SnowTRAC's mission statement? Shouldn't this be one of your goals?

K. Hite: We won't be able to have a connecting snowmobile trail system from Kenai to Fairbanks because Anchorage sits in the middle of the trail system.

Wilke: Is this series of trails ready for classifications?

Luth: It is important to get public information out for education.

Biessel: How does the board make decisions? What are your criteria for funding for the statewide trail program if you don't have a definition of what it is?

Mayfield: My concern is for the Old Iditarod Trail. We don't have funding to groom that trail. How do we get support funding for it?

C. Hite: It is the responsibility of each club to lobby for their funds with the legislators in their areas.

K. Hite: We are asking to expand and we need to have everything in place for the Director to answer legislature questions.

Biessel: There needs to be criteria in place so each area doesn't start competing against each other for funds.

Wilke: Some of the trails got funded because equipment and groomers were in that trail area.

Kaeppele: How do we get a trail established? Let's talk about application, adjudication and trail paperwork.

Wilke: There has always been a problem with these grants for applicants not proving the legality of the access. Can you tell what needs to be done prior to submitting the application?

Luck: Topo maps are essential, finding out before hand if there are any problems with the trail selection area and easements.

Kaeppele: For you to get legal access you will need to fill out the state paperwork and then the state determines the legality of the request.

Crosby: Can a simple manual be put together to tell us what needs to come with the submitted application once we have gone home and forgotten all of this?

K. Hite: It is nice to be on trails that will show you how to get from point A to point B. We need consistency in the signs.

Gauna: On the website it would be helpful to have a list of vendors who make signs in accordance to IASA standards. It would help out the grant applicants.

Kaeppele: Do we rely on groomers to put up the signs?

Gauna: Who puts up the signs when it is not winter?

Biessel: Our maintenance crews.

C. Hite: If the grant could have signs a part of the grant request and then that becomes part of the safety funding.

Gauna: the IASA standard is the minimum in required signs needed.

Luth: Specialty signs may be needed for safety purposes.

Luck: Signs could be used as a safety component to the grant application or a structural component to the grant application.

C. Hite: Grooming and signs should go together to make the process smoother.

Crosby: There has to be financial compensation if groomers or volunteers are putting up signs. It takes a large amount of time to install signs.

Biessel: How about 3% of your allocation to be used for signs?

Kaeppele: Add another page to your application for signs. You can say how many you need or any specialty signs you need.

K. Hite: Equipment type and operations. How do you want to handle this?

Kaeppele: Do we have the equipment we need on the trails for grooming?

Gauna: I think what we have for grooming is adequate.

Eccles: if the public is happy with the grooming then we don't need to spend time on discussing this.

Wilke: Is it appropriate for SnowTRAC to be funding grants to buy grooming equipment?

Crosby: As long as the funds are shared fairly.

Mayfield: I was discouraged to apply to get funding from SnowTRAC for equipment.

Wilke: Were you encouraged to apply for funding from and ORTAB grant?

Mayfield: Yes

K. Hite: ORTAB has been the route to secure equipment.

Luck: ORTAB is required to use 30% of their funds for motorized vehicle trail use. Some of this funding could be used to secure grooming equipment or maintenance of trails.

Mayfield: Big Lake Trails received a grant from ORTAB to re-route and maintain the Iron Dog Trail.

Luck: If we went to contract with groomers we would be required to pay Davis Bacon wages, which would greatly increase the cost of grooming, thus reducing the amount of trails we could groom.

Wilke: It will only be a matter of time before the groomers will have to follow state contracting requirements, which will make business a bit more complex.



Swan: What exactly are the liability implications of volunteer efforts?

### **Increasing Funding to the Pool**

Wilke: What is the possibility of moving RTP funds to the grooming pool?

Luck: Money funneled to SnowTRAC from RTP is possible. RTP funds must be spent if allocated. Generally RTP funds would be used for equipment purchases and trail construction.

Wilke: What about a percentage of RTP funds for the grooming pool, and a percentage for development projects?

Luck: Percentage allocations sound more appropriate because of a variation in the funding amount.

K. Hite: Funding should be secured for a full time administrative position. Ideally the program could use a full time easement adjudicator as well.

Luth: I agree, there is an 8 year backlog of trail easements which needs to be addressed.

Gauna: It would be very helpful to develop a list of trail adjudication priorities.

K. Hite: Three ways to increase funding include a registration fee increase, a percentage of funding from RTP, and a legislative match to registration funds.

In order to support the registration fee increase, we will need support from the Fairbanks and interior areas.

Wilke: There should be a mechanism in place for expending the prudent reserve. A good use of prudent reserve funds would be to purchase and stock pile signs.

Anderson: One thing to note is that people just aren't educated about the registration program.

K. Hite: One way to educate the public would be to send out information in the Snowriders Magazine.

**Meeting Adjourned 5:30 pm.**

**SnowTRAC Meeting Minutes  
December 10, 2009**

**ATTENDEES:**

Ozie West - Disabilities  
Joe Gauna - Anchorage Area (Co-Chair)  
Cynthia Hite - Mat-Su/Copper River Basin  
Bill Luth - Kenai Peninsula/Valdez/PWS Area  
Eric Morris – Northwestern Area  
Mark Wilke - Southeast Area (Chair)  
Myles Yerkes - Northern Area  
Andy Morrison – Inter-Board Liaison w/ORTAB

**DNR Staff:**

Andre Kaeppele - Parks  
Bill Luck - Parks  
James King - Parks  
Sally Davies - Parks (note taker)  
Steve Neel - Parks  
Kyle Kidder – Mining, Land & Water

**Public Guests:**

Bruce Paulsen - Mat-Su Borough Land Management Division  
Gary Anderson – Caribou Hills Cabin Hoppers  
Corky Matthews - Lake Louise Snowmachine Club  
Ron Ringel - Lake Louise Snowmachine Club  
Harry Holt - Lake Louise Snowmachine Club

**Attendance/Introductions and Travel Paperwork**

Wilke: Call meeting to order. Begin a round of discussion.  
All: Introductions made from all attendees.  
Wilke: Do we have any travel paperwork?  
Davies: Please turn in all your receipts by the end of the session tomorrow.  
Wilke: Are there any changes or amendments to the Agenda?  
All: No.

**MISSION**

Wilke: What is the Mission of SnowTRAC? Our goal is to define what our mission is and make SnowTRAC guidelines.  
Yerkes: Who drafted this current Mission?  
Wilke: No one drafted it. This current Mission was hashed out with Director and this is what we came up with as a starting point.  
Morrison: I have some grammar issues with the wording. It is too wordy and needs to be shortened with punctuation.  
Yerkes: Primary mission is to advise Parks not advocating to groups for Parks. Delete promoting and advocating wording. Advocating to legislature will cause trouble.  
King: How about we say the Board will fairly represent.  
Morrison: The Board will fairly represent all Alaskans.  
Wilke: Take out fairly. We are a watch dog. Our only mission is to promote and advocate if public issues arise.  
Yerkes: Where does it say that the board advocates?  
King: Parks wants the board advocating. Keep it broad and open with no specifics in the statement.  
Hite: Use the words fostering and developing as in Title 41. Fostering and developing is the same as promoting and advocating.  
Wilke: Why can't we advocate?  
King: The Board can't lobby the Legislature. They can educate the Legislature.

Wilke: How about it says the Board will represent all Alaskans to improve and develop snowmobile opportunities.

Gauna: Title 41 also states it also attracts visitors to the state.

Morrison: Replace promoting and advocating with fostering and developing.

Luth: We are representing Alaskans, not visitors.

Yerkes: Take out advising Division, organizations and agencies.

Wilke: I disagree. Our job is advising.

West: How about work with other agencies and organizations?

King: You will have to keep in mind that the Board has no authority to advise the Dept. of Fish and Game.

Wilke: The Board should be able to make decisions on their own without getting permission from Parks.

King: The Board and Parks have to continue to work together on important issues to avoid problems.

Morris: I don't see what the argument is about. We are fostering and promoting snowmobiling. The Division has the authority to promote the mission and the Board has the ability to develop the mission.

Hite: The mission typed up right now on the screen is clear on what it needs to say.

Luck: We have arrived at the core issues. The Board was developed to advise the Director.

Kaeppele: A mission statement should illustrate the objectives.

Wilke: We now have three proposed missions up on the screen.

Gauna: I move to adopt number two.

Yerkes: I second.

Morrison: The Board is focusing too much on growth and development and I would like to see maintenance of trails, safety of trails and trail marking mentioned.

Luck: The Division is not mentioned anywhere in the new version.

Morris: I suggest we take the first statement and add maintenance, safety and marking.

King: Change right-of-way to access. Take out trail and keep development and maintenance.

Wilke: We have a current motion on the table. Joe, would you like to withdraw your previous motion?

Gauna: I withdraw my motion of number two and make a motion to accept the current one on the screen.

Wilke: Do we have a second?

Yerkes: I second.

Luth: I call for a vote.

Wilke: All those in favor of this mission statement?

**5 YES   3 NO   0 Abstain   MISSION PASSED**

- *See appendix A for the adopted SnowTRAC Mission Statement.*

## **OPERATING PROCEDURES**

Wilke: I put together three documents and sent them to the Director and staff for input.

### **1. OPERATING PROCEDURES**

Gauna: When did we change from a committee to a council to a board? Are we a council, board or committee?

Luck: Documents always referred to committee.

Kaeppele: Keep it as council because the logo says council.

Wilke: In name we are a council and in action we are a board.

Gauna: Replace board with council.

Wilke: Hearing no opposition?

All: No opposition.

### **2. AUTHORITY**

Gauna: In procedure finish the complete phrase of AS 41.21.010.

Wilke: Hearing no opposition?

All: No opposition.

### **3. THE PURPOSE OF THE SNOWTRAC BOARD IS AS FOLLOWS:**

Wilke: In procedure title take out the word purpose and insert Mission Statement. Then take out the entire first sentence of the procedure.

Wilke: Hearing any opposition?

All: No opposition.

### **4. DUTIES**

Wilke: In procedure we need to share all information with DNR. We don't keep any information to ourselves.

Hite: In the red typing, change the word collective to representative.

Wilke: Also, in the red typing it needs to say users and take out Alaskans.

Kaeppele: The Board represents all user groups and not just specific users.

Wilke: How about user group?

Gauna: I don't think we can represent all groups but we do have to consider all users.

Wilke: Any suggestions or changes to procedure? Any objections?

All: No objections.

### **5. MEMBERSHIP**

Gauna: In procedure, I would like to see no board seat go unfilled. All geographic areas need to be represented.

Kaeppele: The purpose is to get someone from each geographic area that knows what the needs are for snowmobilers in that area of the state.

Yerkes: What about filling the seat only if we can't find anyone to sit on the board in a specific area?

Kaeppele: If they didn't live there we wouldn't know their specific needs and that area of the state would be under represented.

Wilke: We need the best person for the seat and not limit ourselves to the limitations of specific locations.

Hite: Perhaps we need to broaden the requirements.

Luck: If you don't have a geographic representative, it makes those users feel under represented.

King: The reason for geographic representation is to keep the Board from drifting towards an all Anchorage board.

Hite: What about using registration dollars to determine representation?

King: Registration dollars is not a criteria for getting area representation. Representation of the areas is separated from funding.

Gauna: I don't want to see any seats go unfilled.

Wilke: Let's go back to representation and talk about the ORTAB liaison.

Kaeppele: Having an inter-board liaison helps with the understanding of snowmobiling as a motorized sport.

Morrison: I see the need to get some more of the ORTAB funding for motorized sports. I advocate for motorized sports when I am at the ORTAB meetings.

Luck: Andy helps to educate ORTAB on motorized projects. I see Andy as the 10<sup>th</sup> position to SnowTRAC and a valuable asset.

Wilke: ORTAB shouldn't have any bearing on SnowTRAC. We should be separate funding.

Guana: I see Andy as a liaison to find out what ORTAB's needs are and to keep SnowTRAC informed. I disagree with Mark and see value in Andy's position.

Yerkes: I propose we adopt the language 'whenever possible'.

West: Second

Morris: Substitute criteria with constituent.

Wilke: All agreed with current language to the procedure?

All: Agreed

Wilke: Move to vote to accept procedure?

Yerkes: I move.

Wilke: All those in favor? **8 YES 0 NO 0 Abstain PASSED UNANIMOUS OPERATING PROCEDURE 5.**

**6. TERM OF MEMBERSHIP**

Wilke: On procedure six are there any limitations on how long a member can serve on a board?

Kaeppele: You will have to go through the appointment procedure but there is no limit if you are elected.

Wilke: Any opposition to sixth procedure as stated with the strikeouts?

All: No opposition.

**7. COMPENSATION**

Wilke: Any objections to procedure?

All: None

**8. REMOVAL AND RESIGNATION OF MEMBERS**

Yerkes: In the procedure I would like the wording to say an officer may be removed from the board instead of member.

Luck: An officer is elected but a member is appointed. That is the difference in using the word member.

Hite: Break removal and resignation into two sections.

Gauna: Remove the word resignation from title.

Morrison: Removal before service time is up?

King: The Director has the authority to appoint and to remove board members as needed.

Hite: Keep DNR's red wording. Can we do procedure number eighteen all under number eight?

Luth: I motion that the removal and resignation in number eight, that the word resignation be struck out.

Hite: Second

Wilke: All in agreement?

Yerkes: We are just removing the word resignation?

Wilke: Correct. Any further discussion?

All: No.

Wilke: Let's see a vote of hands. **8 YES 0 NO 0 Abstain MOTION PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE**

King: Can we skip to procedure twenty-two Grant Scoring?

Wilke: Any objections?

All: No.

## **22. GRANT SCORING**

Kaepple: We did a calculation on the yearly SnowTRAC program process on funding allocation. There are about a dozen steps which take approximately four months to complete.

Luth: Can we shorten the 30 days application review to three weeks because of the slow mail process?

Luck: We can add the extra week from the application review to the recommendations.

Morrison: Can you email the packets before mailing? Email copies can start the review process before receiving the hard copies in the mail.

Kaepple: Yes.

Wilkes: No more arguments regarding application time frame?

All: No.

Wilke: Why should members provide scoring review seven days prior to meeting?

Luck: In past meetings I have seen scoring of reviews one hour prior to start of meeting.

Hite: I'm OK with early collection of scores.

Yerkes: I don't think if you don't get your scoring in seven days prior to meeting that you can't vote. Regardless of scoring you should be allowed to vote.

Gauna: Let's do away with scoring altogether.

King: We need scoring for objectivity and for public scrutiny regarding favoritism.

Luck: The grant selection could be biased if scores are turned in after the meeting.

Morrison: Clarify the seven days. Are we talking seven business days? I have a problem seeing scoring on the web prior to meeting.

Wilkes: That's a valid point.

Gauna: DNR staff reviews the scores, we then have discussions among ourselves so scores are final, then the scores are posted on the web.

Wilke: Any objections with the time period to get scores to DNR?

Morris: Sheets to DNR? Hard copies?

Kaeppel: It can be email scores.

Yerkes: Could we have some advance notice by email that packets are being mailed so we can look for them?

Kaeppel: Yes.

Yerkes: Let the Director decide to inform members that they can't vote because scoring wasn't sent in.

Hite: Why can't they come to meeting even if they didn't score?

Neel: Don't keep them away from the meeting. They have valuable input on other grants. Just don't let them have input on scoring application. Don't penalize all grants by their exclusion.

Wilke: Any objections?

All: No.

Kaeppel: I am concerned about not leaving in paragraph three. If language is not in the procedure then not sending in scoring may get worse.

Luck: The Board can discuss this.

Yerkes: Motion to remove paragraph three.

Gauna: Second.

Wilke: All those in favor to strike paragraph three? **7 YES 1 NO 0 Abstain MOTION PASSED**

Wilke: In paragraph four before any motion or funding we call for any declaration of any conflict of interest and answer questions concerning grant. We can't advocate but can answer questions.

Gauna: Are we good on paragraph four?

All: Good

Wilke: Are we good on paragraph five?

All: Good

Wilke: Are we good on paragraph six?

All: Good

Wilke: Are we good on paragraph seven?

All: Good

Wilke: On to paragraph eight

All: Good

Gauna: On paragraph nine I would like score not to go up until board has had a chance to discuss.

Hite: Rescore after discussion before Andre presents final score.

Morris: Then are the grants based on wants instead of scores?

West: Can we say they are preliminary scores before discussion?

Gauna: Scores don't reflect individual views of board members.

Morris: We have more grants to score than there is funding.

Gauna: After discussions and scoring, the highest scores get funding.

Morris: If we have ten grants scored and only funding for eight, do only the top eight get funded?

Wilke: Yes.

Morris: I disagree. I have seen lower scored grants get funding.

Luck: Sometimes the board does decide to fund a lower score grant because of need.

Morrison: Scores are a numerical value of how well a grant is written. Scores don't necessarily score the issue of the grant itself.

Wilke: When do we get to see an individual grant score?

Kaeppele: It makes more sense to do it after the discussion.

Wilke: Can we see an individuals score?

Gauna: We are trying to avoid this.

Morrison: What if we throw out the highest and the lowest score?

Wilke: That is a popular concept.

Morrison: Scores have everything to do with funding.

Luck: Letters of support are important to the scoring process.

Wilke: A grant has to stand on its own merit not whether it can be funded or not.

Gauna: Scores should reflect what percentage a grant gets funded at. If a grant gets a high score it should be funded.

Wilke: How are we going to document our scores?

Luth: Two spreadsheets.

Wilke: Let's move forward to what do we do on review.

Gauna: All final scores are displayed in rank order for Board review.

Morrison: Recommend funding line in spreadsheet.

Wilke: How are we going to justify grant rating?

Hite: We need to believe that when we get to this point that we have scored properly, that we have done our job.

Gauna: Let the scores make our decisions.

Gauna: Grants should stay in rank order according to scoring. Then adjust the funding accordingly.

Luth: We don't change the scoring, just the funding of the grant.

Wilke: The Chair will call for a motion, there will be discussion on the scoring and then another motion.

Kaeppele: I suggest we read through grant scoring wording that is now in as it stands now.

Wilke: Let's put space between this for now and go back to operating procedure nine?

## **9. ATTENDANCE**

Wilkes: Any issues?

Yerkes: I do, about absence from two regular meetings.



Wilke: How about two quarterly meetings.

Kaeppele: Can we say two meetings in a calendar year may constitute removal from board.

Wilke: Any more changes to procedure nine?

All: None

#### **10. BOARD RECRUITMENT AND NONMINATION**

Yerkes: Can we take out “will” request from all candidates to “may” request from all candidates?

Luth: Is it “will” or “may”?

Wilke: The word will gives us the opportunity to request. Any other suggestions?

All: No.

#### **11. MEETINGS**

Kaeppele: In procedure it may not be in the best interest of board to have a meeting every two months. May not have enough funding.

Luck: Maybe we can find out how much these meetings cost.

Wilke: Not hearing a lot of objections to procedure let’s move on.

Yerkes: I am not finished with section eleven. We should allow members to attend meetings by telephone.

Kaeppele: That is addressed in section 12--Quorum.

#### **12. QUORUM**

Wilke: We need flexibility in bylaws to what defines a quorum.

Morrison: Majority of the board.

Luth: Let’s say a meeting starts with a quorum and someone leaves. Can we continue?

Yerkes: Bylaws currently says if you drop below five members we have to stop.

Luck: If you start with a quorum and three board members leave, it doesn’t seem like a majority vote for the entire board. Not a fair consensus.

Yerkes: What about a quorum starts a meeting and can continue until meeting is over even if one or more leave?

Luth: A quorum shall consist of a simple majority. We need to remove the DNR representative from the quorum.

Luck: DNR needs to stay as a representation.

Wilke: Any opposition to number twelve?

All: None

#### **13. MAJORITY ACTION AS A BOARD ACTION**

Wilke: I am OK with it.

Gauna: Please clarify paragraph two’s wording.

Wilke: What you need it to say is a proposed action instead of an action.

Gauna: I think it should say “to be considered” instead of all that legal stuff.

Hite: It needs to say to be considered a board action.

Gauna: The rest looks fine.

Wilke: Is everything good with thirteen?

All: It's good.

#### **14. PROXIES**

Hite: Is everyone happy with fourteen?

Gauna: Will proxy be included to make quorum for a meeting. Does a proxy mean they are present?

Gauna: I don't think a proxy should be a vote.

Hite: I motion we accept fourteen as written.

Morris: Second

Wilke: All those in favor of fourteen standing as written? **8 YES 0 NO 0 Abstain MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

#### **15. CONDUCT OF MEETINGS**

Yerkes: I would like to see meetings run by Roberts Rules of Order.

Wilke: Are you saying for the entire meeting?

Yerkes: Only that Roberts Rules of Order prevail in any procedural disputes.

Wilke: Can we say may elect to use Roberts Rules of Order?

Gauna: Does DNR have a copy of Roberts Rules of Order?

Luck: Yes.

Yerkes: Any action can be disputed if Roberts Rules of Order are not used in the event of a procedural dispute.

Matthews: I am Corky Matthews of the Lake Louise Snowmachine Club. I would like to submit a safety handbook that our club developed and thought it would help you in developing yours.

Luth: We thank you for bringing this in.

Matthews: I would like to be involved in the grooming regulations.

Kaeppel: We will give the public time to comment on the trail grooming program tomorrow, and specific meetings on trail grooming will be held in the future.

Wilke: Thank you for coming in.

Wilke: Back to section 15, conduct of meetings.

Luth: I would like the inclusion of DNR staff in fifteen. The Director specifically wants one DNR representative and a note taker.

Wilke: I would like to get opinions on that. I don't think we need DNR present.

Luck: Why do you feel this way?

Wilke: We are big boys and girls.

Luck: You need DNR for a checks and balances on your decisions. Not having DNR participate doesn't represent all users.

Hite: We need a mutual relationship. DNR is the nuts and bolts to these meetings and we wouldn't be able to have them without all the technology DNR brings to the table.

Kaeppel: It is important for DNR to understand how you come to your recommendations and conclusions.

Wilke: Over the years the perception from DNR is that the board needs to be reigned in. That our independence needs to be restricted.

Luck: Without the Director there is no need for a board.

Wilke: I think from my perspective, DNR is the one given free reign and we are here to receive their information only. We are not given any ability to make decisions of our own.

Gauna: Everything changed once the money started flowing from the Legislature and then all of the sudden DNR wanted to be totally involved. It changed from the SnowTRAC making decisions to DNR making the decisions and DNR controlling us. I would like to have meetings and advocate without DNR.

Kaeppele: We need your help on how to administer funds. We value your input but we have to represent all users. Together we foster the growth of the program.

Wilke: DNR needs to take a hands off approach to us and not control us so much.

Hite: What do you do with the information you get from these board meetings?

Kaeppele: It helps us to decide how to allocate funds. We need to understand how you came up with recommendations.

Davies: I suggest we close this meeting because it is 4:45 p.m.

Wilke: Move to adjourn.

Gauna: Second

**MEETING ADJOURNED AT 4:45 P.M.**

OPERATING PROCEDURES---CONTINUATION OF OPERATING PROCEDURES DISCUSSIONS FROM DECEMBER 10, 2009 MEETING.

Wilke: Let's continue the Conduct of Meetings section discussion from yesterday.

Gauna: I motion that we waive the Roberts Rules of Order unless there is a procedural dispute.

All: Second

Wilke: I call for a vote to waive Roberts Rules of Order unless there is a procedural dispute.

**6 YES 0 NO 0 Abstain PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE**

Hite: Can I make a suggestion to take the wording that we took out in the Quorum section and put it this section of DNR representation at meetings.

Morris: Then we wouldn't be able to have a quorum if the wording of DNR representation and a secretary is not in section twelve. We wouldn't be able to make our quorum without them.

Luth: Is it necessary to have a secretary present at all meetings.

Kaeppele: It is necessary to have DNR staff take minutes. It doesn't have to be a secretary. It can be one DNR staff as representation and one DNR staff take notes.

King: The point is to have notes taken at SnowTRAC meetings. DNR also needs to be present at SnowTRAC meetings to make them an official function. The Board's authority is to advise DNR staff and the Board can not do that if DNR is unaware of what is discussed in the meetings.

Wilke: I still don't see the need.

King: There are three main reasons for DNR presence to SnowTRAC meetings. 1. To take notes. 2. To make the SnowTRAC meetings official. 3. The ability to gather information to use in the guidance process.

Wilke: What if we have potential working problems with a specific DNR staff member. How do we go about resolving it? Can we only resolve it in a Board meeting?

King: If there is a problem with a DNR staff member then the SnowTRAC Chair and the Director has a private conversation and come to a mutual solution.

Wilke: With DNR presence we can't have our own private conversations.

Morris: I think that you are making too big of a deal about this Mark.

King: At every official meeting you need state representation. I can't stop you from having private conversations outside of the meetings where there is no DNR presence. But during official meetings DNR representation needs to be present.

Hite: I believe under a Title Board they need the representation of DNR staff. They are very important and helpful to our goals.

Gauna: Should we accept the text as it is?

Luth: Even if you have a problem with a DNR staff member? We need to be able to ask for a replacement.

King: I agree 100%. Requesting a DNR staff replacement is acceptable, but DNR representation will be at all official meetings.

Kaeppele: Since SnowTRAC can't be an advocacy group can we discuss advocacy in an official board meeting?

King: Absolutely. It is appropriate for Advisory Boards to discuss strategies in their meetings on how to approach the Legislature.

Wilke: That is a comfort to know.

King: The more DNR and the board talk, the less we are in court tomorrow.

Morris: Under #12—Quorum, does the DNR presence wording go away?

Kaeppele: We would like to include the language of DNR presence into #15.

Wilke: It is more appropriate to have it in #15 instead of #12.

King: Anytime the board is voting on an official decision I would like DNR representation.

Wilke: Anymore discussion on #15?

All: No.

## **22. GRANT SCORING**

Wilke: James, what happens if we don't want to fund a grant?

King: You make a final recommendation. DNR has a week to decide on your recommendations. We make changes, if any, and then you accept the changes or not.

Gauna: I think we can accept #22 as it is.

Luth: That works for me because I can go back to constituents and explain it better if they have any questions.

Morris: Let's accept it as previously recommended.

King: The spirit of the wording is generate greater communication.

Gauna: So, are we good with #22?

All: Good.

## **23. DISTRIBUTION OF SNOWMOBILE FUNDS**

Wilke: We need to discuss a formula of percentages for funding grants.

King: No formula will ever come out perfectly. Putting in a guideline is fine but we need to be flexible.

Luth: Take out "will" and put in "may". It will give us the option to change the percentages.

Gauna: It makes more sense to keep it flexible.

Kaeppele: Make percentages based on interest for allocation.

Luth: Do you have anything that says "We Need Your Help" kind of flyer for kiosks?

Kaeppel: We can make a flyer for the kiosks.

Morris: Let's accept Bill's wording.

Gauna: If we combine safety/groom programs it will make the accounting easier.

Kaeppel: Accounting would be easier.

Gauna: I move that we adjust allocation of funds to two funds. One is Grants and the other Grooming/Safety.

Luth: I want to see more money used on the ground for users.

King: We should say any remaining grant funds may be distributed between safety, grooming and grants.

Luth: I make a motion to remove "will" with "may" and combine grooming program with safety program.

Morris: Second.

Wilke: I call for a vote on Bill's motion. **6 YES 0 NO 0 Abstain PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE**

Luth: I do have a question. How much is in the prudent reserves?

Kaeppel: Around \$92,000.

King: I would like to see some of the prudent reserve be spent on excess snowfall issues.

#### **16. OFFICERS**

Wilke: Any issues?

Hite: Change wording to from Vice-chair to Co-chair.

#### **17. ELECTION AND TERM OF OFFICERS**

Wilke: Any issues?

All: None.

#### **18. DUTIES OF CHAIR**

Wilke: Any issues?

All: None.

#### **19. DUTIES OF THE VICE CHAIR**

Wilke: Any issues?

Gauna: Take out from "shall" through "have" in the first sentence.

#### **20. ETHICS**

Wilke: Any issues?

All: None.

#### **21. ADOPTIONS AND PROVISIONS**

Wilke: Any issues?

Morris: Do we accept the DNR suggested wording in red?

All: Yes.

Wilke: Do we all understand the present wording in the Operating Procedures?

All: Yes.

Gauna: I make a motion that we recommend to the Director to adopt the operating procedures as edited.

Luth: Second.

Hite: I call the question.

Wilke: All in favor of the motion on the table? 6 YES 0 NO 0 Abstain **PASSED UNANIMOUS OF OPERATING PROCEDURES**

- *See Appendix B for the adopted SnowTRAC Operating Procedures*

## SnowTRAC Meeting Minutes December 11, 2009

### **ATTENDEES:**

Ozie West – Disabilities  
Joe Gauna - Anchorage Area (Co-Chair)  
Mark Wilke - Southeast Area (Chair)  
Bill Luth - Kenai Peninsula/Valdez/PWS Area  
Eric Morris - Northwestern Area  
Cynthia Hite - Mat-Su/Copper River Basin

### **STAFF:**

James King - Parks  
Andre Kaeppele - Parks  
Sally Davies - Parks (Note Taker)  
Kyle Kidder - Mining, Land & Water  
Candace Snow - Mining, Land & Water

### **PUBLIC:**

Randy Crosby – AK Snow Cat  
Dave Hendrickson – DAV/DOR Enterprises  
Doris Hendrickson – DAV/DOR Enterprises  
John Scudder – Anchorage Snowmobile Club  
Corky Matthews – Lake Louise Snowmobile Club  
Gary Anderson – Cabin Hoppers  
Ron Ringel - Lake Louise Snowmachine Club  
Harry Holt - Lake Louise Snowmachine Club  
Debra McGhan - North America Outdoor Institute (NAOI)

### **MEETING CALLED TO ORDER**

Wilke: Now that this meeting has been called to order us there any unresolved issues from yesterday's meeting?

### **OPERATING PROCEDURES**

*To facilitate consistency in discussions of the Operating Procedures, the December 11, 2009 notes have been added to the December 10, 2009 Operating Procedures discussions. Please refer to the Operating Procedures notes on the first day of the meeting.*

### **SAFETY PROGRAM**

Wilke: The public is better served by a comprehensive plan on the safety program. What is our roll?

Gauna: SnowTRAC would allocate dollars to public coalitions for their programs.

Morris: There are two main things that would improve the safety program. 1. Better public communications. 2. Better marked trails.

West: Vehicle safety training programs.

Gauna: Put on seminars. Go to schools and parks to train users in safety issues. Something like the Boating and Safety program.

Wilke: SnowTRAC provides the training materials so local groups can request for them to train.

Holt: I represent the Lake Louise Snowmachine Club and would hate to see regulatory requirements for machine safety training. The users that live in our area are safety aware. We have problems with the weekenders.

Hite: You believe safety is an issue in your area?

Holt: Definitely, especially on the weekends.

Luth: We would need standardized material for each region.

Holt: Distribution of materials in libraries would be good.

Luth: How about a booklet with a DVD?

Kaeppele: Boating and Safety Program has had great success with a DVD.

Wilke: There are local educators at schools and clubs in the various regions that can get the safety information out with a DVD.

West: Troopers are always willing to help with safety training.

McGhan: I represent the North America Outdoor Institute. I see a need for education in the schools. We would also like to start programs in the remote areas. We are working on an internet interactive safety course for children. We have a helmet incentive program that is very successful. We would like SnowTRAC's involvement for educational materials.

Wilke: We will only have around \$30,000 to work with and won't be able to educate all the schools.

Hite: Have you had success with training in the schools.

McGhan: Yes, with the 4<sup>th</sup> through 10<sup>th</sup> grades in the schools we have been able to go to.

West: There are other resources out in the public that can help out with funding a program.

Wilke: The cost of a DVD is expensive to develop. It would be around \$100,000.

McGhan: It could be updated annually.

Wilke: If this is what we want to do we should go forward with it.

Kaeppele: Remember your funding limitations.

Wilke: We can split the costs over a two year cycle.

Gauna: I make a motion that we develop and sponsor a consistent but regional safety program.

Hite: Second

Wilke: All those in favor of the motion? **4 YES 0 NO 2 Abstain MOTION PASSED**

#### **GROOMING AND GRANTS**

Wilke: Let's start with public input with comments limited to 5 minutes.

Crosby: Petersville/Trapper Creek groomer. The process of acquiring grant funds needs to be more streamlined. Documentation of letters of interest is inconsistent.

Kaeppele: We are working on this problem.

Crosby: I would like to see the trail grooming contact in my section to be raised from \$40,000 per season to \$50,000.

Wilke: Is there an increase in usage in your area?

Crosby: Yes, especially the East/West Express.

Matthews: Lake Louise Snowmachine Club. Are you going to set a funding rate for the size of the trail?

Luth: Yes, but we need your input.

Gauna: We would like to raise registration fees for a larger grooming fund.

Holt: Does 100% come back to us?

Luth: Yes, and a bit more. ORTAB gives us some.



Hendrickson: Groomer in Hatcher Pass area. I would like to see the groomer contracts have a "move in, move out" funding for the large equipment we have to use on some of these trails. These costs come out of our pockets right now. Also, mileage of groomed trail is an easier way for payment.

Crosby: The terrain is variable and some miles in some areas may take longer to groom. I prefer the current by-the-hour method. Who determines the scope of the contractual work?

Wilke: DNR.

Kaeppele: It is up to the groomers how they want to be paid through contracts and bids.

Crosby: The current \$28 a mile is an inflexible system. We have cost losses. We need a base rate and then extra money for extra labor in the next contracts.

Kaeppele: We need to come up with a reasonable payment standard.

Anderson: Cabin Hoppers. Paid by the hour is more reasonable because sometimes you can spend more than an hour on a mile of trail. If paid by the mile we lose money.

Crosby: I would like to see a payment system more like the federal government. Be paid a base amount per hour, per machine, per terrain.

Hite: What do you think of raising registration fees?

Holt: People will want to know what the extra money will be used for.

Hendrickson: How about flyers and radio/tv ad campaigns?

Matthews: DNR should ride the trails with the groomers to see what each trail's terrain is like.

Wilke: What are the big picture goals of the Grooming Program?

Hite: To have designated trails that are groomed each year.

Luth: To have trail systems that are connected, such as from Anchorage to Glennallen.

Gauna: A goal to have all trails maintained, groomed and identified.

Hite: A goal to educate the public.

Crosby: We need to make sure that we provide better grooming of the trails we do maintain.

Wilke: Anymore input from the public?

Public: No.

Wilke: Thank you all for coming.

#### **CONCLUSION OF MEETING**

Wilke: We need to state the major SnowTRAC goals.

1. To establish a comprehensive statewide safety program.
2. To establish a comprehensive statewide snowmobile grooming and marking program.
3. To designate a statewide snowmobile trail system.
4. To pursue funding sources to enhance snowmobiling for Alaskans.
5. To improve public awareness of SnowTRAC and its goals.

Wilke: Can I have a motion to approve goals as they stand?

West: I motion.

Hite: Second.

Wilke: Let's take our vote.        **6 YES   0 NO   0 Abstain**        **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

Gauna: Who would like to serve on and chair a sub-committee for the Safety Program?  
Cynthia Hite—Chair  
Mark Wilke  
Ozie West

Gauna: Who would like to serve on and chair a sub-committee for the Grooming Program?  
Joe Gauna—Chair  
Bill Luth  
Cynthia Hite

Kaeppel: There is a request out for use of some of the prudent reserve to fund some of the trail signs in the Mat-Su area.

Wilke: We don't allow any group or club to ask for money after funding has been approved.

West: We shouldn't set precedence.

Kaeppel: They are requesting around \$7,000.

Wilke: Do I hear a motion to fund the request? Hearing no motion, let's move on.

Morris: The prudent reserve is currently at \$92,000.

Kaeppel: I suggest that the remaining reserve go towards grooming and signs.

Luth: How about using reserves unused funds for the educational DVD?

Gauna: I make a motion the prudent reserve be funded at no more than \$50,000 and any unspent funds to into the trail grooming grant pool.

Luth: Second.

Wilke: A show of hands for the motion.                    **5 YES 1 NO 0 Abstain MOTION PASSED**

Gauna: This concludes our meeting.

**MEETING AJDJOURNED**

# **SnowTRAC Meeting Minutes**

## **08/27/2009**

### **ATTENDEES:**

#### **SnowTRAC Board:**

Eric Morris – Northern Area  
Mark Wilke – Southeast Area (Chair)  
Joe Gauna – Anchorage Area (Co Chair)  
Bill Luth – Kenai Pen, Valdez, PWS Area  
Andy Morrison – Inter Board Liaison  
Cindy Hite – Mat-Su, CR Basin Area  
Janet Athanas – Western Area

#### **Park Staff:**

Bill Luck – DNR Parks  
Andre Kaeppele – DNR Parks  
Steve Neel – DNR Parks  
Kyle Kidder – MLW  
Martin Stahl - MLW  
Linda Byrd –DNR Parks (Note taker)

#### **Public Guest:**

Bruce Paulson – Mat-Su Borough Land Management Division  
Laura Bedard – Iron Dog Inc.  
Gary Anderson – Caribou Hills Cabin Hoppers  
Jack Campbell – Mat-Su Trail Council  
Scott Lapiene – Mat-Su Trail Council

### **Introductions and Program Funding**

Wilke: Call meeting to order. Begin a round of introductions.

All: Introductions made from all attendees.

Bedard: I understand the board is opting to increase registration fees in fall. I support this but in order to get more support from the public they need to know where the dollars go.

Kaeppele: You will see that today in this meeting and all of this information will be posted on the web.

Anderson: I agree, the public needs to know where the money goes. That is the big question from everyone.

Luck: Meeting minutes, grant application scores, and funding allocations are posted to website. All this information is available to the public now.

12% of the SnowTRAC dollars are for administration of the program. We have been only using about 10%, the other 2% goes towards grooming and trail signs, which I feel is what the people want.

We were previously funded at \$200,000 / year; now we are at \$225,000. After Parks takes \$25,000 for Admin we have \$200,000. This year we have \$50,000 supplemental ORTAB funds equaling a grand total \$250,000 for grooming, signage and projects.

Bedard: Do the books show dollars coming in for registration fees?

Luck: Actual program dollars do not match the registration fees. Slightly more money is collected in registration fees than what we receive.

Wilke: There is no absolute link between dollars for the SnowTRAC program and registration fees. Program dollars come from Governor's budget.

Gauna: DNR submits a request as a line item every year.

Luck: Yes, and we always ask for more.

### **Grant Application Process**

Paulson: Is it possible for DNR to make the grant application programs less cumbersome?

Luck: It is not our intention to make it difficult. We need all of this information to insure grant money is being used properly based on rules and regulations.

Gauna: Some areas would like to see State Parks identify grooming pool trails to groom and take bids rather than having trail groups fill out grant applications. This would avoid that cumbersome process.

Kaeppele: An intensive application process results in better planned projects and insures that all agency regulations are met.

Wilke: There should be a balance between large and small projects. The bottom line is that we need more grant applications. An easier application process would facilitate that.

Luck: We need more than five, at this time we only have five applications (does not include grooming pool).

Morrison: We need more agencies and (native) corporations on board. Many groups put up their own trail markers, they need to be part of SnowTRAC and the program should support their trail marking.

Morris: The grant process is difficult, this is why people stop applying or don't apply at all.

Wilke: Previously funded grantees should not be required to complete the entire application packet every time.

Athanas: Would it be possible to have meetings around the state to explain to people how to properly fill out the application?

Luck: We have a grant that allows us to do this. We need to go to your communities and coordinate public meetings and trainings. We need you to help coordinate this.

Campbell: Filling out the application for the first time is the most difficult, it is hard to locate the required agency contacts to get the necessary information. Now that I have the contacts established the next application will be much quicker and easier.

Morrison: Want to bring other organizations into mix such as the villages. There are a lot of safety projects to be done in rural Alaska. Perhaps we could get funding from DOT to help out rural areas where trails are the life blood.

Anderson: Grant application process is overwhelming. If something is missing within the application is the whole thing ineligible?

Luck: If specified criteria and requirements are not met then projects are deemed ineligible.

Gauna: I think what Gary meant to say, is if you add a trail to an existing grooming pool network and something is missing within the application, do you then lose funding for previous trails that you already had approval for?

Luck: Sorry, I misunderstood, no. You do not as long as all permitting requirements are in place you can get the new trail included in your grooming pool proposal. If not, just that trail is excluded.

Kaeppele: Access must be established, must have legal, public access before a trail can be funded through this program.

Anderson: Do not want to lose total grant because only one trail is ineligible.

Kaeppele: I would recommend applicants put in grooming request for established trails, and complete a grant application for new trails to be added. That way you separate previously approved trails from new ones, and if the application is deemed ineligible, you still have the funding request for existing trails.

Morrison: A grant application can be for the establishment of legal access for a trail. An applicant can get the funding necessary to establish an easement (conducting a survey, application fees, etc...), and down the road another grant to can be applied for to fund grooming of the now legal trail.

Lapiene: We've been successful at Mat-Su Trail Council in getting SnowTRAC funds. We have had internal discussions about streamlining the application process. The inconsistency between state agencies is difficult to deal with. Is there a way that DNR

can collaborate with other agencies to make the application requirements more straight forward?

I agree that public meetings to educate others on applying for SnowTRAC grants would be extremely helpful.

Morrison: An example of this inconsistency is the difference in equipment weight limits on general state land. Between DNR and ADF&G there is a 2,000 pound difference, the allowable use through the Division of Mining, Land, & Water states 10,000 pounds, while the allowable use through the Division of Habitat states 12,000 pounds. Why is there this inconsistency on lands owned by the same entity?

Lapiene: If equipment used for trail work over 10,000 pounds, a permit is required (90 day process), additionally a permit is required for any work over anadromous streams.

Luck: In the past we have asked for an expedited permit process for certain projects, however we could not get that because of staffing shortages and backlog.

Lapiene: 90 days is what is stated, but around 60 days is more common.

Gauna: Why can't ADF&G and DNR communicate with one another to come up with a consistent requirement? This would streamline the application process.

Morrison: If equipment under 10,000 pounds is used for trail work, than there is no permit required?

Lapiene: Correct.

Morrison: Can we do the trail work with equipment less than 10,000 pounds?

Lapiene: Safety is in jeopardy if we do.

Gauna: What if heads of DNR and MLW got together and said refer all to AF&G guidelines?

Kaeppele: We will take a look into this issue and in interest of time let's move on.

Lapiene: Why doesn't the State maintain legal trail atlas for SnowTRAC trails?

Kaeppele: We are working on this as we speak.

## **Grants Funding**

Wilke: Now let's move on to the grant application review process.

Athanas: Does SnowTRAC have more money available for grants than requests?

Kaeppele: No, we received \$66,350 more in funding requests than what we have available.

Gauna: Do we not need to set aside a dollar amount for grooming and allocate the remainder for grants?

Kaeppele: As a comparison in 2008 \$142,000 were allocated for grooming, while in 2009 (last winter) \$183,000 were allocated for grooming.

Gauna: If use about the same formula this year, it would leave about \$50,000 available for grants.

Morrison: Board has the option of can passing grant application to ORTAB if there is not enough funding here.

Hite: Do leftover funds from a previous year carry over to the next year's SnowTRAC budget?

Luck: Yes, left over funds are rolled over. We have about \$40,000 in funds left over from last which is held as a "prudent reserve" fund for unexpected expenditures such as extra grooming in heavy snow years.

Wilke: The public's perception is that if there is money not used it is lost.

Luck: That is incorrect, SnowTRAC monies stay with SnowTRAC and are only to be used for their grants and grooming.

Wilke: Our budgeting spreadsheet needs to show all of these carry over monies.

Gauna: These carry over funds need to be listed in the public record.

Luck: With the \$50,000 additional allocation from ORTAB, the prudent reserve this year is \$93,921.

Hite: You are definitely saying left over funds from previous years get carried over?

Luck: Yes, definitely.

Kaeppele: Our total funding request this year is \$240,000 for grooming requests and \$91,000 in grant requests.

Wilke: Do I have a motion to delegate money for grants and grooming?

Hite: Motion to make all dollars request for grants available for grants requested and have the remainder of the funding go towards grooming.

Morris: Second the motion.

Wilke: All in favor of this motion raise your hand

**7 YES 0 NO 0 Abstain MOTION PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE**

## **Grant Applicants Review**

**(SEE ATTACHMENT A)**

## **Grooming Insurance**

Wilke: Now that the grants have been completed let's move on to the issue of insurance. (At this point time was taken to read the insurance handout that the board members had).

Kaeppele: The insurance requirement is as follows: When the state provides funds such as for grooming they need to be released from responsibility of liability in the case of an equipment breakdown or grooming operator's injury. There are many different levels of liability required based on type of equipment being used and the type of business doing the grooming. This is where it is up to the individual grooming contractor to meet with an insurance agent and determine what type of plan would be appropriate for their group, the activity, and the equipment used based on the stipulations identified in the insurance handout I provided.

Wilke: We have been looking for cost effective alternatives for this. We transferred our grant request to Trail Mix (Non-Profit) and were then placed under their liability insurance saving our group \$5,000.

Kaeppele: I was advised by the division of risk management that it is a prudent idea to have a trail groomer be a part of someone's business/organization/non-profit that already has established insurance so that the grooming activity will fall under this existing plan.

Gauna: Even small operators need to have insurance. Can they get a smaller policy based on the number of employees and the amount of work done?

Athanas: In my organization 1099 our employees and they have to worry about their own insurance.

Gauna: Just make sure whoever you get to groom has liability insurance per Risk Management Guidelines.

Luck: I think all of the existing grooming groups have the necessary insurance. This was a bigger issue last year because it was the first year we began to enforce it.



Gauna: When you screen the grants if they do not show proof of insurance, they should not be sent to the board.

Campbell: How should the insurance charge be applied in the funding requests?

Wilke: I feel it should be charged as a general overhead.

How do we tell everyone about the insurance requirement?

Luth: They should already know.

Hite: We need to clarify the requirement that if a group does not have insurance, then they are not eligible for funding.

Wilke: Insurance requirements are not only applicable to grooming activities.

Kidder: That is correct. In regards to a Land Use Permit for MLW, bonding and insurance may both required depending on the scope of the project.

Kaeppele: Purpose of bonding is that it protects interest of state regarding the use and subsequent change in value of state land.

Gauna: SnowTRAC needs to change the application form to include the insurance requirements.

Luck: This will be included for the next application round.

Gauna: Before sending the revised application form to public, could DNR staff please send the revision to the board to proof?

Luck: Okay.

Wilke: We'll need to show a statement in the application similar to: "funding contingent upon proof of insurance". Is there any need by this board to go further on this since we have covered and conversed on this several time in the last two years.

Luck: This was previously a large issue. It has since improved, people are finding ways to get this covered.

Wilke: Yes, but need to keep it consistent year to year.

Now on to legal establishment of grooming pool trails and DNR permitting process.

## **Grooming Pool Trails Identifications (1)**

Gauna: The board needs to get together to determine which trails to groom and which not to groom. We will discuss this in great detail tomorrow. We should take a close look at main trails and maybe feeder trails to determine which ones should be left out of the pool due to money restraints.

Hite: Who decides now which trails will be funded?

Campbell: We will need to setup guidelines to do this.

Hite: The board should designate the trails and then not add any more new trails until more funding becomes available.

Gauna: We need to determine criteria for ranking trails from 1<sup>st</sup> on down to help decide which trails to groom based on money available. We will need to get information from areas as to what it would cost to groom specific trails. We have to go to each area and have them help us establish a priority of trails.

Luth: How do we get trails to expand from five feet width class to a 12 foot width class?

Kidder: We will need to figure this out. These issues should ideally be addressed in the easement application.

Wilke: I suggest bypassing State regulations and using the legislature to get trail classes changed.

Luck: We are already working with the legislature on a registration fee increase, you may want to fight one battle at a time.

Kaeppele: In order for a trail maintenance permit to be successful, the applicant must be active in the application process and follow up with staff members to get results.

Paulson: State will often refer applicants to the Borough, they are then required to pay a \$50.00 application fee to get the permit. If State would defer applicants to the Borough this could happen much easier.

Wilke: It is fast approaching 4:30pm, we will pick up on this topic again tomorrow. All, please go over the guidelines for grooming book we were given.

The main issue for tomorrow will be to designate trails.

MEETING ADJOURNED – 4:30 pm

## Meeting notes for day 2 (August 28<sup>th</sup>)

### SnowTRAC Meeting Minutes 08/28/2009

#### ATTENDEES:

##### SnowTRAC Board:

Eric Morris – Northern Area  
Mark Wilke – Southeast Area (Chair)  
Joe Gauna – Anchorage Area (Co Chair)  
Bill Luth – Kenai Pen, Valdez, PWS Area  
Andy Morrison – Inter Board Liaison  
Cindy Hite – Mat-Su, CR Basin Area  
Janet Athanas – Western Area

##### Park Staff:

Bill Luck – DNR Parks  
Andre Kaeppele – DNR Parks  
Steve Neel – DNR Parks  
Kyle Kidder – MLW  
James King – DNR Parks  
Karlyn Herrera – DNR Parks  
Wayne Biessel – DNR Parks  
Teri Zell – DNR Parks  
Linda Byrd – DNR Parks (Note taker)

##### Public Guest:

Bruce Paulsen – Mat-Su Borough Land Management Division  
Gary Anderson – Cabin Hoppers  
Scott Lapiene – Mat-Su Trail Council  
Kevin Hite – Alaska State Snowmobile Association

#### Registration Fee Increase (1)

Wilke: Call meeting to order.

Luck: Introduces James King and Karlyn Herrera.

Wilke: Asks James if would like to address the board.

King: Would like to express State Parks appreciation for all the hard work that the board put in. Would like to acknowledge the board accomplishments and we support their goals.

- Wilke: The political process for increasing registration fees is open for discussion.
- King: I am supportive of this issue. The key to make this successful is to get with the legislature. I have already done some of the leg work. However the process could easily die if the Division of Parks was the only one who pushed for it. This needs the advisory board and the public to keep it alive. You need to make known to legislature that the public and board support this effort.
- Hite: Is there another way of accomplishing the fee increase without having to go to the legislature?
- King: You could go to Governor. I feel he would be supportive if the board has the public behind them. He is very approachable, but I feel this is an issue better suited for the legislature.
- Luck: I would like to suggest that by March the board has a sub-committee to go to the legislators and to gather support from different user groups.
- Wilke: We need to be ready by the first week of the session and talk to other legislators. It needs to be done face to face, not as a telephone call.
- Do we have any supportive information from DMV?
- Herrera: We have talked with them but have not received pertinent information from them.
- King: DMV is not required to give funds to the program, but any language that can strengthen a funding commitment is good.
- Herrera: I will get a good contact at DMV to discuss this issue.
- Wilke: Margaret Brodie previously forwarded an Email with some DMV information to the board, I will forward this Email to you.
- Lapiene: I encourage members of board and all interested parties to start now to contact all legislators. Start now before they convene for legislative meetings.
- King: Get letters of support from all groups and clubs and mail them to Mark. Mark can get a package together with the letters and pictures (before and after trail pictures) to leave with legislators so they can review.
- Hite: Can we get this information on a website?
- Luck: It may be possible to use Survey Monkey to help show support.

Morrison: Need some talking points that can catch some non snowmobilers. Economic impacts for rural areas, safety issues, etc.

Wilke: Bush legislators will be tough to convince because there is no grooming there, but they do want safety. This may be a way to earn their support.

Lapiene: Eddie Grasser would be a good contact. He worked on the 1<sup>st</sup> round of registration fee language. He knows the political ropes.

Hite: Who will be the go to staff person to ask questions regarding this?

King: Andre, Bill and I will give help to answer the questions.

Wilke: I am having trouble finding any current economic information about this issue, all information I have found is outdated.

Morrison: Is there another way we can solicit funds (such as donations) so that we can avoid having to go through the legislative process?

Gauna: That is a whole bucket of worms. We have tried before.

Athanas: Could folks adopt a trail to help with maintenance and funding costs?

Gauna: Our trail organization does that now with in-kind labor, but not with money.

## **Grooming Pool Trails Identifications (2)**

Wilke: Back to the grooming program, at close of the meeting last night we were looking at the prioritization of trails.

Athanas: Where are the areas we have trails and who is using them? If we want to engage the bush, we can't just do this where trails already exist.

Gauna: That's correct, but we are not getting grooming requests from the bush. Perhaps you can help get the program information out there.

Athanas: Yes, I do not think people currently know about this.

Gauna: I do not understand because we advertise statewide and we did get one request for an emergency shelter.

Wilke: Maybe we should take a step back and address how trails will be regionalized before address the trails themselves.

Lapiene: So to do an accurate assessment we need to engage the villages.

Athanas: I can have 56 villages at a table if I do a meeting about this program.

Luck: I encourage the board or staff to help us come up with meetings/venues to educate snowmobilers statewide about the program.

### **Advisory Board Visioning**

Hite: I have three questions:

1. What does DNR view as the SnowTRAC board roles?
2. What does SnowTRAC view as the roles of DNR staff?
3. What do people think of state administered safety program idea?

Wilke: Yes, we want to know what direction we are going and if everyone on the same page. Let's go around the table for each person's thoughts.

King: Roles and priorities for the SnowTRAC board are as follows. It represents what Alaskans want, it is there to serve the people, to help facilitate what users want like the grooming, trail marking, and building trails. It represents Alaskans first, DNR's opinion second, my vision serves the people.

Kaeppele: You advise staff as to what recreational snowmobilers throughout the state want, you are the ones out there that hear from the users and are the ones that represent the users, we are here to help the board get through State process so that the users can get the types of things they want with their registration fees.

Luck: You're advocates for the people, your expertise and knowledge really help us, we facilitate.

Neel: As a grant person I need input so when I work with grantee I know what is going on.

Morris: The board represents Alaskans and the SnowTRAC program, my area does not register snowmobiles and we are really not contributing to the program. Trail marking as well as grooming number one priority in my area of Alaska, it's the key to bring registration out in rural Alaska.

Gauna: My idea of SnowTRAC is bringing citizens together to advise DNR to help snow goers decide where to spend available money, members have responsibility to go back to regions/area and spread the word about the happenings of the program. Later grooming became the focus of the program because it is what the people wanted, it is the easiest to see and view on the ground and is now one of biggest focus of SnowTRAC. We need to let our regions/areas know what is available.

Wilke: Number one priority is grooming but we need to get away from this and add staking, safety, and education to the program. Trail development needs to come back to the

program as it seems to have left. Right of Way issues are hardly talked about anymore and are a huge issue. We are the voice back to DNR, the eyes and ears of our regions/areas.

Hite: I would like to see safety funded as a statewide curriculum managed by DNR rather than piece meal grant applications. If we can get this done can get to new grant applications each year instead of spending hours discussing same safety requests and issues each year.

Morrison: We are getting a lot more support from the State now and are growing in the right direction. We must be the eyes and ears of our areas. I hear so much when I am out riding. Easement is an important issue and needs to move forward so that we can grow and preserve our trail systems.

Luth: We are stewards between DNR and the public. We need to get as much information as possible from the public to support them. People are scared that trails are going away. We need to look at the future, not just recreation but transportation trails. This is going to be a big issue.

Athanas: We need to do a press release so that the board can take information back to the people, we should set a date to do so everyone does this at the same time. Education statewide is a good thing.

Wilke: Janet, could you start the work on a press release.

Athanas: Yes, I will do it.

Anderson: I have learned a lot these last two days sitting in on your meeting. Good direction, you put a lot of work into it. I agree to get the word out to everyone.

Lapiene: We are in an infancy stage compared to the lower 48, been reactive rather than proactive. In order to make the program proactive requires committed staff and not just volunteers. We need to seek more grants, 5 just isn't enough. I wonder if people think that the grooming is the whole program and that is part of the reason we don't see more grants.

Paulson: This entity acts as guiding force as a statewide program for trails, marking of trails, safety and education. I feel boroughs need to work closely to help the board to accomplish this. People want maintenance of trails rather than new trails.

Kidder: This is a good way to see need for easements statewide.

Biessel: The most endangered species in Alaska is access. This group should focus on this, without access it has nothing. I would like to see the group work on fair allocation process for grooming pool, it needs to mature and it needs your input. There needs to be an assurance and assessment program to insure that funds are being used wisely.

Zell: We should build on assessment, I would like to see a part time staffer familiar with trails to go out and give input how it is being done. Really need this and an allocation of funds needs to be done.

King: I have made a summary of what everyone has said and this is what I hear from you:

*“The board will fairly represent all Alaskans while promoting and advocating improved snowmobile opportunities and advising the Division on snowmobile issues including the snow machine registration program, how best to spread available funding, safety, grooming, trail marking, education, trail development, acquiring legal right of ways and other issues.”*

Wilke: Do I hear a motion to accept James’ summary as our SnowTRAC vision statement?

Athanas: Motion to accept the summary as our vision statement.

Gauna: Second the motion.

Wilke: All in favor of this motion raise your hand.

**7 YES   0 NO   0 Abstain   MOTION PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE**

### **Program Reserve Funds**

Luck: Do we have a list of all trails we groom?

Wilke: It is better to have a list of trails when asking for money. In the past grooming was done based on geographic areas, and now we know it is not the best method. We need to list the trails which are requesting grooming and assign some dollars values to them. Let’s work up a matrix.

Luth: Some areas will need to help with this and have no representation here today.

Gauna: I make a motion to request State Parks make a continuing prudent reserve fund of no more than \$50,000 and move the rest into the grooming pool.

Hite: Second the motion

Luck: I would feel more comfortable with more than \$50,000 in prudent reserve.

Gauna: \$50,000 is plenty.

Athanas: Bill, what do you do with the money?



Luck: Excess hangs out there and is put into another account and used as backup if money falls short due to unforeseen circumstances, used as rollover dollars.

Neel: It is used the next year before using new monies.

Luth: Rollover funds were used last year on a trail signing project.

Wilke: Reserve funds used to should go back into pool and not set aside. I hear grief from the public that they do not like the idea of a reserve fund.

Gauna: State has the right to reserve funds.

Luck: No way to know exactly what funding will be needed in a particular year, we need the reserve preserve the program.

Lapiene: I agree with Bill. I feel we need a prudent reserve. If we set a cost allocation per mile for trails we will know what is needed for funds and additional funds can be used for high snow years.

Zell: In the past we have had to cut off contractors due to lack of funds and still had snow to be groomed.

Gauna: I am not saying should not have a reserve, I want it limited to \$50,000.

Neel: Forget the word reserve, it is money left over from end of year and moved over to the next year (rolled over).

Gauna: I just want to know excess goes into grooming pool.

Wilke: Let's vote. All in favor of motion to keep the "prudent reserve" funds at \$50,000 raise your hand .

**5 YES 1 NO 1 Abstain MOTION PASSED**

**Grooming Pool Trails Identifications (3)**

Wilke: Trail Priority Matrix for grooming.

At this time there was much discussion over this issue, as a result a matrix was setup to rank trails with the categories of:

- |                         |                                   |                       |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Trailhead Access     | 2. Number of users per week       | 3.Length              |
| 4. Width                | 5. Distant from grooming base     | 6.Terrain             |
| 7. River/water crossing | 8. Frequency of grooming required | 9. Average snowfall   |
| 10. Economic impact     | 11. Loop/network trail            | 12.Trunk/feeder/local |

### 13. Length of season

At one point members realized that matrix would need to be divided into two separate ones. One would be loosely based on public demand and use while the other would be loosely based on the maintenance costs for grooming and signing trails. Due to time allowance members agreed to table this issue and to move on to allocation of dollars for grooming for the 2009/2010 winter season.

Athanas: Based on a class of trail could we have an estimate of the cost to maintain it?

Kaeppele: Costs will be different for a different class of trails, we need to work out on hourly or mileage cost to achieve this.

Wilke: For now we need determine geographic areas, and we can then continue to work on the matrix priority.

Gauna: We should use the following regions – Western, Northern, Southeast, Southcentral, Mat-Su.

### **2009/2010 Snow Trac Funds Allocations**

Some of the monies requested of the grooming pool and grantees were amended to reach the budget of available funds. Following is the discussion leading to the final funding allocations.

Wilke: Moves to accept grooming pool allocations at \$216,403.

Luth: Second the motion.

Biessel: I would like to go back and take a look at the numbers.

Kaeppele: Allocations for Chugach and Wood Tikchik state parks have not been addressed.

Gauna: Do we have requests from these areas? If they want money they need to request it.

Wilke: I agree.

Luck: It is only fair, they need to ask.

Kaeppele: Parks has never had to ask for funds before, it would be unfair to require it now without notification.

Gauna: They are not exempt from requesting.

Morris: To deny them funding without forewarning or knowledge is unreasonable, I suggest we allocate them funds this time and notify them that they must submit requests for future funding.

(ALL AGREED)

Luth: I would like to see Big Lake grooming funding increased.

Gauna: If they wanted more they could have asked for it.

Biessel: I believe there are additional funding needs in Big Lake and Hatcher Pass, would like to revisit funding allocations in these areas.

Gauna: Do you want amendment our motion?

Athanas: I would like to amend the motion that unallocated funds from grooming pool go to Chugach and Wood Tikchik state parks.

Morris: Last year Chugach and Wood Tikchik spent \$2,000 each and someone else suggested \$5,000 in additional funds for Big Lake.

Gauna: Before we move money around remember that Wayne has flexibility to move money around during the season if it needs to be moved based on conditions.

Luth: Make a motion to use \$8,040 left from grooming pool to fund a part time position for a grooming contract administrator.

Hite: Second the motion

Wilke: Isn't State Parks already responsible for this? They already get administrative funds.

Luck: We talked about putting Andre out there once week per each month for four months and you asked about a trail counter and signage.

Morrison: If someone is already there let them do the signage.

Gauna: Who?

Morrison: Andre, if he is the one there.

Wilke: Andre is already 100% budget funded, State Parks agrees Andre will do this.

Kaeppele: We have the capability to do this through Administrative funds, \$8,040 left over can go somewhere else.

Gauna: Will you do that? Spend one week a month for four months in the field doing compliance checks with existing administrative money.

Kaeppele: Yes.

Gauna: Statewide?

Biessel: If the travel statewide equipment will be needed.

Kaeppele: I could go with groomer or club member.

Lapiene: Audit needs to be independent and separate from the club. Does State Parks not have snow machine to use? (Answer is yes.)

Hite: Make a motion to fund Chugach and Wood Tikchik at \$2,000 each and the rest to Big Lake.

Morris: Second the motion

Gauna: All in favor raise your hand.

**7 YES 0 NO 0 Abstain MOTION PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE**

**(SEE ATTACHMENT B FOR FINAL SNOW TRAC BUDGET ALLOCATIONS)**

### **Registration Fee Increase**

Gauna: Now let's move on to the registration fee increase issue.

Hite: We have talked with James King about the process this morning.

*(At this point Kevin Hite, President of Alaska State Snowmobile Association (ASSA) was introduced- Kevin arrived a few minutes earlier, was not present for all of the meeting.)*

K. Hite: Our association has had a lot of discussion going on and the general consensus is they support the increase in fees to support snowmobiles.

Going to Juneau is a big step. However, in order for the ASSA to lobby, they need direction from SnowTRAC and State Parks. Our main concern is with grant program and how closely it is monitored on the ground.

750 people were surveyed (Anchorage base) and the majority are in favor of the increase.

In order to successfully lobby though, I have some points that need to be addressed:

1. Originally SnowTRAC formed in 1978 and allocated 15% of the funds to safety and the rest to grants. We feel that allocation is no longer there.
2. Parks Staff is not going to have time to do the compliance. If we get the fee increase contract administration demands are going to be huge and administration will have to be a full time position.
3. Transparency of the program is an issue, all funding allocations and registration fee incomes needs to be visible to the public.

I want to be able to talk to people about this happening. Currently we have talked about ASSA newsletter dedicating space to SnowTRAC to show work being done. At this time we cannot support increase, we hope by June that will change.

Kaeppele: I agree with what you said. With that amount of funding increase the program will need to be ramped up and that will need to be planned for and laid out.

K Hite: Those are the answers I need to be able to support this; I need the program guidelines for a \$1 million dollar program before I can lobby to support the increase.

Wilke: The frustration with this program is the amount of time it takes to deal with these concerns and you walked right into the middle of it. Come to us with some suggestions for ramping up the program to support an increase. I know you have ideas that would help.

K. Hite: Yes, I understand. I will be glad to give a presentation to you with some ideas. I'm not throwing rocks, I want this to work.

Luck: A Lot of your points are very valid. The group is in the process of reconstruction. This is a solid group of people. The intention is to grow but it is a bit premature to grow at this time based on a \$1 million dollar budget. The Board needs to look at this program on a statewide level.

However, I strongly disagree with the transparency of programs. Accounting books are at every meeting we go to. There is a huge commitment here for transparency.

The task of monitoring has not fully been thought out yet but I do believe that Andre is the one individual to initially take on the task. Before going to the Snow Rider magazine we should have a meeting to talk about the direction of program.

K. Hite: Did not mean to question transparency. I know these people are working very hard. I feel this program is one of the best things that has happened to Alaska. I want it to grow.

- Wilke: If we go to increase fee registration, there will still be support out there. Essentially there is not enough time to work out all the kinks for this session. A suggestion is to move to 2011 legislature session, in order to be completely prepared. At this time the program is not prepared to administer the increase.
- Lapiene: Mat-Su Council in support of the fee increase. The money available now is not there to do everything. The current \$5.00 annual registration fee is minimal. An increase to \$20.00 is a drop in the bucket compared to other states. A \$1 million dollar program is nothing. I am surprised ASSA is saying that they won't support this. People are out there buying \$8,000 snowmobiles for a \$5.00 registration fee. As president of the Mat-Su council I will carry back this information and still support the increase.
- K. Hite: The ASSA supports the increase. However, I need to be able to go out and convince others. I want to have all snowmobilers support this, and getting the items I mentioned fixed will help this. I just want it to be more prepared.
- Lapiene: If they are not educated yet what will another year do?
- K. Hite: We take some of the blame for this. There are some areas we need to work on to get the support. If we fail in Juneau it will be a long time before can go back. We need public support for the pull.
- Gauna: It is almost time to adjourn.
- Morrison: Maybe we need outside help, maybe a consultant could help.
- Biessel: One final point regarding grooming standards, criteria established today is important, dollars per mile look at adjusted, trail mileage = \$ per mile  
miles X width X frequency/per week  
1 = 5 to 6 feet      2 = 7 to 12 feet      3 = 13 to 16 feet  
I will put this out in an Email to you and we can work with it, it could be a technical element.

## **Meeting Scheduling**

- Hite: We need to schedule the next meeting, a quarterly schedule is good. For the next meeting I suggest taking a look at groomer operation guidelines, a statewide safety curriculum, and a close look at the registration fee increase and where the money would go. We should put this on the agenda.
- Kaeppele: Let's set a firm date for next meeting.
- Luck: Where are we on the January 19<sup>th</sup> date? (This is the first day of the legislative session)
- Wilke: Not sure if it is realistic to plan a meeting to lobby the legislature this year.

Luck: I agree, there are not enough answers yet.

Wilke: The purpose of the next quarterly meeting should be to deal with a statewide safety program, it is the least difficult issue to deal with and we can get hands around it. We need to come up with how SnowTRAC wants to do safety in Alaska. Curriculums already exist. We need organization(s) to take out to the riders.

Hite: This could work the same as grant, however it would be a onetime grant in which outside organizations would help DNR out.

Wilke: I propose a separate meeting for each of the following issues – safety, grant application, grooming program.

Luck: In the meantime we can start Andre with the contract administration work.

Next quarterly meeting tentatively scheduled for December 3<sup>rd</sup> and/or December 4<sup>th</sup>.

*MEETING ADJOURNED 4:30 p.m.*

## ATTACHMENT A

### 1. Project Name: **Mat-Su Trail Marking and Signing II**

- **Applicant: Matanuska-Susitna Borough**
- **Funding: \$ (10,557)/ \$ (28,620)/ \$ (39,177)**
- **Project type: Trail Maintenance**
- **Land Owners: Various (state, borough, mental health, etc..)**

#### **-PROS**

- a. **High level of public support**
- b. **Clearly depicts need for service**
- c. **Budget is thorough**
- d. **Legal land access clearly described**

#### **-CONS**

- a. **Fails to address storage and maintenance of remaining signs**
- b. **Distribution of signs difficult to determine**

#### **Project Description:**

The proposed project will fund the purchase of trail markers and signs for multiple use winter trails, primarily used by snowmobiles. Mat-Su borough will distribute the markers and signs to those trail groups and organizations who have signed agreements with the borough under the trail care program. The trail groups will be responsible for the installation and maintenance of the trail markers and signs.

#### **Board Discussion:**

Neel: Grantee is currently finishing up Phase I and is in compliance with the current grant.

Morris: Motion to fund.

Luth: Second the motion.

Paulsen: This is an extension of a 2007 grant. The borough works with trail care program partners. DNR has given the Borough management authority of these trails. We have third parties that do the ground work. The borough has acquired the public easements and is now into marking trails. There is a public need for additional funds to purchase more signs.

Gauna: What percentage of these markers and signs end up on trails where snow machines do not go.



Paulsen: None

Hite: How many organizations are involved in the program?

Paulsen: 19 in all.

Luth: The program is very efficient. Required signs are quickly distributed to groups.

Morrison: What is the response to the signing?

Luth: In my area alone I have lots of beginners. The signing has increased compliance with staying on trail easements and it helps the public know where they are. The response is generally very positive.

Gauna: I have seen the same response.

Hite: I have been there, it is great to see the signs.

Kaeppele: Is this to purchase new signs or to replace signs?

Paulsen: This request is to meet demand for signage we could not do so with the first grant.

Kaeppele: My concern is not to spend thousands each year to replace reusable signs.

Gauna: Most people will retrieve the old signs.

Neel: This request is under \$15,000 and does not require a match.

Lapiene: Borough has been very successful at this and there is always a need for more signs. Is the borough contributing to this project?

Paulsen: We are providing a match through our general fund.

Luck: Are the signs available to all applicants?

Paulson: Yes, we send out a letter to all organizations (in the Mat-Su, not statewide).

Wilke: All in favor of the motion raise your hand

**7 YES 0 NO 0 Abstain MOTION PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE**

## 2. **Project Name: Moose Range Trails**

- **Applicant: Mat-Su Trails Council**
- **Funding: \$ (26,705.09)/ \$ (17,146.36)/ \$ (43,851.45)**
- **Project type: Trail Development**
- **Land Owners: State**

### **-PROS**

- a. Large public interest**
- b. Potential to link to other trail systems**

### **-CONS**

- a. Grooming will be done by Nordic ski club**
- b. State agency permits not complete (F&G anadromous stream)**
- c. Doesn't adequately describe maint, storage, and use of equipment**

### **Project Description:**

Project will consist of signing, grooming, and maintenance of approximately 22 miles of trail in the Palmer Moose Range. Grant funds will be used to purchase grooming equipment and signs.

### **Board Discussion:**

Wilke: Does staff have any information to offer?

Kidder: Looks to be all State land, which makes grooming a generally allowed use.

Wilke: Is there an easement for this? If not, we can't fund this.

Luck: There is a generally allowed use for grooming on State land, therefore this is a legal activity that we can fund.

Wilke: If this is funded, can they do the work without an easement?

This board has to prove beyond a doubt that the applicant will have legal access. Kyle, would you fund this grant based on that?

Kidder: Yes.

Luck: They have legal access since this activity is on general state land.

They can proceed with the current proposal. The only thing that would be a problem is if a 5 foot corridor was widened without a permit.

Campbell: There is no discussion to widen a trail in this application.

Hite: Who uses the trail?

Campbell: Almost everyone that lives in the area.

Hite: Do skiers use the trails also.

Campbell: Yes.

Kaeppele: Elaborate on who will do the grooming and to what frequency.

Campbell: We are expecting 350 hours of grooming year.

Luth: How many miles?

Hite: 22 miles?

Luth: We do 100 miles for 400 hours as a point of reference.

Wilke: Motion to fund?

Luth: Make a motion to fund.

Janet: Second.

Wilke: Open for discussion.

Luth: It seems most people using the trails are from the local area, skiers are the largest user group users.

Hite: Are cross country skiers the primary users?

Gauna: This cost is way over estimated. We shouldn't be grooming these narrow local trails. This goes away from our concept of well maintained wide trails. Can we send this project to ORTAB?

Luck: The biggest issue that I see is that these trails are not primarily for snowmobile use but for skiers. I think we need to take a vote to find out or not, this could be a good candidate for the Recreation Trails Program.

Wilke: Do I hear a motion to move to ORTAB?

Luck: I suggest the grantee refine the budget and give the application to ORTAB.

Hite: Motion to move to ORTAB

Luth: Second the motion.

Campbell: Can I get a list of changes or additional information needed to submit this to ORTAB?

Gauna: I suggest you work with Bill and Andre on this.

Wilke: All in favor of motion to move to ORTAB raise your hand.

**7 YES 0 NO 0 Abstain MOTION PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE**

### 3. **Project Name: Be Snowmobile Safe**

- **Applicant: North American Outdoor Institute**
- **Funding: \$ (15,000)/ \$ (21,000)/ \$ (36,000)**
- **Project type: Safety and Education**
- **Land Owners: Not Applicable**

#### **-PROS**

- a. Good medium (internet) to get safety message out**
- b. Project supported by Senators, Governors, and City Government**
- c. Credible instructors used for teaching**
- d. Previously successful grant applicant.**

#### **-CONS**

- a. Budgeting doesn't account for a set number of courses**
- b. Difficult to gauge the success and compliance of an online system**

#### **Project Description:**

Provide statewide snowmobile safety education training programs that include online courses and live training with both multi-media information and hands-on field exercises taught by professional, certified avalanche and snowmobile safety trainers. The information will include practical, easy to implement skills delivered in an engaging format that appeals to students in 4<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades as well as outdoor enthusiasts of all ages. Each workshop will be customized for the audience skill level.

#### **Board Discussion:**

Neel: This grantee is not out of compliance.

Luck: This group continuously acquires grants, they are very successful, they go to Expos and give programs.

Last year this group applied for 3 grants, and this was the only one the board approved.

Gauna: We did not have enough money last year to fund more than one of their grants.

Lapiene: What is the certification level of their instructors?

Morrison: They are heli ski guys.

Kaeppele: There is no documentation in the applications, but all instructors listed are well trained in avalanche safety.

Morris: Are they required to have match?

Neel: No, this grant is under \$15,000 and is for safety.

Wilke: Hear a motion to fund?

Athanas: Motion to fund

Morrison: Second

Wilke: Open for discussion.

Gauna: Their budget does not seem correct. They are not soliciting the required quotes for instructor charges.

Luck: This is a personnel charge, there is no bid requirement for this.

Hite: Is the contract worker the instructor? Do they use their own people? Is \$7200.00 the actual funds for the instructors?

Wilke: Last year we funded a \$15,000 website grant, and I have not seen any changes to their website in the last year, with no additional online training opportunities. Where did that \$15,000 go last year?

Luth: The public wants to see this money on the ground in trails, they are not supporting this.

Hite: I believe in safety programs but need to know how the dollars are used. There is no evidence of this in the last web project we funded from this group.

Morris: It seems as though the funds are being used to fund a ski instructor's life style, does anyone else provide this service?

Morrison: I have been to a few of these, they are an organization that pulls together and get people in a room to get the word out and taking lead.

Kaeppele: I attended one of these at the Iron Dog Expo. It seemed out of context. It was a skier discussing avalanche danger to a snowmobiler at an Iron Dog Event. I think a curriculum focused on high speed snowmobiling, navigation, winter survival, and remote travel would have been more appropriate. Additionally there was only one snowmobiler in attendance.

Gauna: SnowTRAC safety dollars should go into state funded program.

Hite: I agree, we need statewide program, if we promote this we will not get there.

Gauna: It could be modeled after the Boating and Safety program.

Wilke: We need a program, we need to stop these small deals.

Kaeppele: If this grant is not approved there will not be a lot of means to get out safety instruction this winter.

Morrison: Can we move this to ORTAB?

Luck: Can not guarantee it would be approved, it may be a good fit for this application.

Wilke: In past we have funded grants for less than the requested dollars.

Luck: We can fund for less dollars.

Wilke: All in favor of motion on the table raise hand.

**1 YES 6 NO 0 Abstain MOTION FAILED**

Morrison: I recommend that applicant applies to ORTAB for funding.

Morris: They will need to clean up the application before it goes to ORTAB.

Morrison: Bill, do you advise them of this.

Luck: I will cover this with them before ORTAB.

**4. Project Name: Snowmobile Helmet Safety Incentive**

- **Applicant: North American Outdoor Institute**
- **Funding: \$ (15,000)/ \$ (10,000)/ \$ (35,000)**
- **Project Type: Safety and Education**
- **Land Owners: Not Applicable**

**-PROS**

- a. Project supported by Senators, Governors, and City Government**
- b. Previously successful grant applicant**
- c. Can provide on the ground safety around the state**
- d. Motivates snowmobilers to learn about safety**
- e.**

**-CONS**

- a. Does not account for income generated from helmet sales**
- b. Pricing quotes are inconsistent and hard to compare**

**Project Description:**

Provide snowmobile helmets as an incentive for attending safety education training programs that include online courses, live, multi-media presentations and hands-on field exercises taught by professional, certified avalanche and snowmobile safety trainers. Each participant that successfully completes assigned tasks and a short quiz to demonstrate their knowledge of the material presented will be eligible to purchase a Snell/DOT approved snowmobile helmet for approximately \$25-\$50 (\$150 value). Each workshop will be geared appropriately for the audience skill level.

**Board Discussion:**

Wilke: Question any conflict of interest, if so please excuse yourself, any public comments?  
Is there a motion to fund?

Athanas: Motion to fund grant.

Morris: Second

Wilke: Open for discussion.

Neel: This project does not require a match.

Athanas: What are they doing with the income they are receiving from helmet sales?

Gauna: I want to know too.



Gauna: The applicant has three helmet bids but there is a different amount of helmets on each bid so that they cannot be compared comparative.

They should have a quote per unit but this application has a different quantity on each quote, they need to be comparative.

Hite: I amend motion to fund to include a clause that helmet income will be put back into more helmets next year?

Morris: I accept that and add a requirement to show where the helmets are going.

Neel: Quarterly reports will show the amount of helmets sold.

Lapiene: Programs like this need to be self sufficient, income funds should go towards more helmets.

Wilke: Have amendment to motion to show that helmet sales monies from this grant to pay for helmets and distribution with a report/receipt showing who/where helmets were sold to. All in favor of this amendment raise hand.

**6 YES 0 NO 0 Abstain MOTION PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE**  
**(Andy Morrison had to leave before vote was taken)**

Wilke: I did my own research on this application. I always had questions about the facts and figures with this grant. I checked the Bio Medicine website, and the report is not even close to what is depicted in this application. I have a problem with grants that provide incorrect information to solicit funds.

Lapiene: My concern is that other organizations get donations and give away helmets, while this organization wants money to buy and sell them.

Morris: I like the fact that people have to pay for the helmet, this gives people a stronger sense of ownership and appreciation for them.

Gauna: Call the question. All in favor of the grant as amend raise your hand.

**3YES 3 NO 0 Abstain MOTION FAILED**  
**(Andy Morrison had to leave before this vote was taken)**

5. **Project Name: Iron Dog Safety Expo**

- **Applicant: Iron Dog Incorporated**
- **Funding: \$ (24,688)/ \$ (21,375)/ \$ (46,063)**
- **Project type: Safety and Education**
- **Land Owners: Not applicable**

**-PROS**

- a. Good venue will reach a lot of snowmobilers**
- b. Several safety organizations will be present under one roof**
- c. Fully supported by industry and local government**

**-CONS**

- a. Cost unreasonably high for one day event**
- b. Grant funds would pay for vendors to market products**
- c. Does not specifically outline safety seminars and materials available**

**Project Description:**

Free public EXPO that promotes snowmobile and outdoor education and safety through presentations, seminars, industry vendors, public safety organizations and through the distribution of educational brochures. The EXPO will be held February 13, 2010 in Anchorage at the Dena'ina Convention Center.

**Board Discussion:**

Wilke: Can the staff provide any information about this grantee?

Neel: They have a history total compliance.

Wilke: Are there any comments from the public?

Bedard: This is 27<sup>th</sup> year of the Iron Dog Race. The safety inspection expo has been in existence for four years. This is a large event and is organized by a non-profit organization Iron Dog Inc.

This event is an opportunity to for the snowmobile industry to collaborate with the user. This event promotes economical growth, safety, and recreational opportunities.

The funding requested is a fraction of what it takes to run this event. For the last three years the EXPO has been held in Wasilla at the sports complex. This event will be in Anchorage, which will draw more people, but also require more funding. The match amount on the budget does not itemize all expenses, many expenses aren't foreseeable until the event takes place. Our organization owns nothing and must therefore rent everything.

Hite: How do you think public would respond to spending \$25,000 for an Expo instead of a trail?

Bedard: Here is an opportunity to reach out to the user, provide safety information, and explain the program and which trails are groomed.

Hite: The Iron Dog title makes this seem like a racer only event, how do you promote this to the general snowmobile user?

Bedard: Three years ago the event open up as Safety Expo which changed the event from and Iron Dog event to an event for the general public. Last year much of the public did attend, the general consensus is that they would like to see it grow.

Athanas: What is the possibility of doing this event earlier in the season when people need a safety refresher before heading out on the trail?

Gauna: This event falls a week before the Iron Dog race, this leads me to believe the focus of the event is for the race. Why should Snow TRAC fund the whole event? What amount of the total dollars is specifically for safety education and not the race oriented? A one day safety seminar cost of \$24,000 plus is too high.

Bedard: Anything can be done cheaper but we would like to see more participation by holding the event in Anchorage. \$12,000 is to rent the Dena'ina Center, this covers about 50% of the whole event cost.

Gauna: Is safety expo in conjunction with other show or all by itself? Looks like you are asking to help finance the whole event.

Bedard: A large part of the cost is for advertising, one advertisement alone is \$5,000.

Hite: Are there other organizations coming in? Do you charge for booth space?

Bedard: This event is not to make money, we invite organizations and do not charge for booth space.

Morris: Are there any manufacturers that contribute to this event?

Bedard: Not in actual dollars.

Lapiene: There would be a large decrease in participation if this was only a safety event and not associated with the Iron Dog. The Iron Dog label draws more participants.

Wilke: Is there a motion to fund?

Morris: Move to fund.

Gauna: Second.

Wilke: Open for discussion.

Hite: Expensive for a one day event. Rather see this combined with another safety event, and have the Iron Dog event another day.

Bedard: This is the largest snowmobile event in the State of Alaska and it will cost much more than we are requesting.

Campbell: Iron Dog is a powerful vehicle to attract people, adding safety to it applies.

Luth: I agree along with that, suggest partially funding based on the money we have.

Wilke: What do we get out of it if funded? What is in it for SnowTRAC?

Neel: Andre and I went last year, this is a great opportunity for interested people new to the sport to learn about it and how to do it safely.

Wilke: To Andre and Bill – would you guys go there?

Kaeppele : I went last year. It is a good venue to solicit more grant applications, hear from the public and what they want out of the program, and educate people on the grooming pool and the importance of registration. I believe it is an appropriate venue for safety education.

Lapiene: I encourage this board to participate. \$24,000 is a small amount of money for an event of this caliber, having it in anchorage is a great attraction, what you will get out of it is a good return.

Athanas: Why does the budget spend more on web development than newspaper advertisements?

Bedard: Web development will promote safety year round.

Morris: Regarding the Iron Dog I don't believe you Can enjoy a trail at 100 miles an hour, and generally unsafe as well. Regardless I will support this, but I still believe it is cheaper and more appropriate to have in Wasilla.

Wilke: Still seems like a lot of money for a one say event. What is the possibility of decreasing our funding contribution? What about Tesoro, can't they sponsor the event as they have in the past?

Bedard: The event is no longer sponsored by Tesoro.

Wilke: This does seem like a safety program, actually the event hosts several safety programs. I see at least four, I don't know that SnowTRAC can afford all of these. Perhaps we can fund a fraction of the programs. I believe this is the best of all of the Safety and Education grants, but \$24,000 for one day is too much.

Athanas: Vendors should be required to pay for part of the event.

Bedard: They are not considered vendors in this capacity, they attend the event to promote safety.

Luth: The booths don't have a rental fee?

Bedard: No charge.

Campbell: There should be a charge.

Gauna: Would like to amend to the amount of funding SnowTRAC will vote on from \$24,000 to \$15,000.

Luth: Second

Wilke: Any more discussion (NONE)

Wilke: Vote to fund grant.

**6YES 0 NO 0 Abstain MOTION PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE  
(Andy Morrison had left before this grant was put before the board)**

Wilke: Now vote on amendment for decrease of funding to \$15,000.

**6YES 0 NO 0 Abstain MOTION PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE  
(Andy Morrison had left before this grant was put before the board)**

**ATTACHMENT B**

<b>Grooming Pool &amp; Snowmobile Trail Grant Expenditures</b>	<b>2009/2010</b>
--	------------------

	Requested	Appropriated
<b>GROOMING POOL</b>		
<b>Southcentral Grooming Areas</b>		
Big Lake	Estimate <del>\$ 5,000</del>	\$ 9,040
Petersville	Estimate \$ 40,000	\$ 40,000
Lower-Susitna Drainage	Estimate \$ 6,225	\$ 6,225
Mid-Valley Trail Club	<del>\$ 19,000</del>	\$ 14,000
Lake Louise	\$ 21,003	\$ 21,003
Willow Area Trails	\$ 16,000	\$ 16,000
Caribou Hills	<del>\$ 14,997</del>	\$ 20,000
Denali Highway	\$ 18,000	\$ 18,000
Hatcher Pass	Estimate \$ 20,000	\$ 20,000
Snowmads	\$ 19,610	\$ 19,610
Montana Creek Motor Musers	Estimate \$ 5,565	\$ 5,565
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 185,400</b>	<b>\$ 189,443</b>

<b>Interior Grooming Areas</b>			
Yukon Quest	<del>\$ 15,000</del>	\$ 10,000	\$5K Increase Director Decision
Chena River Recreation Area I	Estimate <del>\$ 6,000</del>	\$ 4,000	
Chena River Recreation Area II	Estimate <del>\$ 6,000</del>	\$ 4,000	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 27,000</b>	<b>\$ 18,000</b>	
<b>Southeast Grooming Areas</b>			
Juneau Snowmobile Club	<del>\$ 12,000</del>	\$ 6,000	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 12,000</b>	<b>\$ 6,000</b>	
<b>Other Areas</b>			
Chugach State Park	<del>\$ 8,000</del>	\$ 6,000	\$4K Increase Director Decision
Wood-Tikchik State Park	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 10,000</b>	<b>\$ 8,000</b>	
<b>Snowmobile Trail Grants</b>			
Mat-Su Trail Signing	\$ 10,557	\$ 10,557	
Moose Range Trails	<del>\$ 26,705</del>	\$ -	
Be Snowmobile Safe (NAOI)	<del>\$ 15,000</del>	\$ -	
Snowmobile Helmet Incentive (NAOI)	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	Director Decision

Iron Dog Safety Expo	<del>\$ 24,688</del>	\$ 15,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 91,950</b>	<b>\$ 40,557</b>

**Program Administration**

Statewide Program Administration	\$ 13,000	\$ 18,000
Southcentral Grooming Administration	Estimate \$ 11,000	\$ 11,000
Interior Grooming Administration	Estimate \$ 1,000	\$ 1,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 25,000</b>	<b>\$ 30,000</b>

<b>GRAND TOTAL FUNDS REQUESTED</b>	<b>\$ 351,350</b>	<b>\$ 268,000</b>	<b>PROGRAM FUNDS APPROPRIATED</b>
<b>PROGRAM FUNDING AVAILABLE</b>	<b>\$ 282,233</b>		
<b>DEFICIT</b>	<b>\$ 69,117</b>	<b>\$ 24,000</b>	<b>PRUDENT RESERVE FUNDS APPROPRIATED</b>

<b>PROGRAM FUNDS FY 2009/10</b>	
\$ 236,000	Legislatively Transferred Funds
\$ 46,233	Rec Trail Transferred Funds
\$ 282,233	<b>TOTAL</b>
\$ 268,000	<b>Board Appropriated Funds 2009/10</b>
\$ 14,233	<b>Remaining Funds</b>

**\$ 292,000 TOTAL FUNDS APPROPRIATED 2009 / 2010**

<b>FUNDING BREAKDOWN</b>	
\$ 221,443	Grooming Costs
\$ 40,557	Grant Costs
\$ 30,000	Admin Costs
\$ 292,000	<b>Total</b>

<b>PRUDENT RESERVE FUNDS</b>	
\$ 113,269	Rollover (Older RTP Funds Remaining)
\$ 14,233	Remaining Program Funds 2009/10
\$ 15,000	Used 2009 / 2010 Safety Ed Grant
\$ 5,000	Used for Yukon Quest Grooming
\$ 4,000	Used for Chugach State Park Grooming
\$ 103,502	<b>Prudent Reserve Remaining</b>



## Snowmobile Trail Grant Program - 2009/10

			Scores												
Ref. #	Project Name	Submitted by	M.W.	J.G.	B.L.	M.Y.	A.M.	C.H.	E.M.	J.A.	O.W.	A.K.	S.N.	B.L.	Avg
1	Mat-Su Borough Trail Marking and Signing II	Matanuska-Susitna Borough	97	92	98	-	-	75	99	91	-	86	-	-	92
2	Moose Range Trails	Mat-Su Trails Council Inc.	68	30	79	-	-	56	89	89	-	79	-	-	58
3	Be Snowmobile Safe	North American Outdoor Institute	36	32	81	-	-	81	79	93	-	97	-	-	67
4	Snowmobile Helmet Safety Incentive	North American Outdoor Institute	43	43	82	-	-	86	82	88	-	97	-	-	71
5	Iron Dog Safety Expo	Iron Dog, Inc.	86	52	83	-	-	81	92	98	-	98	-	-	82
SnowTRAC Board												DNR Staff			

## SnowTRAC Meeting August 25, 2008

### Attendees:

Bill Luck	Andy Morrison	Eric Morris	Frank Woods
Greg Barclay	Joe Gauna	Mark Wilke	Cindy Hite
Margaret Brodie	Steve Neel	Olga Lotosh	Teri Zell
Wayne Biessel	Neil Shishido	Howard Davis	John Scudder
Ben Barclay	Bill Luth	Linda Byrd (Note taker)	

Luck: 8:30am Opened meeting, introductions made, ask for any additions to agenda

Gauna: The Oxygen & Octane Trade Show-good idea for SnowTRAC and/or DNR have booth over weekend

Hite: Great way to get out information about why requesting higher registration fees, gives the people the opportunity to understand and think about the increase

Wilke: Believe the booth has been done before

Brodie: Yes, will need new maps updated and done

Luck: I will be there to represent State Parks if any of you want to join

Luth: What are the dates?

Hite: Around October 13<sup>th</sup>, I will check and let you know

Luck: Need to elect a Chair and Co-Chair

Gauna: Nominate Mark Wilke for Chair

Luth: Second the motion

Wilke: I like working in the background more, this position needs a firm hand, I can perform this, will require order

Gauna: Concur, share and timer

Woods: All in favor of Mark Wilke

**MARK WILKE ELECTED CHAIR BY UNANIMOUS VOTE**

Wilke; Now for the Co-Chair

Gauna: Greg Barclay has a long history with SnowTRAC, I nominate him

Woods: Second the motion

Barclay: Love to work with Mark, my concern is securing time, I think someone in Anchorage area best to work with DNR

Woods: We need the background you to have, will work together

Hite: Agree with Greg, Anchorage person may be best, nominate Joe Gauna

Luth: Second

Wilke: Agree on Anchorage area, pays off

Morrison: It is a position that I would be interested in the future but Joe will be great now

Barclay: Withdraw nomination

Wilke: Vote now, all in favor of Joe Gauna for Co-Chair

**JOE GAUNA ELECTED CO-CHAIR BY UNANIMOUS VOTE**

Luck: Discuss grooming pool map, will get updated, hope to put on web, I currently have 2 interns mapping the trails

Luth: I have maps of our area if anyone wants one

Luck: Regarding land status I am working with Neil Shishido on this, this had fell through the cracks before

Wilke: Proposal for mapping

Luck: Funded for 2 years

Wilke: Separate appropriation

Luck: No, inventory assessment, locate where trails are and if trespassing will need to be rerouted

Woods: So will have map of all trails

Brodie: For all of DNR, a much wider scope

Morrison: Winter trails change, need to really work on this

Luck: You're right

Luth: Yes, does change anywhere from 3 to 400 feet

Wilke: Question if grant to GPS a trail to go to State mapping, is it part of public record

Shishido: On undesignated State plan or within 50 feet can do with hand held, if close to private land need a surveyor

Wilke: My data where to go

Luck: Question adopt your mapping data as State

Wilke: Yes

Brodie: No, has to be official by State not trail data base, but will put in trails file

Luck: If State adopts our survey Neil gets involved with it

Luth: Hand held done by use and given to Mat-Su, they gave to State and they gave to surveyors, we started and the State finished it

Morrison: Two interns doing could the current mapping could move to snow mobile trails this winter

Luck: Could, people already out there using hand held can give data input

Morrison: Each group in grooming pool

Luck: Yes

Gauna: State minimal mapping standards published to get trail memorialized

Luth: Surveyors need to advise locals so they can go out with them

Gauna: Yes

Shishido: Will find standards and provide to Bill to Email to the board

Gauna: Add to Andy's comment question who in the field, your Rangers

Luck: Interns currently how it is setup, may need to setup a subcommittee for this

Brodie: Grant for State Parks will have a public hearing, make sure you attend

Wilke: Need to get winter trails GPS and understood, need laying for them as well as the summer trails, like to see a list that State Parks is proposing for trails

Luck: I would like to see it done

Morrison: Question if State Trails plan includes snow machine trails

Luck: Not yet, will develop for this

Luth: Wayne Biessel has a plan to connect the trails

Wilke: Juneau has a comprehensive plan

Luck: Right, each area needs to talk to Park Superintendent

Morrison: BLM holds a lot, DNR coordinates with them, big disconnect between mushing and snow machine trails

Wilke: Turn over to Bill Luck for applications

Luck: Gave my assessment to applications with the handout, my recommendations and yours will be given to the Director, we can fund as many as we want but need to save for grooming pool

Wilke: Go through projects, communicate on them, question to Margaret if there is cap on individual grant

Brodie: Caps have been removed because cost has gone up

Wilke: Question where has to go, safety, education, etc; have \$240,000 need to use 5% on safety and education

Brodie: Minimal need to allocate is 5%

Woods: Talk about increase

Wilke: To cover the new people, if project not a fit for SnowTRAC can present to ORTAB to consider

Luck: Yes, that is why the application form mirror each other

Wilke: Can fund, not fund, put to grooming pool or revise to ORTAB

Barclay: Need to add can fund at a different level

Morrison: Diversified falls in having enough grants, for non-motorized ORTAB needs to think more year round

Wilke: Question grooming project put off to ORTAB

Luck & Brodie: No

Morrison: ORTAB frustration same, need more money to do project

Brodie: Part of grooming pool as part of ORTAB

Luck: If all ORTAB funds not used it is put into the grooming pool

Wilke: Agree, marriage of two needs to happen

Barclay: On these applications we are assuming legal land access is ok, in the pass if there was a question about this we threw in the garbage

Luck: I do go through that information, you just do not see it, and if requirements not met you do not get the application. A grey area when waiting on legal status

Gauna: Be very rigid on legal access

Luck: I am communicating with the ones you have, going back and forth on working on legal access

Brodie: We do not sign grant unless 100% proof of legal access

Wilke: So we approve grant contingent on approved legal access

Woods: I have a problem with that

Gauna: I feel like we are extending the deadline

Luck: Showing flexibility, communicating with the applicant, need to be open about this, see the big picture, some projects worthy enough to wait on legal access

Barclay: If not legal come back next year

Hite: If not all legal why not advise to apply the next year

Wilke: Hold till speak to this further doing grants discussion, Ben Barclay is present to answer questions about this grant application

Gauna: Need legal access by deadline

Luck: Applications have been approved before pending providing legal access, we will not give the grant before we receive approved legal access

Wilke: Maybe that is the answer, look at and discuss, let State deal with approval and legal access

**AT THIS POINT GRANT APPLICATIONS REVIEWS WERE CONDUCTED, SEE ALL NOTES UNDER SnowTRAC COMMENTS FOR EACH PROJECT SHOWN ON ATTACHMENT I**

**AFTER GRANT APPLICATIONS REVIEWS WERE COMPLETED MEETING WAS DIRECTED TO DISCUSSION REGARDING GROOMING POOL, NOTES FOLLOW**

Wilke: Now let's talk about grooming pool

Gauna: Rotation of the trails for grooming

Brodie: Done in all regions, not rotated anymore

Barclay: Need more expansion in grooming pool

Gauna: If reduce will run into problem, need to be consistent for complete season, question looking at the reduction of number of miles this year

Hite: As a new member how does the grooming pool work

Zell: Request are accepted and approved, cost is based on what groomers charge, some cost more than others, do move around funds, some areas get hit with more snow than others

Morrison: Give responsibility to the State, can move monies as needed

Gauna: If money start to run out someone will have to make decision what get done, do we let the State do this

Biessel: Contractual usage may void the great astonishing volunteer base we currently have, they do a great job, signage is needed, consistent marking of trails, like to see dedicated amount of money set aside for signage, the challenge of grants is the legal land access, need consistency of maps, need more of them and updated, like to see people recognized for the work they do perhaps on the signage, State

needs to monitor if trails are being maintained and use of equipment, something we have not enforced but need to start is proof of insurance

- Hite: On the insurance question if can pool through State to get cheaper rates
- Scudder: Requiring insurance will kill the clubs
- Morrison: What level of insurance are we talking about
- Zell: \$300,000 insurance
- Gauna: Five years ago could not locate umbrella insurance to this, may have changed
- Woods: Underwriters stay away from this
- Brodie: Need to research this, question to contract out-less for the dollars
- Morrison: Liability insurance contingent on Workmen Compensation
- Barclay: If we purchase the equipment (State) is this the case
- Brodie: State insures the equipment, not the rider
- Wilke: Need clarification on this, if I am grooming a trail paid out of a grant or riding on a State snow mobile
- Brodie: Equipment covered, rider is not
- Morrison: Propose proof of insurance needed this year
- Biessel: Can't authorize at this time, need to check on this with Risk Management and get back to you
- Luth: Coverage under WACO and rule I have set for my people is if see another person on the trail, they stop and let that person pass then they continue
- Gauna: Question time to make motion to pursue allocation for different area of the state
- Woods: Motion to allocate \$34,000 to general grant projects, \$200,000 to grooming pool, \$6,000 for signage
- Gauna: Second the motion
- Morrison: Grooming and signage standards out there
- Gauna: Based on signage rules setup deadlines to order signs
- Biessel: Yes
- Wilke: Call for vote on motion to allocate \$34,000 to general grant projects, \$200,000 to grooming pool, \$6,000 for signage
- MOTION PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE**
- Barclay: Motion to use grooming pool funds and split out to areas that used last year, based on actual use of the fund, with option to move funds, if needed, by the State
- Gauna: Second that motion (to State employees- because you have full flexibility do we need to allocate)
- Wilke: Any areas that did not get funds
- Zell: Homer Snomads
- Wilke: Do we need to add or take any off list
- Gauna: What is current procedure to get grooming
- Biessel: Build increase fuel cost
- Gauna: Not talking about that, how to get information out to clubs
- Luck: I thought we already discussed that
- Gauna: So at point to designate trails, amount of funds, how often, now is the time to do this, money is going to run out, need to do something now
- Wilke: Still a test, have not gelled to that point yet, meeting once a year will not handle this
- Zell: Based on number of users, standard fee-currently different amounts
- Gauna: Will not solve this today but State Parks need to start work on this, who does count of users
- Zell: Host and/or Rangers in park does count and Parks uses highest count of the day
- Morrison: In past based on registration, consider sticking with this
- Biessel: Another variable is if a good job is done, if so will get funded again, if will not get funded again
- Wilke: Call questions, time to vote on the motion to use grooming pool funds and split out to areas that used last year, based on actual use of the fund, with option to move funds, if needed, by the State
- 7 YES, 1 NO, MOTION PASSED**
- Brodie: One to two years left for grooming pool, maybe only one unless gas goes down, you need to

augment with ORTAB or out right ask the State for general funding

Gauna: Who would submit request to ORTAB for this funding to occur

Wilke: Who designates money to ORTAB/SnowTRAC

Brodie: ORTAB is federally funded and must be distributed

Barclay: Can we request money from ORTAB

Brodie: Yes, you can

Wilke: Question raise the registration fee

Morrison: Motion to raise the state registration fee to \$25 every 2 years with option to reduce if legislative does not approve allocation to SnowTRAC

Barclay: Second the motion

Gauna: Current funding = point of sale registration by legislative, DNR goes to DMV to get number of registration and multiplies by \$5.00, this is the amount DNR request for SnowTRAC if legislative approves this, Increase could be done in legislative session if a push such as letter, calls, etc. put in action, has to be legislative that makes the change

Wilke: 12% Admin Fee to State Parks

Woods: Ask for increase and ask for appropriate increase

Gauna: Reason for increase is the intend to respond to DNR request as stated now

Woods: Language would be the same with the increase

Barclay: People in my area can see a need for, best need is for grooming pool not more grants

Hite: Reason to get out to shows to explain this to public

Scudder: Post sure to question, 600 members in my club and I have mentioned it, they were ok with \$10 to \$15 per year but they buckled at \$25 per year, Lower 48 members pay much higher fees

Morrison: Question what is the appropriate amount

Gauna: Go for \$20 a year, this is a first step for the State Groomers Program, good trail connections

Scudder: Fairbanks and Western Alaska do not see where money is going to, got to get out there and show them what it does for them, may even incorporate ATV

Wilke: Discuss safety program out of this, this pool of money has that opportunity

Morrison: Ideas on the \$20.00

Woods: Point of sale and re-registration \$20.00 a year

Wilke: Question 2<sup>nd</sup> part of motion contingent on legislative transferring all money in budget request, question decrease if not allocated to SnowTRAC

Barclay: Can not give a penalty to the people who you are asking for what you want

Morrison: Right, amend motion to increase registration fee to \$40.00 every 2 years contingent that money is allocated to DNR when ask for budget for SnowTRAC and grooming pool projects

Gauna: Second the motion and it will take a lot of work

Wilke: Take a vote on motion to increase registration fee to \$40.00 every 2 years contingent that money is allocated to DNR when ask for budget for SnowTRAC and grooming pool projects

**MOTION PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE**

Barclay: How do we do this

Wilke: Need a copy of document of where we are at now for registration fees

Luck: Will look for original registration resolution

Gauna: I will look on finding information, was during Tony Knowles era

Zell: Can send you some examples from Mat-Su Advisory Board

Luck: Give me a date

Wilke: Next 60 days

Luck: Will get as fast I can

Barclay: Find a Legislator to help us

Gauna: Charlie Huggins will be good, I will try to talk to him but it is up to all of us to get with their legislative members for sponsors

Wilke: I will work on, figure out Char of Senate Finance to contact on this, I would like to do this but work at remote worksite, my time is limited

- Luck: Last conversation with James King he advised needs to be SnowTRAC to carry the torch
- Wilke: Go home and think how well do you know your Legislators, if you just go in to talk to them they will advise you to put it in writing
- Hite: Email is good, more and more is being done this way
- Gauna: Question dates for Oxygen Octane Trail Show
- Hite: October 17<sup>th</sup> in the evening starting at 5 or 6 pm to 8 or 9pm and October 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> from 10am to 4 or 5 pm, I will get the exact times and let everyone know
- Gauna: ASA will sponsor DNR
- Hite: Need booth with big sign about raising registration fees to get people to stop and get literature and to talk to us about it
- Luck: A bulletin board with pictures of what has been done
- Morrison: That is good and need SnowTRAC Mission, what the funds for – safety programs, grooming trails, etc.
- Wilke: ASA and Anchorage Snowmobile Club will they support
- Gauna: Get ideas and send to Bill to put in process as they come up
- Biessel: Groups work hard on NS quarter (Big Lake & Denali State Lake), bringing trails together by February of 2009 connecting whole section, groups got together with lots of energy to work on this, groups working to identify trails, think big, make statewide system{Passed around examples of signage}, on the safety program recommend throw out some request to groups to get someone to do this, there are lots of groups out there that would grab the chance to do this
- Wilke: Adjourned meeting

## 1. Willow Winter Trail Maintenance Project

- **Willow Trails Committee**
- \$16,850 (requested) / \$22,885 (match) / \$39,735 (total)
- 100 miles of snow machine trail to be maintained and signed
- 80 miles of trail to be groomed (through volunteer labor)
- 5 kiosks to be updated and maintained
- Trails located on Mat-Su Borough and State land; letters of non-objection from private property owners.
  
- **PROS**
  - a. Excellent grant history, strong commitment from applicant.
  - b. Supported by WACO, Mat-Su Borough, Iron Dog, and State Parks.
  - c. Included in local management plan.
  - d. Included letters of non-objection from property owners and some quotes for equipment.
  - e. Many volunteer hours provided through match.
  
- **CONS**
  - a. Project covers 100 miles of trail; difficult to determine land status of entire route through maps that are provided (-2pts)
  - b. Doesn't address ADA (-2pts)
  - c. Could provide better cost breakdown for signs (-1pt)
  - d. Unsure if some of the grooming wages will be covered through grooming pool??? Applicant says that all grooming is volunteer, but includes grooming in project description.

**Project Description:** This two-year project seeks funding to groom, sign and maintain approximately 100 miles of winter trails and trailheads within the West Gateway Trail System. It will require the purchase of a four-stroke snowmachine and grooming equipment, the weekly grooming of trails, posting of directional and safety signs to be placed along the trails, and implementation of safety and educational materials at kiosks.

### SnowTRAC Comments:

- Woods: Bring to table  
 Gauna: Second the motion  
 Luth: Not groom on any land, no money involved, use volunteers  
 Barclay: Question dollars for machine in budget  
 Luth: Three quotes, can trade in after 1 year to get a new one for the old one  
 Barclay: For 5 years belong to State, not yours to trade in  
 Wilke: Margaret, do we allow trade in  
 Brodie: If you approve, the Board will need to track the State will not  
 Morris: If trade in do you keep the same tag or get a new one  
 Brodie: Either way-new or present tag  
 Luth: Extended warranty 6 to 6 years  
 Morrison: Question the need to replace each year  
 Luth: Lot of usage, they wear out



Barclay: Question why not use a bigger machine  
 Luth: Eight feet wide on trails, some maybe six  
 Morris: Private donations used for this  
 Luth: Private match funding used for item/project not funded  
 Morris: Understand, grant is for the snow machine  
 Luth: Repairs for equipment; 4,000 miles yearly per unit  
 Woods: Not enough to do project, spending public funds , snow machine only might skate through  
 Luth: Spread money around a little more  
 Woods: Right and conflict of interest, hands over going out to real project, lower bids on other requests, can not negotiation on grant  
 Gauna: Do not finance snow machine, move to ORTAB  
 Hite: Question about land and creek, five year ending this year letter for permission  
 Luck: Winter trail  
 Luth: Yes, going for new letter  
 Hite: Two year grant, timelines does not fit in  
 Luth: Cleaning summer and fall  
 Hite: Dates flex  
 Wilke: The timelines do not always fix perfectly, delays, project extended, etc.  
 Morrison: Can not read into the timelines too much, question move to ORTAB will service SnowTRAC better to fund  
 Wilke: Trade in not a bad idea, used for grooming will suffice, typical SnowTRAC grant, have funded grants for snow machines in the past  
 Morrison: Move to fund at requested rate, worth giving it a try, good test model  
 Gauna: Motion to move to ORTAB  
 Barclay: Only buy so many snow machines, Pros for different equipment lasting longer  
 Gauna: Concur with what Greg is saying, it is not impossible to use the heavier equipment just difficult  
 Davis: Funds from TRAC and SnowTRAC  
 Hite: Question professionals, SnowTRAC into smaller focus of grooming trails  
 Wilke: Inventing as go, discussion closed, vote taken on motion to move project to ORTAB  
**3 YES, 4 NO, 1 ABSTAINED MOTION FAILED**  
 Wilke: Opportunity to change scores (NONE CHANGED)  
 Guana: Do not want to see money spent on snowmobile, motion to fund all but snowmobile  
 Wilke: Open discussion  
 Woods: Snowmobile why applied for grant, best use of funds for where it is at  
 Morrison: Only fund the grooming not purchase of equipment, could put to grooming pool  
 Gauna: That is fine, not approve at all, remove from list to present to Wayne Biessel  
 Luck: Can purchase equipment in grant  
 Morris: Still a need to be able to purchase equipment  
 Brodie: Any machine purchase we get free grooming  
 Wilke: Big grooming, large and small, snowmobiles needed but in some area large grooming appropriate, blanket no snowmobiles, not sure right way to go  
 Gauna: Question how work, I am sure some people use these machines to haul freight and get paid for it, we are paying them  
 Biessel: Can not police all equipment  
 Scudder: Hire contractors, more control  
 Morris: Motion to vote to remove snowmobile purchase from grant  
**2 YES, 2 NO MOTION FAILED**  
 Hite: Make snowmobile \$12,000  
 Morris: Second motion  
 Gauna: Do not buy snowmobile  
 Morrison: Labor rider/volunteer hours-need insurance, if use small contractor could be One man business, do

not need this

Wilke: Vote to motion to approve purchase of snowmobile cap at \$12,000

**5 YES, 1 NO, 2 ABSTAINED, MOTION PASSED**

Woods: Motion to fund \$14,350 for grant

Hite: Second motion

**4 YES, 2 NO, 2 ABSTAINED , MOTION PASSED**

Gauna: Do not like idea of purchasing snowmobiles, need use larger equipment, contractors

Wilke: Let the notes show that Joe Gauna strongly opposes any snowmobile purchases for grooming purposes, feel should be contracted out.

**SnowTRAC Approval (#'s): 6 YES    1 NO    1 ABSTAINED**

## 2. Deception Area Highland Trails/ Lloyds Historic Trapline Trail Surveying Project

- **Willow Trails Committee**
- \$8,250 (requested) / \$3,400 (match) / \$11,650 (total)
- 75 miles of trail to be surveyed
- Land status to be determined; some trails are known to be located on Mat-Su Borough and State land.
  
- **PROS**
  - a. Excellent grant history, strong commitment from applicant.
  - b. Supported by WACO, Mat-Su Borough, ASSA, and Willow Dog Musers.
  - c. Included in local management plan.
  - d. Survey work will help to protect future use of recreational trails.
  
- **CONS**
  - a. Good project but could have been amended to RTP 2008, Haessler Norris trail survey project (-2pts)
  - b. Maps are a bit confusing; hard to discern 75 miles of trail from what is shown (catch-22) (-2pts)
  - c. No competitive quotes for survey (-2pts)
  - d. Can only charge \$19.51 for guide's volunteer service (-2pt)
  - e. Incomplete budget (-1pt)
  - f. No mention ADA benefit (-2pt)
  - g. Does not provide new recreational activity, but will potentially protect (-1pt)

**Project Description:** The purpose of this project is to have the Deception Area Highland Trails / Lloyds Historic Trapline Trail, which are part of the Haessler-Norris Winter Trail System, referenced in the Willow Area Trail Plan, to be surveyed with the State's Minimum Mapping Standards. This survey will then be used in the near future to determine land status and to start the easement designation/acquisition process for the trail system.

### **SnowTRAC Comments:**

Morrison: Motion to fund  
 Morris: Second motion  
 Wilke: Question land owners  
 Luck: To be determined  
 Wilke: Survey question trespassing on private land  
 Gauna: Question where bids for surveyor work, only one quote  
 Woods: This is backwards, need to go to Borough first to get letter to access  
 Gauna: GPS survey, then research, then surveyors, then easement, provide land status before get a grant  
 Luck: ORTAB did approve  
 Shishido: Addition of trail to ORTAB approval  
 Morrison: Could have been done together  
 Wilke: Question determine land status without surveyor, I have  
 Gauna: I have too  
 Shishido: Can get sticky, beneficial to have surveyors to do it  
 Luck: Question who you recommend to do it

Woods: Anyone beside us, these guys are clueless  
Scudder: Same problem in Chugach State, went to Mining, Land and Water and got information, illegal survey, grant is denied, information is out there, got to have information  
Woods: Need to do their homework  
Scudder: Yes, do the work and compare if private move over, if want to access private go to the PIC and get information  
Wilke: Exactly what we do not have, permission to go on public land  
Morrison: ORTAB was a different conservation, public access limit want to get laid down, if had shut out 100 miles trails lost, surveyor is local and hope will get permission  
Luth: West and South done by ORTAB, this is up by Hatcher Pass area, this North and East  
Brodie: Question one project amend to ORTAB  
Gauna: Motion to move to ORTAB  
Barclay: Second motion  
Hite: I believe in this project, need trails, no guarantee ORTAB will approve  
Gauna: Understand, but ORTAB already approved  
Woods: Piggyback ORTAB  
Morrison: Did not pass over whelming in ORTAB, could be more funding, but may be delayed  
Wilke: Vote to move to ORTAB  
**3 YES, 2 NO, 3 ABSTAINED, MOTION PASSED**

**SnowTRAC Approval (#'s): n/a YES      n/a NO -- (VOTED TO MOVE TO ORTAB)**

### 3. Southfork Montana Creek Trail Grooming

- **Montana Creek Motor Musers**
- \$24,000 (requested) / \$8,000 (match) / \$32,000 (total)
- 10 miles of trail to be maintained and groomed
- 7 miles of trail to be signed
- Private land owner: CIRI Corporation; Public: Mat-Su Borough and State land
  
- **PROS**
  - a. 15 letters of support from local residents; strong support.
  - b. Good map documentation.
  - c. Previously supported by Mat-Su Borough.
  - d. Addresses safety concerns from public.
  - e. Previously performed well with same grant application.
  
- **CONS**
  - a. Could provide more info on grooming and signage (-2pts)
  - b. Could provide better description of budget (-3pts)
  - c. No competitive quotes for equipment purchase (-2pts)
  - d. Does not necessarily create a new recreational opportunity – maintains it (-2pt)
  - e. Acknowledges ADA but does not improve access (-1pt)
  - f. No resolution of support or language supporting use in land management plans (-5pts)
  - g. Sounds as though the applicant already has the equipment they need to complete the work – looking to replace it, or double the grooming capability

**Project Description:** Grant funds will be used to purchase two wide-track snowmachines (brand TBD) to tow groomers on the Southfork Montana Creek Trail system. The applicant organization will be able to pull 4 groomers and maintain the trail in an expeditious manner (one trip up and back). This trail provides access to a vast area of alpine riding between Montana Creek and Sheep Creek.

#### **SnowTRAC Comments:**

- Barclay: Motion to fund  
 Hite: Second motion
- B. Barclay: Legal access, 30 year trail, legal 100 feet right of way CIRI to Montana Creek, no problem with us using trail, not sure want to approve legal access, have been grooming for public use
- Wilke: Right of way on road bed, trail does not follow bed
- B. Barclay: Establish access based on road bed and public always using
- Barclay: State ok legal access
- Luck: No approval of legal access
- Gauna: If want grooming money need to go to grooming pool
- Luth: With snowmobiles out earlier
- B. Barclay: Trail not suitable for larger equipment
- Woods: Large will not work in Juneau, Dillingham, etc.
- Gauna: Question get into legal matter, snow machine to ORTAB
- Brodie: Can not count on ORTAB, snow machine is not there
- Gauna: If no legal access deny

- Morrison: Snowmobile for grooming, may go to backside with ORTAB
- B. Barclay: Right of way along trail
- Wilke: State question that, map does not show  
**AT THIS POINT MAJOR GENERAL DISCUSSION ABOUT LEGAL ACCESS, EASEMENT WITH BILL AND MARGARGET ASSURING THAT IF ANY GRANT APPROVED PENDING LEGAL ACCESS IT WOULD NOT BE FUNDED UNTIL PROOF OF LEGAL ACCESS RECEIVED**
- Gauna: Question bids for hardware, requirements call for it
- Luth: 10 miles of trail, question why 2 snowmobiles
- B. Barclay: Use 3 and 4 at a time
- Wilke: Question \$1500 Admin fee
- B. Barclay: No Admin person, used to buy gas, repairs, etc.
- Gauna: Perfect example of commercial operator, 8 feet wide trail
- Luth: 10 miles of trail, commercial operator more expensive
- Wilke: Anyone want to change scores (NONE CHANGED)
- Guana: Do not want to see money spent on snowmobile, motion to fund all but snowmobile
- Wilke: Open discussion
- Woods: Snowmobile why applied for grant, best use of funds for where it is at
- Morrison: Only fund the grooming not purchase of equipment, could put to grooming pool
- Gauna: That is fine, not approve at all, remove from list to present to Wayne Biessel
- Luck: Can purchase equipment in grant
- Morris: Still a need to be able to purchase equipment
- Brodie: Any machine purchase we get free grooming
- Morris: Modify to \$12,000 for one machine in place of two
- Morrison: I agree
- Luth: Agree cut in half, only 10 miles of trails
- Hite: Cut to ½ of \$2250, get rid of Admin
- Morris: Amend motion to cut to \$1125 for one snow machine
- Wilke: Take vote  
**6 YES, 1 NO, 1 ABSTAINED, MOTION PASSED**

**SnowTRAC Approval (#'s): 5 YES      3 NO**

**4. Tesoro Iron Dog Safety Expo**

(Safety and Education Project)

- **Iron Dog, Inc.**
- \$11,090 (requested) / \$7,027 (match) / \$18,117 (total)
- Funding to pay for Wasilla Sports Complex rental, equipment, advertisement, and project coordination
  
- **PROS**
  - a. Supported by the ASSA and NAOI, Mayor of Wasilla, Arctic Cat, Polaris and Ski-Doo.
  - b. Directly addresses safety concerns for snowmachiners.
  - c. Previously performed well with same grant application.
  - d. Provides safety equipment to participants who take safety quiz.
  - e. Event has performed well in the past.
  
- **CONS**
  - a. Applicant does not provide much detail on educational programs; minimal effort (-10pts)
  - b. No quotes or bids for contracts or equipment to be purchases (-2pts)
  - c. Thinnest application I have seen. For the value of the EXPO, the applicant could provide more information on events and training programs, schedule of events, etc. (-5pts).
  - d. Line quote from SCORP, but vague (-2pts)

**Project Description:** Project funds will be used to provide a free public EXPO that promotes snowmobile and outdoor education through presentations, public safety seminars, displays for industry vendors and distribution stands for educational brochures. The EXPO will be held January 31, 2009 at the Wasilla Sports Complex from 10:00am to 2:00pm.

**SnowTRAC Comments:**

Wilke: Move to entertain  
 Gauna: Second motion  
 Barclay: Call the question  
 Woods: Alaska Snowmobile Safety Book, question get these for free  
 Hite: Sold to user, part of match  
 Gauna: ASA gives to anyone that wants them  
 Woods: Question funding of the Iron Dog Safety Check, question or job, question State for public funds  
 Morrison: Iron Dog is profit organization  
 Wilke: Admin fee is extraordinary  
 Gauna: Has anyone every been to this event  
 Neel: Went to event in March, I have never written a snow machine, lot of information, lot of machines on display, interesting  
 Luth: It is advertising for every snowmobile seller or anyone that wants to put a booth there  
 Gauna: Iron Dog sled inspecting done there, large turnout, lot of safety information given out, riders give information out, take the time to talk to people, this is a plus

Morris: Amend to cut to \$8306, eliminate all Admin Svc

Woods: Second motion

Wilke: Take vote

**7 YES, 1 ABSTAINED, MOTION PASSED**

**SnowTRAC Approval (#'s): 7 YES    1 NO**



## 5. Be Snow Smart – Hands-on Training (Safety and Education Project)

- **North America Outdoor Institute**
- \$15,000 (requested) / \$15,000 (match) / \$30,000 (total)
- Funding to pay for marketing and media, instructional resources, instructors and support staff.
- Funding will be allocated for “six community and school presentations” (unsure if this means 6 or 12??? assuming 6).
  
- **PROS**
  - a. Provides programs to areas that have been affected by avalanche or snowmachine related deaths.
  - b. Strong public and governmental support.
  - c. Directly addresses safety concerns for snowmachiners.
  - d. Provides samples of learning materials within application and adequately portrays distribution plan.
  - e. Previously performed well with same grant application.
  - f. Event has performed well in the past.
  - g. 2 resolutions of support.
  
- **CONS**
  - a. No quotes or bids for contracts or equipment to be purchases; expenditures are not adequately justified (-6pts)
  - b. Says that project is consistent with land management plans (SCORP) but provides no language – proof (-2pts)

**Project Description:** Project funds will be used to provide hands-on, interactive training by professional outdoor safety educators on avalanche awareness and safe winter travel. This program has been crafted for snowmobile riders. In combination with the helmet safety program, participants will have the opportunity to purchase a Snell/DOT snowmobile helmet at significant discount following the completion of a short comprehension demonstration (quiz).

### SnowTRAC Comments:

- Wilke: Motion to entertain  
 Luth: Second the motion  
 Woods: This group consistently padding Admin account, fishing for more dollars to operate  
 Gauna: I’m with you  
 Barclay: Same, also has other 3 applications wanted to throw them out  
 Luck: Feel they did all 3 to cover bases  
 Wilke: Asking for classes may never have  
 Woods: Letter of support is from 2004  
 Luth: Something for them, people from my area go to these classes and hear good feedback, give it that  
 Hite: Looks like 6 trainings in school, others as expos  
 Luth: Not the way they operate  
 Morrison: No snowmobile safety as of yet such as Boating and Safety, these projects bring in a lot of people, till have a better idea need to give money for safety  
 Brodie: Avalanche safety, troopers give grants also for very same thing, Snow Dynamics got the grant but left the state 6 weeks ago, BART, no more, never did what they said they would do

Wilke: Need good source to do this, nonprofits never work out  
Luth: Question set up more professionally  
Morrison; Been to these classes, people from various organizations attend these classes  
Gauna: Call the question  
Morrison: Motion to fund overall at \$10,000  
**MOTION WAS NOT SECOND, NO DISCUSSION, NO VOTE**

**SnowTRAC Approval (#'s): 3 YES 5 NO**

## 6. Be Snow Smart – Snowmobile Helmets (Safety and Education Project)

- **North America Outdoor Institute**
- \$15,000 (requested) / \$43,500 (match) / \$58,500 (total)
- Funding to pay for snowmachine helmets, instructors and support staff.
  
- **PROS**
  - a. Provides programs to areas that have been affected by avalanche or snowmachine related deaths.
  - b. Strong public and governmental support (Sarah Palin proclamation).
  - c. Directly addresses safety concerns for snowmachiners.
  - d. Previously performed well with same grant application.
  - e. Event has performed well in the past.
  
- **CONS**
  - a. Applicant does not provide samples of learning material within application (-4pts)
  - b. Could have easily added this to the other application – Hands-on Training
  - c. No justifiable breakdown of labor costs; no labor hours listed (-5pts)
  - d. This app. lacks resolution of support (-2pts)
  - e. Says that project is consistent with land management plans (SCORP) but provides no language – proof (-2pts)

**Project Description:** Project funds will be used to provide Snell/DOT helmets to all participants of the Be Snow Smart winter safety awareness program as an incentive for attendance. Participants will be eligible to purchase a new helmet for \$25 following completion of the course and a short comprehension demonstration quiz.

### SnowTRAC Comments:

Wilke: Motion to review  
 Hite: Second the motion  
 Luth: \$25.00 where does it go  
 Brodie: To purchase the helmets  
 Gauna: Not good information  
 Morris: Budget not detailed well  
 Gauna: Look at budget, enough to buy helmets  
 Hite: Helmets and goggles equal what they say on the budget  
 Brodie: Includes shipping  
 Gauna: \$4500 staff equal a lot, multiple donors  
 Wilke: To the State people here, what constitute a quote, screen print in here off the net  
 Guana: I would accept this  
 Wilke: Need quote with 90 days guarantee  
 Brodie: Is an Email with a quote  
 Guana: Has 3 prices on it  
 Morrison: Different types of projects  
 Woods: Not very professional  
 Luck: Modify these grants

Hite: To Margaret, Question any reports on those that are successful, I would like to see a rap sheet for this

Brodie: If not 100% compliance in past you do not see it again

Scudder: We do that, give helmets to people, we get them volunteered and shipping is free from the source, does not cost a dime

Wilke: State fund project taking away money from local dealers

Brodie: State considers non profit as a business, they are buying from dealers and they do ship helmets out to the bush

Shishido: Question 5% to safety and education

Gauna: Isn't that just a guideline

Wilke: Each year looked at differently

**SnowTRAC Approval (#'s): 2 YES 5 NO 1 ABSTAINED**

7. **Be Snow Smart – Avalanche Transceivers** (Safety and Education Project)

- **North America Outdoor Institute**
- \$15,000 (requested) / \$3,776 (match) / \$18,776 (total)
- Funding to pay for two Beacon Basin Stations, 2 signs, a project manager and grant administration.
- **PROS**
  - a. Stations are to be placed in areas that are prone to avalanches and/or have frequent snowmachine related deaths.
  - b. Provides a reminder to snowmachiners the dangers of avalanches and the importance of carrying beacons.
- **CONS**
  - a. Applicant does not give a clear enough description of how the station works (-7pts)
  - b. Budget summary deficient (-4pts)
  - c. Match – don't think that it will take 2 wks to install equipment (-2pts)
  - d. No strong letters of support from snowmachiners (-2pts)
  - e. This app. lacks resolution of support (-2pts)
  - f. Says that project is consistent with land management plans (SCORP) but provides no language – proof (-2pts)
  - g. Significant risk of this being something that snowmachiners will just pass-by or ignore; rather see funding go toward something more interactive.

**Project Description:** Project funds will be used to purchase and install Avalanche Transceiver practice stations to be located in Hatcher Pass (Matanuska Susitna Borough) and Turnagain Arm (Kenai Peninsula Borough) for avalanche safety education purposes. The goal of this project is to provide a training station in high-risk avalanche areas with appropriate signage that professionals believe will serve as a reminder and encourage practice of avalanche safety equipment, thus helping to reduce the risk of preventable accidents caused by human-triggered avalanches.

**SnowTRAC Comments:**

- Wilke: Statistics not correct, I have checked this out (At this point discussion of how many actual snowmobile rider deaths occurred in Alaska due to avalanche)
- Luth: Only one ideal on how to put together, only one quote, I have real problem with set up place, no 24 hours monitoring, they could go and your money is lost
- Morrison: Question public access, set up this, has not ask for people to set up
- Biessel: Question inquiry to support station at Hatcher Pass, target for vandalism, rather see signs, I have not seen anything in writing to do this
- Scudder: We teach these type of classes, do not need check stations, your buddy is check station
- Wilke: Beacons do not work, bury in snow can not see or signal out
- Gauna: Ready to move on
- Wilke: Do not rely on beacons, doing training for them is giving a false sense of security, a danger
- Barclay: Take this off the table completely

**SnowTRAC Approval (#'s): 1 YES    6 NO    1 ABSTAINED**



## Snowmobile Trail Advisory Committee

### SnowTRAC

#### Teleconference

October 7, 2005 at 2:00 p.m.

Staff called teleconference to order @ 2:00 p.m.

#### Members Present:

- JR Malesic, **Chair** - Anchorage
- Ken Lancaster – Soldotna
- Eric Morris – White Mountain
- Marianne Beckham – Anchorage
- Myles Yerkes – Skwentna

- Andy Morrison – Girdwood
- Mark Wilke – Juneau
- Frank Woods - Dillingham

#### Members Absent:

- Greg Barclay - Soldotna

#### Staff Present:

- Margaret Brodie – Admin. & Grants Manager
- Lani Eggertsen-Goff – Grants Administrator

Alaska State Parks Staff outlined that available funding (125K) for continuing the Grooming Pool (GP) that was a pilot program last year. Five park areas were suggested for funding, Anchorage, Mat-Su, Northern, Kenai, Other areas of Alaska. Staff requested the board's recommendations on which areas should be considered for Grooming Pool funding.

Board express concerns of expanding last year's Grooming Pool Pilot Program when current status of trails and funding is uncertain. A main goal of the Grooming Pool is to provide trail connectivity with legal access and trail marking using existing funds.

Last year \$70K was spent in the Mat-Su area alone. Based on a broad-brush analysis, Alaska State Parks staff estimates a cost increase of 20-25 percent, mainly due to increased fuel costs. Staff solicited interest from all five areas and had only received input from Mat-Su, Anchorage and Northern. Last year, the Mat-Su Park Superintendent selected trails to be groomed and the contactors who groomed the trails. Staff stated that State Park superintendents would follow procurement procedures under the Alaska State Park Central Office's direction.

The discussion moved to rates of pay to vendors and non-profits that actually perform the grooming services, having State Park staff implement the GP with or without the Board's close guidance and suggestions that Snowmobile Trail Grant funds should officially be split between trail projects and winter trail grooming.

A motion was made that SnowTRAC continue funding the Grooming Pool program and fund existing GP allocation of funds as follows: \$75K to Anchorage/Mat-Su; \$25K to Fairbanks, \$20K to Kenai; for a total of \$125K Ken Lancaster seconded the motion.

A friendly amendment to the motion was suggested to increase Kenai's allocation to \$25K to make the total funds actually add up to \$125,000. The motion was amended to reflect that.

Discussion on the motion included questions about existing trails and funding trails that haven't been considered by the SnowTRAC grant program, as well as legal access issues. Alaska State Park staff reiterated that DNR, SP superintendents and staff prior to grooming pool funds being used on trails must hammer out all legal access issues. Concerns were voiced about the GP becoming "permanent." The majority of the board pointed out the broad support for the GP concept since the first year was a success.

The motion was voted on, it passed by a vote of seven Yes and one No vote.

JR Malesic was elected unanimously as the board's new chair.

Discussion about the increase in registration fees ensued. There was also discussion of alternative methods to increase revenue to the SnowTRAC program, gas tax was the main alternative suggested.

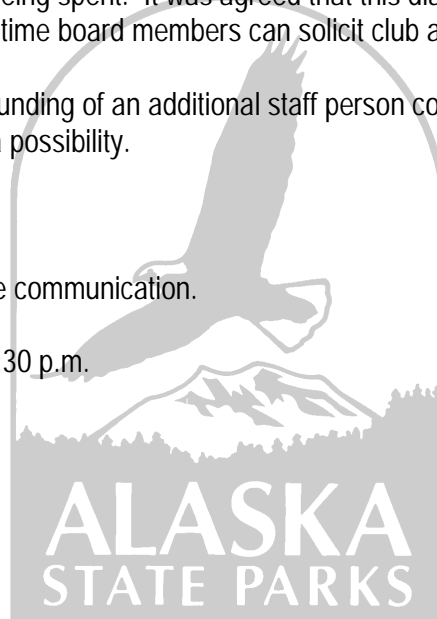
The board discussed ways for members of the public to give the board and State Park staff input on how to increase revenues, a survey at snow machine dealerships was suggested, as well as more signage at trailheads to let folks know where their registration fees are being spent. It was agreed that this dialogue could continue in the future as a board item of business and in the meantime board members can solicit club and user input.

The final question raised was whether funding of an additional staff person could occur if registration fees are increased, staff acknowledged that as a possibility.

Next meeting agenda items:

Elect a Vice-Chair and discuss Ex-Parte communication.

The teleconference was adjourned at 3:30 p.m.





## Snowmobile Trail Advisory Committee

### SnowTRAC

Advisory Board Meeting

September 28 2005

Atwood Building - Anchorage

Staff called meeting to order @ 8:40 a.m.

#### Members Present:

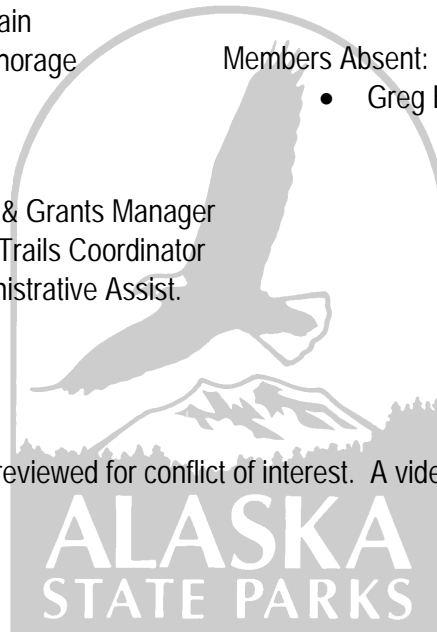
- JR Malesic - Anchorage
- Ken Lancaster – Soldotna
- Eric Morris – White Mountain
- Marianne Beckham – Anchorage
- Myles Yerkes – Skwentna
- Andy Morrison – Girdwood
- Mark Wilke – Juneau
- Frank Woods - Dillingham

#### Members Absent:

- Greg Barclay - Soldotna

#### Staff Present:

- Margaret Brodie – Admin. & Grants Manager
- Samantha Carroll – State Trails Coordinator
- Sandra Cleveland – Administrative Assist.



Introductions were made.

Ethics paperwork was handed out and reviewed for conflict of interest. A video on Ethics Laws was shown. Brief question and answer period.

Break

#### Ineligible grant applications:

Iron Dog – only submitted one copy of the application, 11 were needed. They will try again next time.

Caribou Hills Cabin Hoppers - submitted an incomplete application. No public notice was given on this application. Staff from DNR ML&W provided background on the Caribou Hills Cabin Hoppers and issues they have had with regards to "trespass trails" in terms of trail easement acquisitions and negotiations. There were questions and answers.

North American Outdoor Institute – the application was considered ineligible by the Committee, the application proposed a project that is similar to one that is already funded by the same applicant. Current grantees are not eligible to apply for the same project scope while still administering a current project. Grantees are eligible to apply for different projects.

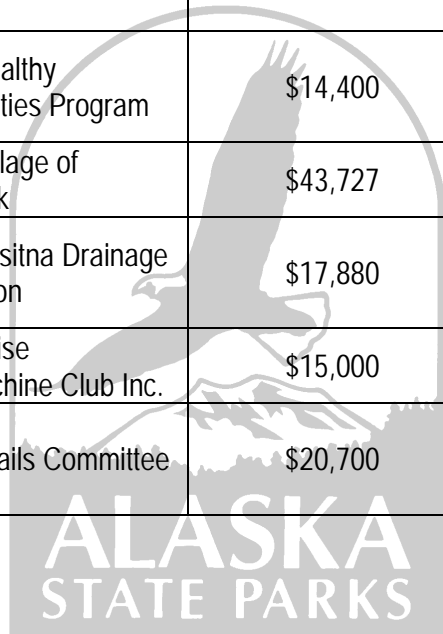
Break



**SnowTRAC’s funding recommendations to the Director of State Parks:**

The maximum amount of a grant is \$50,000. The program receives \$200,000 per year, which is the total funding for the entire program.

Project Title	Applicant	Funds Requested	SnowTRAC Award
Hatcher Pass Snowmobile Trails	DPOR Mat-Su District	\$50,000	Funding through the Grooming Pool for one year
2006 Chugach State Park Snowmobile Trail Maintenance	Anchorage Snowmobile Club	\$8,972	Fund in full
Trapper Creek Trails Winter Grooming & Signing	Alaska Snow Cat	\$15,000	Funding through the Grooming Pool for one year.
Mat-Su Snowmobile Helmet & Safety Program	Valley Healthy Communities Program	\$14,400	Fund in full
Shelter Cabin at Igguagnak	Native Village of Shaktoolik	\$43,727	Funded at \$25,000
Lower Susitna Drainage Area Trail Grooming & Maintenance	Lower Susitna Drainage Association	\$17,880	Not funded
Eureka Trail East to Locate Monuments	Lake Louise Snowmachine Club Inc.	\$15,000	Fund in full
Willow Winter Trails Maintenance Project	Willow Trails Committee	\$20,700	Awarded funds for non-grooming activities & funded through the Grooming Pool for one year.



**Grooming Pool:**

Last year SnowTRAC authorized funding for a Grooming Pool Pilot Program, which was administered through the Mat-Su State Parks office. The pilot was well received throughout the community of the Mat-Su valley and it’s visitors.

The Mat-Su Superintendent spoke on how he administered this program and how he distributed the money.

Discussion on how to distribute funds from the pool.

Public suggested that the state disburse the money for the Grooming Pool.

Park Staff would like to see a one-page application used for the Grooming Pool.

One of the aspects of the grooming pilot was that if the program worked, then the following year funds would be disbursed to other areas of the state. It was suggested that half of the programs funds go into grooming and the other half for maintenance and development grants.

Committee members ask that Staff take on the Grooming Pool task and keep the Committee informed on its progress. Members would like to have this concept in writing.

Staff will put together all the information and have a SnowTRAC teleconference by the end of next week.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:30pm

sjc





**SnowTRAC  
Advisory Board Meeting  
Teleconference**  
May 26th, 2005, 2:00 p.m.  
Atwood Building  
550 W. 7<sup>th</sup> Ave., Ste. 1380  
Anchorage, Alaska

Call into conference center @1:57 p.m.  
Meeting brought to order by Samantha at 2:04 p.m.

**Board Members Present:**

- ◆ Ken Lancaster –Soldotna
- ◆ JR Malesic –Anchorage
- ◆ Eric Morris –White Mountain
- ◆ Andy Morrison –Girdwood/Talkeetna
- ◆ Mark Wilke –Juneau
- ◆ Myles Yerkes –Skwentna

**Staff Present:**

- ◆ Margaret Brodie –Chief, Admin. & Grants
- ◆ Samantha Carroll –Trails Coordinator
- ◆ Dennis Heikes –Mat-Su Superintendent
- ◆ Michaela Phillips –Admin. Clerk II

**Board Members Absent:**

- ◆ Greg Barclay –Soldotna
- ◆ Marianne Beckham –Anchorage
- ◆ Frank Woods –Dillingham

**Welcome**

Introductions of members and staff.

**Snowmobile Trail Grant Procedures**

- Open Application Period.
- Applications reviewed by ASP. Those that meet requirements are sent to SnowTRAC board members to review and score.
- Board members review and score grant applications.
- Board meets. ASP leads scoring procedures during the meeting. Members report scores and discuss **the applications**.
- **Board members report application scores and make funding recommendations to ASP.**
- ASP tallies scores. Ranks applications and awards grants to those within funding parameters.

\*Allot enough time for board members to sufficiently review each application in order to be prepared when the board meets to **report scores for grant applications**.

## Grooming Pool Pilot Update

SnowTRAC approved \$60,000 for the Grooming Pool Pilot. Funds were distributed as grants by the Mat-Su Parks office. Funds were granted to local clubs, organizations and businesses that have been involved in grooming these trails in past years. The process was made easy; Parks solicited for grooming bids, applicants provided proposals, which included trail maps and budgets, funds were then granted. The area office managed the funds to allow for area wide grooming with an emphasis on popular trails. The idea was that ASP would retain the ability to move funds around within the area as needed. A goal of the pilot is to have flexibility with funding, which allows funds to move to areas where there is more snow accumulation.

- Lake Louise received \$4,000. Group paid a local groomer for the initial run. Then went out with their own machines with drags, kept trails in good condition, maintained as needed.
- Willow Trails received \$35,000.
- Big Lake Chamber of Commerce received \$18,000. Paid a local groomer to work with them, done by 3rd week in February.
- Curry Ridge received \$21,000.
- Hatcher Pass received \$19,000.

### PRO

1. System worked when funds not needed in one area were available for transfer to another area with less funding and higher need.
2. Potential for continuous trail system starting in Big Lake and finishing in Petersville.
3. Some trail systems interconnected with grooming in some circumstances.
4. Grooming Pool works with local clubs, organizations and businesses that have been involved in grooming these trails in past years.
5. Pool allows for employment opportunities within the private sector.
6. Formed a partnership with the Borough.
7. Parks office was able to administer due to availability of full-time, year-round staff.

### CON

1. Not enough funds if everyone groomed as much as they wanted to groom.
2. More work for the local ASP office.
3. Not a lot of money available.
4. This year's funding is at a level with insufficient funds to do something in every area.
5. Cities and Boroughs are not contributing.
6. Not always going to have this money unless specifically set aside for a grooming pool out of the grant budget/funds.

## Web Page Development

Board will be providing input on web pages. Web pages will be used for advertising, awarded grants, grant project information, project schedules, contact info, project maps and locations of past grant projects. This will give public awareness as to how registration dollars are being used.

- Sample grants.
- Identify successful grants with all the elements we are looking for.
- Checklist of what exactly is needed to apply.
- Checklist within the grant application for the grantee to complete for themselves and us.

- Have a central location to see grant project locations and project descriptions and progress statewide.
- State website with map of existing legal trails, proposed trails, plans for improvements, etc.
- Generate public interest in trails with information about recreation areas. Not just popular, but less known areas as well.

### **Other Issues Discussed**

- Application time frames.
- Using a consistent grant cycle.
- Applicants know to get their letters and information together before application comes out.
- Land Access is the most important and time-consuming aspect of the application process.
- What do we do in the future for Pilot Programs?
- First in-person meeting.
- SnowTRAC logo.
- Grantee sign requirements.
- Possible continuation of Grooming Pool Pilot Project.
- Grant processes from application to actual grant awards.
- Discussions of how many applicants are expected to apply this year. Last year the grant period was shorter, usually higher, more grants than money available.

### **Next Steps**

- Working on cleaning up application.
- Re-open grant cycle.
- Close application period the end of July. Have month of August to review, like to leave at least two weeks to go over grants.
- Grants are sent out for the board to review and score. Director then reviews recommendations and awards grants.

### **Next Meeting**

- Most of the first day of the in-person meeting is all administrative issues, board business, ethic video, etc.
- Meeting time is available for discussion of applications, since half the board is new next meeting should be a couple days.
- Samantha will send out a packet for training for scoring grant applications.
- **Next meeting date set for late August.**

Meeting convened at 3:21 p.m.



## **SnowTRAC** **Advisory Board Meeting**

January 8th, 2005  
Atwood Building  
550 W. 7<sup>th</sup> Ave., Ste. 602  
Anchorage, Alaska

Chair Marianne Beckham called meeting to order at 9:15a.m. Saturday, January 08, 2005. Quorum present.

### **Board Members Present:**

- ◆ Greg Barclay –Soldotna
- ◆ Marianne Beckham –Anchorage
- ◆ Matt Divens –Fairbanks
- ◆ Bruce Friend –Anchorage
- ◆ Mark Wilke –Juneau
- ◆ Frank Woods –Dillingham

### **Board Members Absent:**

- ◆ Kenton Bloom –Homer
- ◆ Craig Seibert –Trapper Creek

### **Staff Present:**

- ◆ Margaret Brodie –Chief, Admin. & Grants
- ◆ Samantha Carroll –Trails Coordinator
- ◆ Karen Husa –Acct. Tech. I
- ◆ Michaela Phillips –Admin. Clerk II

### **Public Present:**

- ◆ Mike Buck –Valdez Snow Machine Club
- ◆ Jack Mosby –Alaska Trails

### **Welcome**

Chair welcomes all board members and staff to this meeting and thanks all who could attend.

### **Minutes**

Minutes reviewed by board for approval.

Matt **MOVES** to “approve minutes of November 5-6 meeting as presented to the board.”

Greg **SECONDS** the motion.

No objections

Motion passed @ 9:30a.m.

Greg would like an update on ORTAB and SnowTRAC Member and Board information. Will address this issue at 3:45p.m. Staff will prepare and address.

Chair asks for any “conflicts of interest” changes since November meeting. Bruce elected to ORTAB. No “conflicts” at this time.

### **Grant Addendums**

Grant addendums (previously missing information) for grant applications have been provided to the board for review separate from those originally submitted. Staff, while reviewing grants, found a lot of missing information that needed to be included in the grant for adequate consideration by the board. Board members will take time to review these supplements to ensure accurate scoring of all grant applications.

### Electronic & Unsigned Letters of Support

Suggestion that applicants must provide **signed** letters of support. Federal law allows electronic signatures.

### Steps for Motions

1. Motion to "APPROVE Grant"
2. Discussion
3. Vote (no abstaining from vote unless conflict is present). Motion PASSES or FAILS

### Funding

Discussion concerning funding what grants with what \$ (Federal funds, SnowTRAC funds, ORTAB funds, etc.)

Mark questions if they applied to ORTAB?

Margaret states no "double-dipping". Samantha will ensure.

[200K available for SnowTRAC grants.](#)

Frank would like to see access of federal funds before utilizing funds from the state.

Margaret says we need to know what SnowTRAC would like to fund and what ORTAB wants to fund, Federal Gov. may not fund some things, which will fall back to SnowTRAC.

Bruce says we need to be a "safety net".

Margaret reminds the board that the State needs recommendations for approval from the board as we do not know where the Federal Government is with recreational trail funding, and how much the State will receive for Recreational Trail grants.

Mark wants to see all SnowTRAC \$ going to **ONLY** snowmobile grants.

Frank suggests we support what the State wants the Federal Gov. to fund, then if not funded through Federal programs SnowTRAC can support.

Margaret -SnowTRAC approves. ORTAB approves. Director chooses from the approved grant applications and utilizes appropriate funds; all funds will be utilized.

Mark doesn't want to see SnowTRAC grants sent to ORTAB. Basically, some grant applicants are getting a second chance.

Bruce reminds board that a major concern is public image. Show registered users where their money is going, what is being accomplished.

### Conflicts of Interest and Lobbying

Board members with "conflicts of interest" are not allowed to lobby, however they may answer direct questions from voting members.

### Grant Scoring

---

#### [Grant Application #1](#)

Grant Name: 2005 Grooming Season

Grant Applicant: Anchorage Snowmobile Club

Grant Amount: \$10,775.00

Final Score: 77.40

Motion to "recommend this grant to the Director for funding." Motion **PASSED** @ 10:43a.m.

---

Mike Buck with the Valdez Snowmachine Club arrived @ 10:40a.m. to lobby for Grant Application #11.

Bruce **MOVES** to "score grant application #11 out of order to facilitate the committee's understanding with the assistance of the public."

Matt **SECONDS** the motion.

No objections.

Motion passed @ 10:48 a.m.

---

#### [Grant Application #11](#)

Grant Name: Northwest Alaska Circumnavigation Expedition

Grant Applicant: Valdez Snow Machine Club

Grant Amount: \$15,000.00

Final Score: 88.42  
Motion to "recommend this grant to the Director for funding." Motion **PASSED** @ 11:06 a.m.

---

Break @ 11:07 a.m.  
Return @ 11:22 a.m.

---

#### Grant Application #2

Grant Name: Willow Safe Crossing  
Grant Applicant: Willow Trail Committee  
Grant Amount: \$6,350.00  
Final Score: 82.67  
Motion to "recommend this grant to the Director for funding." Motion **PASSED** @ 11:46a.m.

---

#### Grant Application #3

Grant Name: Alaska Railroad Snowmobile "Stay Off the Tracks" Safety Campaign  
Grant Applicant: Alaska Railroad Corporation  
Grant Amount: \$14,646.00  
Final Score: 65.83  
Motion to "recommend this grant to the Director for funding." Motion **FAILED** at 12:06 p.m.

---

Adjourn for lunch @ 12:07 p.m.  
Return @ 1:26 p.m.

---

#### Grant Application #4

Grant Name: Big Lake Area Safer Trails Project  
Grant Applicant: Big Lake Chamber of Commerce  
Grant Amount: \$7,300.00  
Final Score: 78.33  
Motion to "recommend this grant to the Director for funding." Motion **PASSED** @ 1:51 p.m.

---

#### Grant Application #5

Grant Name: Be Snow Smart  
Grant Applicant: North American Outdoor Institute  
Grant Amount: \$15,000.00  
Final Score: 75.83  
Motion to "recommend this grant to the Director for funding." Motion **FAILED** @ 2:07 p.m.

---

#### Grant Application #6

Grant Name: Purchase of Utility Snowmobile & Hauling Trailer for Trail Grooming & Maintenance, Park Patrols, Search & Rescue  
Grant Applicant: Chugach State Park  
Grant Amount: \$9,240.00  
Final Score: 75.50  
Motion to "recommend this grant to the Director to be forwarded to the ORTAB for funding." Motion **PASSED** @ 2:19p.m.

---

#### Grant Application #7

Grant Name: Winter Access Road at Big Lake  
Grant Applicant: South Port Marina Co., Inc.  
Grant Amount: \$5,500.00  
Final Score: 59.00  
Motion to "recommend this grant to the Director for funding." Motion **FAILED** @ 2:30 p.m.

---

#### Grant Application #8

Grant Name: Winter Recreation Safety  
Grant Applicant: South Port Marina Co., Inc.  
Grant Amount: \$11,223.60  
Final Score: 43.20  
Motion to "recommend this grant to the Director for funding." Motion **FAILED** @ 2:33 p.m.

---



#### Grant Application #9

Grant Name: Southfork Montana Creek Snowmachine Trail Grooming  
Grant Applicant: Montana Creek Motor Musers  
Grant Amount: \$15,000.00  
Final Score: 69.00

Motion to "recommend this grant to the Director for funding." Motion **FAILED** @ 2:43 p.m.

---

#### Grant Application #10

Grant Name: Lake Louise Recreational Trails 2004-2005 Seasonal Maintenance & Grooming, with Completion of Mendeltna Trail  
Grant Amount: \$10,658.00  
Final Score: 80.00

Motion to "recommend this grant to the Director for funding." Motion **FAILED** at 2:54 p.m.

---

#### Grant Application #12

Grant Name: Northwest Arctic Borough Shelter Cabin Construction  
Grant Applicant: Northwest Arctic Borough  
Grant Amount: \$16,778.26  
Final Score: 88.83

Motion to "recommend this grant to the Director for funding." Motion **PASSED** @ 3:01p.m.

---

#### Grant Application #13

Grant Name: Alaska Trails Champion Pilot Training Program  
Grant Applicant: Alaska Trails  
Grant Amount: \$14,900.00  
Final Score: 68.80

Motion to "recommend this grant to the Director to be forwarded to the ORTAB for funding." Motion **PASSED** @ 3:11p.m.

---

#### Grant Application #14

Grant Name: Turnagain Snow Trails  
Grant Applicant: Alaska Snow Safaris, Inc.  
Grant Amount: \$15,000.00  
Final Score: 87.67

Motion to "recommend this grant to the Director for funding." Motion **PASSED** @ 3:21 p.m.

---

#### Grant Application #15

Grant Name: On Track for Life  
Grant Applicant: City of McGrath  
Grant Amount: \$9,832.00  
Final Score: 90.33

Motion to "recommend this grant to the Director for funding." Motion **PASSED** @ 3:38p.m.

---

#### Grant Application #16

Grant Name: Rescue Deployment Vehicle  
Grant Applicant: Dillingham Snowmobile Association  
Grant Amount: \$7,500.00  
Final Score: 84.80

Motion to "recommend this grant to the Director for funding." Motion **PASSED** @ 3:43p.m.

---

#### **Grooming Pool Mat-Su Pilot Project Update**

- Big Lake Chamber of Commerce operating in Big Lake requested \$20,000/received \$18,000. Mcghan Construction is contracted to complete the grooming.
- Willow Trails Committee operating in Willow requested \$3,760/received \$3,000. Members use their own snowmobile to tow grooming equipment (purchase with previous grant funds). Grooming funds are used to reimburse members for materials, gas, oil, etc.
- Curry Ridge Riders operating in Petersville requested \$30,000/received \$18,000. Hiring a local snowcat owner to tow a groomer.

- Friends of State Parks/Mat-Su operating in Hatcher Pass requested \$25,000/received \$17,100. Hired DavDor, a small Palmer business owning two snowcats.
- Lake Louise Snowmobile Club operating in Lake Louise requested \$3,900/received \$3,900. Hired a local snowcat owner to do initial grooming of the season to set a good base. Club members will use their own sleds to tow groomers throughout the rest of the season.

### **Board Business & Updates**

Opening new 2006 grant cycle –going to hold till March 1<sup>st</sup> to open, will notify the board.

Introduction of the SCORP.

Mark **MOVES** to “amend the minutes of November 5-6, 2004 meeting to accept a correction to the grooming pool criteria – grant applicants having received funding from the Grooming Pool are not eligible to receive SnowTRAC funding for grooming projects.

Matt **SECONDS** the motion.

Open to discussion.

Motion **WITHDRAWN**.

No amendment of minutes.

Board membership issues including renewal of membership.

Meeting adjourned @ 4:22p.m.



## SnowTRAC Advisory Board Meeting

November 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup>, 2004  
Atwood Building  
550 W. 7<sup>th</sup> Ave., Ste. 1980  
Anchorage, Alaska

Chair Marianne Beckham called meeting to order at 8:59 a.m. Friday, Nov. 5<sup>th</sup>, 2004. Quorum present.

### Board Members Present:

- \* Greg Barclay –Soldotna
- \* Marianne Beckham, Chair –Anchorage
- \* Matt Divens –Fairbanks
- \* Bruce Friend –Anchorage
- \* Mark Wilke –Juneau
- \* Frank Woods –Dillingham

### Board Members Absent:

- \* Kenton Bloom –Homer (unable to contact)
- \* Christine Noakes –Big Lake (moved, no longer on board)
- \* Craig Seibert –Trapper Creek (medical emergency)

### Staff Present

- \* Margaret Brodie –State Parks Admin. & Grants Manager
- \* Joy Bryant-Dolsby –Grant Administrator II
- \* Samantha Carroll –State Trails Coordinator
- \* Michaela Phillips –Admin. Clerk II

### Introductions

Since the last board meeting there is all new staff working with SnowTRAC.

During introductions some board members had concerns regarding audio recording of the meeting. Discussion ensued as to the legality of recording the meeting, the State's interests, and the board's meeting being a matter of public record. Marianne had asked Samantha to have a tape recorder to assist in obtaining adequate minutes for the meeting. Margaret informed the board that the recordings become State Record and must be maintained for a minimum of 3 years.

- \* Matt MOVED "to take minutes manually."
- \* Frank SECONDED.
- \* Discussion. Documents ultimately belong to the State and the decision is therefore up to the State.
- \* Mark MOVED "to table the motion."
- \* Matt SECONDED.
- \* Motion PASSED without objection.

### Agenda

Meeting Agenda approved.

### Grant Cycle & Marketing

Is it by fiscal year or calendar year? What is the grant application schedule? The current grant application cycle opened the beginning of September and closes December 15<sup>th</sup>. The amount of time available for notification of the opening of the grant application period is a big concern. The current notification time allows for little to no time for grantees to contact their local government and public for support. Discussion on types of notification including postcards, e-mails, newsletters, packets or some other form of notification could be provided ahead of the grant application cycle opening. Packets need to be produced or the State website could advertise the opening of the grant cycle. Larger emphasis needs to be made to assimilate funds. More money needs to be available for trails, grooming and signage. There

needs to be more consistency regarding the overall timeline of the grant cycle (a grant is effective the date the grantee signs the grant contract). The TRAAK Board has been dissolved and replaced with the Outdoor Recreational Trails Advisory Board (ORTAB). All grants presented to SnowTRAC will also be presented to ORTAB which will eliminate the perennial concern about duplicate granting to Grantees.

What are the current methods of public notice regarding marketing of the SnowTRAC Grants?

- \* Possible mechanisms for public notice:
  - bulletin boards
  - mass media faxes & mail-outs
  - DNR Public Information Center (PIC)
  - ASSA Newsletter
  - COAST Magazine
  - COMPASS piece
  - Trails Symposium
  - Website
  - Public Service Announcements (PSA's)
  - SnowTRAC members

### **Minutes Approval**

Marianne presented last meeting's minutes for review by the board and subsequent approval.

- \* Matt MOVED "to approve the minutes from last meeting, January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2004."
- \* Greg SECONDED.
- \* Discussion.
- \* Motion PASSED without objection and minutes APPROVED as submitted.

Break @ 9:51 a.m.

Reconvene @ 10:00 a.m.

### **US Senate Bill 931**

SB 931 Avalanche Funding passed. It is on the calendar in several house committees. However, it is a "lame duck" at this time. It can be resubmitted at the next legislative session; Mark will contact Stevens for this. This bill specifically earmarks money for avalanche training. Mark said he could use help looking for support for the bill through letters, phone calls, etc. Actual letters work much more effectively than anything else. We need to "tap" other western states' legislature and their senators for guidelines and ideas.

### **Program Goals & Steps to Accomplish Them**

- \* Money on the ground
- \* Safety & Education
- \* Access
  - Maintain Current Trails
  - Establish New Trails
  - Expand Current Trails
- \* Economics
- \* Registration Fees used for Snow Mobile purposes
- \* More Fun, Exercise & Recreation
- \* Recognize the "customer"

Discussion, the following represents comments and/or suggestions to reach goals: 1) The Board needs to set and work toward goals, which include trail production and maintenance; 2) Rural representation needs to be considered. There are major safety and access issues within the villages and hub areas in rural Alaska that need to be addressed and worked on. SnowTRAC and the snowmobile community cannot accomplish these goals alone; 3) Concerns that the money is leaving the hands of the snow machine users. More grant money needs to be seen on the ground, being used by the clubs and organizations and to promote and develop safety. Negative views toward the registration and SnowTRAC need to be addressed and alleviated if possible. More people involved in the sport would help. Maintaining a positive image with the public when SnowTRAC funds are being used by the State is impossible. The State should not be allowed to utilize these funds as they have other resources available. Perhaps the Board needs to grade/score grant applications from the State on a harsher scale. However, the State shouldn't be shut out; securing easements could be a responsibility of the State. The board can recommend to the Director to discourage the State/DNR -Parks from apply for grants from SnowTRAC; 4) The Board does not support any extra money used for non-approved projects outside of those by and for snow machine users. This is a public grant cycle and therefore, is open to everyone.

Board members expressed the following sentiments: Over 75% of grantees do not perform the projects they apply for grants for. The planning and consequently the follow through, is not happening. The State has closed down on many of these grants and collected nearly \$60k in unused grant funds back from these non-compliant grantees. Many snow machine clubs are shut out of the grant application process because of the requirement of upfront funds matching for certain purchases such as equipment. The scoring process should be looked at and possibly revamped, and non-performers vs. performers, those in non-compliance need to operate at least at the base level of those in compliance. They need to work harder. This will show our "customers" where their money is going. Performers should be rewarded. Allow performers to apply for higher grant amounts. Non-performers are put essentially on a "blacklist", they may apply for grants, but are not put forward by the Grant Administrator to the Advisory Board –You. Applicants are not informed why their grant application was denied and no grant was awarded. There should not be any policy in effect that penalizes the good because of the bad. Do not make requirement for 50% down for production and grooming grants. The State needs to push non-compliant grantees for repayment, they do not get any further funds or ability to even apply for new grants if they are non-compliant. Money for trail building and equipment is provided with no expectation of the grantee paying upfront. Samantha handles the grant applications prior to their award. The Grant Administrator handles the grants after they are awarded. Non-compliance grantees cannot receive new grant funds until past non-performance grant funds are repaid. The Board feels that the State should not be making decisions as to which grant applications are put forward to the board for review and scoring. But, non-performers need to step-up to the performers range. Non-compliant grantees cannot apply for new grants until they are in compliance with all past grants. The State takes too long in reimbursing grantees for the 50% upfront. Many grantees are small entities and have trouble coming up with such a large amount of funds upfront. Often times they have to get loans.

Staff responded that, essentially, yes, if they (Applicant) owe money to the State they can submit an application but they will not be considered until their previous non-compliant grants are repaid and brought into compliance. They can submit a plan that will have the same value of the old grant and essentially changing the scope of their grant. The State will try to provide reimbursement funds sooner and expenditures for propagation of the grant (use & intent), the whole scope of the project. Yes, the State has been lax in the past with reimbursement payments, but is working on the issue and aiming for a turn-around time of 5 days.

- \* Open discussion regarding grant applicants.
- \* Mark MOVED "to allow for 50% upfront payment on SnowTRAC grants."
- \* Bruce MOVED "to table SnowTRAC 50% upfront payment until tomorrow at 1:30 p.m.-2:15 p.m."
- \* Frank SECONDED.
- \* Mark WITHDREW his motion.
- \* Discussion.
- \* Motion PASSED without objection.
- \* Discussion on scope change is tabled until tomorrow at 1:30-2:15 p.m.

### **Appointment of Advisory Board Members**

Discussion on number of board members as stated by Director, Gary Morrison. Gary wants to see representation on this board be more area influenced. Future appointments to the board will be by area representation instead of organization affiliation. All members of SnowTRAC must be pro-snowmobiling. No term limits apply. However, the grant terms will be staggered. Reappointments are subject to the discretion of the Director of State Parks. The matter of alternates arose. Each board member should have an alternate to serve in their stead if they are unable to attend. Alternates must be presented and approved in advance of the meeting at which they will alternate for the regular member.

#### **ORTAB**

- \* no double funding
- \* 30% motorized
- \* 40% diversified multi-use
- \* receive copy of all SnowTRAC grant applications
- \* 15 Board members
- \* Letter of Interest to State Parks Director –December 1<sup>st</sup> deadline

#### **Overall-**

- \* Keep 9 Board members
- \* All Statewide At-large
- \* More telephonic meetings
- \* Letters of Interest to State Parks Director

Adjourn for Lunch @ 12:12 p.m.

Reconvene @ 1:30 p.m.

### **Grant Application Scoring –Training**

Introduction of Grants Administrator Joy Bryant-Dolsby

1. Review Grant Application

2. Review Grant Application scoring sheets
  3. Discuss Grant Cycle
  4. Discuss scoring procedure
  5. Discuss "conflict of interest"
- \* Joy –we want to make the process object not subjective. It needs to be fair and equitable. We need to provide the applicants with a description of the process and a scoring sheet as these may help them in writing their application and determining a scope they can accomplish.
    - public funds
    - public process
    - fair & equitable
    - as objective as possible
  - \* Matt –disagreed with the "conflict of interest" clause.

Currently, if a board member is a member of an organization applying for a grant they must declare their "conflict of interest" and remove themselves from the scoring and discussion of that particular grant. Open discussion regarding "conflict of interest" and grant scoring.

The combined grant application scores are calculated by combining each voting board member's scores then averaging that number by the number of board members scoring the applications. Grantees and the board member with a "conflict of interest" should be allowed to discuss the grant application with the scoring board members. Scoring sessions should be open to all to lobby for a grant application.

### Rundown of Scoring

- \* Applicants must answer all questions.
- \* Applicants must complete the entire application before their application is eligible for consideration and scoring.
- \* Applications must contain all necessary permission documentation from all involved landowners.

The board and the State (Grants Administrator) need to occasionally contact the authorizing landowners for verification that access is still permitted.

The board should contacts grantees to allow them to better inform the board members and help consider for award. How is it verified that all involved parties have been properly notified and necessary permission has been obtained and recorded? How far is the State going to take verifying that all points meet? Permission needs to be for the entire duration of the grant project. Also needs to be long enough for access to the project. In other words, if access permission only lasts as long as development takes no one will be able to utilize the improved areas/results.

Why are grantees given 2 years for their grant project? There were problems completing their projects under that amount of time. If they are unable to complete within the time frame they need to change the scope of the project.

Organizations applying for grants need to be considered. Some organizations are better suited than others to apply for and complete a project. There needs to be a consistent grant cycle. Stop letting grantees "off the hook" when they fall short. There should be a maximum on extensions of project time. Accountability is the issue. They need to underestimate themselves and their project/productivity goal. That way they are more likely to complete the project and if they fall short, prior to closure of the grant time they can approach the board and apply to re-scope.

Many areas suffer seasonal/weather-associated pit-falls, the board needs to provide some flexibility in these matters. They need to deal with it. A year could be good, it could be bad. They will need to comeback next year and apply again. There are many factors involved, we shouldn't close the door, doing this may cause applicants not to apply. There should be exceptions on a case-by-case basis and a limit to the grant cycle. For grant terms longer than 1 year, the grantees should be required to check-in and provide annual progress reports to the State/SnowTRAC Board. That would be very helpful, even quarterly reports.

The board should consider the State's position including administrative costs. What % of Samantha's time will be available for SnowTRAC? Samantha is still very new to this position and has been in training nearly since her hiring. She has yet to fully develop her position. Tina Long will be the Grant Administrator for SnowTRAC, Karen Husa is our Accounting Clerk and will be providing the financial support for SnowTRAC.

- \* The board would like to meet with Tina to become familiar with her and her involvement with SnowTRAC.
- \* They would also like to stay with a 2-year grant term.
- \* Grant applications concentrating on safety and education will remain at a higher importance level than all other grant applications.
- \* Need to check old meeting minutes for previous discussion regarding percentage designation.
- \* Question to change or leave Section III Support for Project, subsection C which currently reads:

-Project is consistent with management or land use plans approved by the local governing body or other lands uses or interests, and/or consistent with prevailing safety practices.

- \* Mark MOVED to remove Section IV subsection H. for Grooming, Development or Acquisition project –project will provide an important missing (trail) link or connection.
- \* Greg SECONDED.
- \* Discussion.
- \* Motion APPROVED without objection.

### 2005 Application Cycle

- \* Grant Cycle Timeline DISCUSSION
  - January 1<sup>st</sup> –Applications Available
  - April 1<sup>st</sup> –Application Due Date
  - May 1<sup>st</sup> –Applications Out to Board for Review/Scoring
  - Mid-May –Application Scoring Due
  - May 30<sup>th</sup> –Grant Awarding/Notification
  - July 1<sup>st</sup> –Funds Available in Bank
  - August 1<sup>st</sup> –Funds Available to Awarded Grantees

Close of meeting @ 4:00pm



## SnowTRAC Advisory Board Meeting

November 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup>, 2004  
Atwood Building  
550 W. 7<sup>th</sup> Ave., Ste. 1980  
Anchorage, Alaska

Chair Marianne Beckham called meeting to order at 8:40 a.m. Saturday, Nov. 6<sup>th</sup>, 2004. Quorum present.

### Board Members Present:

- \* Greg Barclay –Soldotna
- \* Marianne Beckham, Chair –Anchorage
- \* Matt Divens –Fairbanks
- \* Bruce Friend –Anchorage
- \* Mark Wilke –Juneau
- \* Frank Woods –Dillingham

### Board Members Absent:

- \* Kenton Bloom –Homer (unable to contact)
- \* Christine Noakes –Big Lake (moved, no longer on board)
- \* Craig Seibert –Trapper Creek (medical emergency)

### Staff Present

- \* Margaret Brodie –State Parks Admin. & Grants Manager
- \* Samantha Carroll –State Trails Coordinator
- \* Michaela Phillips –Admin. Clerk II

### Old Business

Membership on board, appointment, is the board fully staffed at this time, is there a rotation. There needs to be a wider representation of the state through this board is desired. Currently, the board is at 8 members + staff. Missing 1 board member + TRAAK/ORTAB liaison. The TRAAK/ORTAB liaison will be a non-voting board member, thought they will help review & score grant applications. Re-appointment of board members and the number of board members is up to DNR –Parks. The State will solicit for board members soon to fill positions up at the turn of the year and wants a good representation across Alaska instead of organizational representation. All applications for board appointment need to be submitted to the Director no later than January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2005 for those positions expiring in January and March. What are the mechanisms of solicitation? Is it open solicitation area by area? The board will provide listings of contacts to staff, job descriptions for board members. Selection of board members needs to take into consideration the positions requirements regarding dedication of time, conflicts of interest regarding affiliation/association with clubs/organizations.

### Ethics

What are the board's feelings regarding ethics? The member declares their conflict of interest before they even handle the grant. Need to take into consideration that board members having a "conflict of interest" still represent an area and the interests of that area. We need to set limits on what is considered a conflict of interest. Will board members with a "conflict of interest" with a specific grant application be able to discuss the grant application with the other voting board members, since they can't score it, they can at least provide some backup about the project? What are the Attorney General's Guidelines? Board members should refrain from voting on specific grants.

- \* Samantha provided the board with copies of the State of Alaska's Conflict of Interest Guidelines which includes the State's description of "personal interest".
- \* Samantha provided Ethics forms for each board member to review and sign.

Equipment purchased through grant projects is property of the State, grantees may purchase the equipment at "fair market value" after 5 years.

The board needs to recognize the effort put forth by applicants just to apply.

- \* In the current grant cycle, which opened the beginning of September, applications are due December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2004.



- \* The board needs approximately 2 weeks to review and score the grant applications.

Break @ 9:48 a.m.

Reconvene @ 10:00 a.m.

### Grooming Pool

The State uses old funds that have expired –roughly \$60k

- \* Who controls?
- \* How do they control?
- \* Where do the funds go?
- \* How much funds go out?
- \* Is there a set amount of funds available per area?
- \* Are the funds given to an area get taken back if say, no snow, or they are unable to use the funds in the timeframe given?

How do we determine the amount of funds given to an area? Who gets what and how much? The amount of funds received should be based on the number of riders/users in an area, urban vs. rural. Also, snowfall needs to be taken into consideration. Certain areas are affected differently by weather, variable cost by the type of equipment being purchased, distance of the trail. There should be a maximum a group can use per year. Don't want to see more funds going to just one area that will only benefit a small amount of users. The board needs to coordinate with the Park Supervisors to get a run down of needy areas/trails, etc. A standard needs to be set for the grooming pool. Will funds taken from the Grooming Pool be in the form of a grant or a contract? With grants the grantee chooses who does the work, where to buy the materials, etc. With contracts the State chooses by using the bidding process. We need to look at other organizations, entities, states, provinces. How did they accomplish what we are trying to accomplish? How do they manage these same projects? In Oregon the State owns all equipment and contracts out to specific groups to use the equipment and maintain trails. Will the State maintain and groom illegal trails? (NO) There are many unstable variables to consider. Do you pay by the hour or by miles groomed? What type of equipment is used to groom, snow machines or larger equipment? The board needs to decide the most important needs and let the State choose the contractors. Do we want to appropriate a specific dollar amount yearly to grooming trails? Perhaps SnowTRAC should apply to ORTAB for grant funding for the Grooming Pool, creating more funds for SnowTRAC. No equipment should be purchased with Grooming Pool funds. The Grooming Pool is a good opportunity to get a positive image of SnowTRAC out to the public. We need to look at other methods for getting SnowTRAC more money i.e. the tourism industry. How long does SnowTRAC have to allocate and spend these funds? SnowTRAC has 5 years after expiring the grant to spend these funds. Where is it kept? It is kept in the capital fund. Where does the money go if not spent? The funds are absorbed back into the State's General Funds if not used within timeframe. The board needs to pick one deciding factor to fund, start small and grow gradually. These funds need parameters, where does the State want to see this money spent i.e. private, park, public? These funds can be used on all legal trails.

- \* assign an area
- \* give the State parameters within an area and what needs to be accomplished
- \* try different areas alternately
- \* market our success

Pilot project. Cannot accept any grant applications from the same area that is receiving funds from the Grooming Pool. Perhaps we should notify statewide we are initiating a pilot program and let them come to us.

- \* Signs need to be posted stating that grooming of the trails was paid for with funds from the SnowTRAC Grooming Pool.
- \* Need maps showing good access, well groomed, legal trails.
- \* Failure can be transposed to update the pilot in the future and improve.

Boroughs may start stepping in and contributing funds or support.

- \* Mark MOVED "SnowTRAC recommend to the State to develop a Grooming Pool Pilot Project."
- \* Greg SECONDED.
- \* Discussion.
- \* Motion PASSED without objection.

Research is needed to help develop the Pilot Program.

- \* Frank MOVED "to amend the motion to recommend to the State to focus on the Mat-Su area including the drainages of the Yentna, Susitna, and Matanuska rivers and develop protocols and parameters with a minimum of monthly updates for the Grooming Pool Pilot Program."
- \* Mark SECONDED.
- \* Further DISCUSSION of Grooming Pool Pilot Program.
- \* Motion APPROVED without objection.

### Delegation of Funds

- \* administrative costs –currently the State receives 10%
- \* signage
- \* advertising
- \* grooming

How much money are we looking at? \$20k per year is paid to the State to cover administrative costs. This does not cover the total incurred expenses.

- \* Mark MOVED “the Board recommend to the State to spend the remaining un-appropriated grant funds on the Grooming Pool Pilot Project.”
- \* Bruce SECONDED.
- \* Motion APPROVED without objection.
- \* Grooming Pool Pilot Program needs to happen this season.
- \* State will do the footwork for getting the contract filled.

Adjourn for Lunch @ 11:32 a.m.

Reconvene @ 12:55 p.m.

### Equipment Cache

- \* All equipment purchased with State Grant Funds is State property.
- \* Other entities may utilize equipment for other grant projects.
- \* After 5 year the equipment can be purchased at “fair market value”.

After the grant project term is up, the grantee may provide the same service using the same equipment from the cache and provide progress reports on the usage. No grant funds can be used to purchase equipment. If all equipment purchased with grant funds is property of the State, what happens to the interests of the grantee that put up a percentage of the cost of the equipment to purchase at the onset of the grant period? We need to follow suit with other states that have developed snowmobile programs. Some states buy all the equipment then contract out for jobs to be completed with that equipment. Push purchases for larger/expensive equipment to ORTAB.

- \* Issue TABLED for later discussion.

### Snowmobile Registration

Registration is SnowTRAC’s sole source of revenue. Need to get the “customer” to want to register, also market what SnowTRAC and the State are doing with their money, and show them they are getting a lot of product for the price. The public does not want to pay the fees. More signs need to be posted showing exactly where and how the registration funds are being spent. Fish & Wildlife, Alaska State Parks, etc. need to be out enforcing the regulation for registration. Appeal to dealers to push the registration fee and work toward raising the price of the fee. DOT can provide a listing of all registered machines by area. Enforcement of the registration needs to include monitoring trails, stopping riders for verification of registration and citing those not in compliance. Re-registration of machines is a key issue. Perhaps can influence financial lenders and insurance companies to push them to register and maintain registration. Offer a rebate if they re-register and have dealers push the issue when machines are brought in for service. Need PSA’s, newspaper coverage, mass media faxes, etc. Clubs/organizations need to require members to register new machines and continued registration of old ones. Show the “customer” exactly where their money is being spent.

- \* Current fine for not registering machine is \$20.
- \* Need standard (DOT) regulations that include:
  - Registration
  - Certification
  - Fines
  - Speed Limits
  - Insurance Requirements
  - Age Requirements
- \* SnowTRAC Board is only an advisory board and does not make legislation

This is too big a project to be completed in 1-2 meetings; it might well take a couple years. Should the board be taking on this issue of regulations? Should it be a combined effort with ORTAB and any other involved entities? We recommend to the State to consider increasing fines for non-compliance, registration fee increases, and enforcement options.

- \* Fines do not go to SnowTRAC.
- \* Fees do go to SnowTRAC.

- \* Mark MOVED "to have SnowTRAC Advisory Board continue analyzing snowmobile rules and regulations and make recommendations for changes."
- \* Greg SECONDED.
- \* Motion APPROVED without objection.

The board needs to meet and invest the time to complete the task. The motion needs a timeframe. This is a great opportunity to define the concept. The Board has completed most of the legwork, just need to coordinate all the information. Take 2 years with quarterly meetings to complete this. Could do within 10 meetings. Including legislation of other states with developed programs will make the job easier. Two 2-day sessions over a 2-month period

- \* Meeting I
  - o Safety & Equipment
  - o Insurance
- \* Meeting II
  - o Speed Limits
  - o Licensing
- \* Meeting III
  - o Fines
  - o Fees
- \* Meeting IV
  - o Rules of the Road

### Travel Policies & Procedures

- \* Samantha provided an updated copy of the State's regulations on travel.
- \* Michaela provided reimbursement requests for all Board members in Travel status to review, sign and return.

### Tabled Issues

- \* Continued discussion on grant funds regarding advance and reimbursement.
- \* Continued discussion on scope changes and length of grant terms. Scope changes will be made on a case-by-case basis with analysis of the grantee's performance, capabilities, etc. The grant administrator will make the determination.
- \* Continued discussion on the equipment cache.

### Staff Stuff

- \* Board members will provide Samantha with information for a database for future public contact.
- \* Collect travel and ethics forms from Board members.
- \* Mark welcomed all staff and expressed his appreciation for their hard work these 2 days of meetings. Unanimous concurrence.
- \* Frank MOVED "to adjourn."
- \* Matt SECONDED.

Meeting adjourned @ 4:00 p.m.

---

Michaela K. Phillips

## SnowTRAC Meeting

January 20, 2004

Meeting called to order at 9:15 a.m. by Chair Marianne Beckham. Quorum present.

### COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Marianne Beckham - Anchorage  
Kenton Bloom – Homer  
Christine Noakes - Big Lake  
Mark Wilke – Juneau

Greg Barclay - Soldotna  
Matt Divens – Fairbanks  
Craig Seibert - Trapper Creek  
Frank Woods - Dillingham

### COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT

Bruce Friend - Anchorage (excused)

**Staff present:** Jim Renkert and Elisia Walsh, ASP

**Public:** Randy Crosby, Alaska State Snowmobile Association (ASSA)

### ALTERNATES OR PROXIES

Kenton Bloom nominated Mickey Todd as a proxy for himself. Todd has participated in various snowmobile groups including SNOWMADS. Marianne had no objections to Todd as a proxy for Kenton.

Greg moved “to approve minutes from April 25, 2003 as submitted.” Mark Wilke second. Motion approved.

### AGENDA ADDITIONS/REVISIONS

Marianne asked that the minutes be reviewed prior to the conflict of interest declarations. Mark requested to add in a discussion of SB 931, which you can obtain another copy of from Elisia. Matt motioned it be added. Chris seconded. Agenda addition approved.

### CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATIONS

Greg Barclay declared a conflict with grant application #10, Caribou Hills Cabin Hoppers. Frank Woods declared a conflict with grant application #21, Curyung Tribal Council and #22, Dillingham Search and Rescue Team.

### STAFF REPORTS

Gary Morrison, Director of the Division of Parks & Outdoor Recreation, stated that the new person to replace Jim will be working in a combined position of Recreational Trails and the Snowmobile Trail program, so adjustments in time and priorities will follow, but no specifics are known at this time. Also, there will be a new board to replace the previous TRAAK board controlled by DOT, which has been transferred to DNR State Parks office. There is an Administrative Order in process to have the new board members appointed by the director of Alaska State Parks.

Jim Renkert announced his acceptance of a new position. At this time, it is not known who will be the replacement. In the meantime, Gary Morrison will assist. Also, in an attempt to clean up

previous grants to release some more funding, certified letters have been mailed out to all of the grantees requesting financial reports be sent in.

**Meeting recessed for a break @ 10:10 a.m.**

**Reconvened @ 10:20 a.m.**

#### **FY00 GRANT STATUS**

- Alaska State Snowmobile Association (ASSA) has never been completed. Grantee has been asked to return monies, but has not responded.
- Trail Mix and Juneau Snowmobile Club has completed the project from Lawson Creek Bridge to Lake Creek Trail improvements.
- The Point Mackenzie Trail Head, Mat-Su Borough kiosk has been completed.
- City of Wasilla Trail Head is complete.
- City of Wasilla Trail Grooming is still open. An extension to March of 2004 has been requested and granted.
- Mountaineering Club/Eklutna Cabin is complete.
- Eagle song lodge: A problematic project. The applicant is incorrect on some of the information and the Alaska State Parks (ASP) had erred on some of the problem. In addition to the Snowmobile grants is also a recipient for a couple of Recreational Trail projects as well. He will be working with the ASP staff to revise the grooming or give the money back. Discussion.

#### **FY01 GRANT STATUS**

- White Mountain Volunteer Fire Department cabin project is still open. At this time there is negotiations about reimbursement for labor costs.
- Copper Country Snowmobile Club is currently working on securing the rights to the trail easements.
- Big Lake Chamber of Commerce, Trail Grooming, is still active.
- Brevig Mission is currently awaiting possibly more reimbursement from the State in the next fiscal year.
- Anchorage Snowmobile Club has not had much snowfall and is almost at the end of their grant.

#### **FY02 GRANT STATUS**

- Alaska Mountain Safety Center, Snow Sense for Snowmobilers, is one of the most successful grants completed. The brochure is now being used by the Canadian Avalanche and Bombardier.
- Fairbanks Police Department and Fairbanks Snow Travelers, borough wide safety and education program is still open.
- North Slope Borough is completed and the final payment has been sent.
- St. Michaels Trail Shelter, no contact.
- Interior Trail Grooming, Chena Hot Springs Winter Trail, no contact, no progress report and grant has expired.
- Ohogamiut Traditional Council in Marshall, no contact.
- Caribou Hills Cabin Hoppers is complete and a reimbursement request is being processed.

### **FY03 GRANT STATUS**

- Mat-Su Borough in Big Lake expires in October 2004 and no progress reports sent.
- Alaska Snow Cats, Petersville is currently working on obtaining all of the required grants, as the grant award was set up on the premise that the grantee would obtain all the permits prior to the project. Discussion regarding the permit process.
- Aleknagik Bridge Crossings are complete. A progress report and a reimbursement payment were processed in the past summer, but have not been done since that time. Discussion followed regarding proper DOT permits and approvals even for small footbridges.
- Valdez Snowmobile Club brochures have been printed and distributed. They include a note regarding the SnowTRAC Committee as a source for funding.
- Iron Dog project is now closed.
- Curyung Tribal Council project is completed.

### **FINANCIAL REPORT**

None at this time due to staff out of office, but have approximately \$100,000.

### **TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT**

Fill out, sign and hand in to Elisia at the end of the day.

### **PUBLIC APPEARANCES**

Randy Crosby from Alaska Snow Cats, Petersville spoke regarding the frustrations he has experienced working with DOT and DNR on the permitting process for his project. Since the project has been problematic from the beginning, the estimated time and cost of the project are now delayed and he is doubtful that the grooming could be done at the same price quoted in the grant application. Is there a way that the applicant can be relieved of some of the duties and not have the problems dumped on them?

**Meeting recessed for lunch 11:30 a.m.**

**Reconvened at 11:48 a.m. WORKING LUNCH**

### **U.S. SENATE BILL 931**

Mark Wilke reported SB 931 currently in the works in Washington, D.C., which would provide money and funding for snowmobile avalanche education and prevention. Discussion.

Discussion continued into adopting a universal brochure and handbook by the SnowTRAC Committee versus having multiple grant applications for brochures and handbooks that all closely resemble each other. Greg recommended that after reviewing the booklets, "to adopt the ASSA Safety Booklet format as the Official SnowTRAC Safety Brochure for the State of Alaska pending approval by the ASP Director." Mark seconded it. A discussion follows regarding various booklets and brochures already out there from grant applications. Vote taken, all voted in favor. Motion passed pending approval from Gary Morrison, ASP Director.

## **SAFETY AND EDUCATION GRANT APPLICATIONS**

Open discussion and general comment on the grant applications. Overall the applications had generally poor documentation. It did not appear that some of the applicants put a lot of time into their applications.

Grant #1 – Big Lake Winter Trailhead, Mat-Su Borough. Scored below the 60-point minimum, **Score 46.**

Grant #2 – ASSRRT Equipment Grant, DNR/DPOR. Final score is below the 60-point minimum. **Score 51.**

Grant #3 – State of Alaska Safety Brochure, Lake Louise Snowmachine Club. Scored below the 60-point minimum. **Score 44.**

Grant #4 – State of Alaska Snowmachine Safety Handbook, Lake Louise Snowmachine Club. Scored below the 60-point minimum. **Score 43.**

Grant #5 – Snowmobile Trail Grant Program Public Awareness PSA, Porcaro Communications. Scored below the 60-point minimum. **Score 43.**

Grant #6 – Big Lake Multi-Use Trail Maintenance, Mat-Su Motor Mushers and ASSA. Scored below the 60-point minimum. **Score 13.**

Grant #7 – Petersville Road Winter Trailhead Project, Mat-Su Borough. Scored below the 60-point minimum. **Score 51.**

Grant #8 – Chugach State Park Anchorage Areawide Snowmobile Safety Initiative, Chugach State Park.. **Score 59.**

Grant #9 – Mat-Su Valley Snowmachine Safety & Helmet Program, Valley Health Communities. **Score 88.**

Grant #10 – Safety Signing for Caribou Hills Trails, Caribou Hills Cabin Hoppers. Greg Barclay is removed from discussion due to a conflict of interest. **Score DQ.**

Grant #11 – Bethel Area Trailmarking & Snowmachine Helmet Program, Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation. **Score 88.**

Grant #12 – Project Kids, SNOMADS. **Score 79.**

Grant #13 – Purchase Snowmobile, DNR/DPOR, Hatcher Pass Management Area. **Score 72.**

Grant #14 – Winter Trail Markings & Signing, Mat-Su Borough. **Score DQ.**

Grant #15 – Kroto Creek Snowmobile Trailhead Sanitation & Safety Project '04 & '05, DNR/DPOR. **Score 69.**

Grant #16 – Youth Snowmobile Safety Awareness Program, Kenai SAFE KIDS Coalition for the Central Peninsula Area. **Score 95.**

Grant #17 – Mat-Su Parks Snowmobile Signs & Safety Project, Mat-Su Parks & Outdoor Recreation. **Score DQ.**

Grant #18 – LSDA Snowmobile Safety Rodeo, Lower Susitna Drainage Association. Scored below the 60-point minimum. **Score 58.**

Grant #19 – Klehini Valley Backcountry Rescue, Northern Nights Adventure. **Score 60.**

Grant #20 – Hooper Bay Police Dept. Snowmobile Patrol Vehicles, City of Hooper Bay. Scored below the 60-point minimum. **Score 57.**

Grant #21 – Snowmobile & Avalanche Safety, Curyung Tribal Council. Frank Woods did not participate in this grant rank or discussion due to a conflict of interest. **Score 79.**

Grant #22 – Ice Rider Suits for Dillingham Search & Rescue, Dillingham Search & Rescue Team. Frank Woods did not participate in this grant rank or discussion due to a conflict of interest. **Score 87.**

Grant #23 – Snowmobile Safety for Middle & High School Students in NSBSD, North Slope Borough School District. **Score 79.**

Grant #24 – Operation Safe Trail, DNR/DPOR. **Score 72.**

Grant #25 – Avalanche Awareness & Hazard Recognition, BAART. **Score 72.**

**Collection of signed score sheets.**

**FUNDED GRANTS**

Safety and Education Projects

9. Valley Healthy Communities	\$ 8,725.00
11. Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corp.	\$14,728.88
12. SNOMADS, Project Kids	\$15,000.00
13. DNR/DPOR Hatcher Pass Mgt.	\$ 7,523.00
15. DNR/DPOR Kroto Creek Trailhead	\$ 9,800.00
16. Kenai Peninsula SAFE KIDS Program	\$15,000.00
19. Northern Nights Adventure	\$15,000.00
21. Curyung Tribal Council	\$ 5,996.56
22. Dillingham Search & Rescue	\$ 4,248.00
23. North Slope Borough School District	\$15,000.00
24. DNR/DPOR Operation Safe Trail	\$14,286.00
25. BAART	<u>\$15,000.00</u>

**TOTAL** **\$140,307.44**



## **DATE & AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING**

Sunday and Monday, April 4-5, 2004 at the Trapper Creek Lodge.

### **Agenda Items Are:**

Statewide safety program  
Review the existing State regulations & statutes  
How often does committee need to meet?  
Grooming pool  
Operating procedures  
ASP info about new and old appointments  
Grant amount adjustments  
Election of officers  
Proclamation in support of HB 931

### **COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS**

Mark Wilke commented on the issue between skiers and snowmachiners and the only area available for winter recreation. Chris Noakes commented The WSA does all the big snowmachine events. Talked about getting Winter X up in Alaska. It could bring a lot of economic value to Alaska. Matt Divens stated that the Fairbanks Snowmobile Club observed that it is too difficult for small groups to apply for the grants due to the fact that it is only a reimbursement set up. A point was made that you can request the money up front, but it is difficult to get awarded. Frank Woods said that the winter trails project, covers a large area. Who approved stuff at DOT for the winter trail markings? Received a lot of calls regarding the project due to the small ad in the paper. Greg Barclay observed that the biggest problem for his area is working with the State and the trails and the bridges washed out from the flooding. Craig Seibert mentioned two things. One, gives credit to Crosby about the grooming. Two, the reason why Bruce stepped out this year was a celebration of Polaris' anniversary. At Saturday at noon a group of riders will leave Trapper Creek in support of women in snowmachining and breast cancer awareness. Chairperson Marianne explained that she had survived a terrible car accident and will be hoping to ride again. Encourages people to watch out for the drunk coming towards you and has enjoyed working with everyone and the hard work on the grants. Said farewell to Jim who has been a great support. Also, the committee needs to think of who they want to be chair next..

**MEETING ADJOURNED 4:45 p.m.**

# SnowTRAC Committee Meeting

April 25, 2003

Meeting called to order at 9:34 a.m. by Chair Marianne Beckham. Quorum present.

## COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Marianne Beckham – Anchorage

Greg Barclay – Soldotna

Bruce Friend – Anchorage

Lee Johnson - TRAAK Board Liaison – Fairbanks

Christine Noakes – Big Lake

Craig Seibert – Trapper Creek

Mark Wilke – Juneau

## COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT

Kenton Bloom – Homer (excused)

Matt Divens – Fairbanks (excused)

Frank Woods – Dillingham (excused)

**Staff present:** Jim Renkert and Teri Gilpin (ASP)

**Public:** Gene Gerkin, Patsy Coyne-B.A.A.R.T., Jack Campbell-Mat Su, Cliff Larson-  
Division of Mining, Land & Water, Scott Lapiene, Jody Simpson, Joe Gauna.

Chair Marianne welcomed all committee members and public attending.

No Alternates or proxies.

Christine moved “to approve the minutes from January 30, 2003.” Mark 2<sup>nd</sup>. Minutes approved as submitted.

Agenda stands with no changes.

## PUBLIC APPEARANCES

*Patsy Coyne, B.A.A.R.T.* Thanked SnowTRAC for the grants. BAART’s job is to go out and educate the public about avalanche safety. Presence in local schools and at Arctic Man again this year. They have been actively supporting continuation of SnowTRAC funding. Discussion/Comments on grant accomplishment and good proposals, and on contacting Senator Green’s office. Discussion. Committee members expressed appreciation to B.A.A.R.T. for a job well done and for submitting good applications.

*Jack Campbell.* Attending to learn what’s happening with SnowTRAC. He is interested in the grant process, specifically a particular section of the Iron Dog Trail that needs work. Discussion.

*Marianne:* We could easily argue that with the \$200,000 that was invested in SnowTRAC, if we could save the life of one person it would be a huge reward for a small investment. Just think of all the safety and other things that SnowTRAC has been able to do through the grant process. Discussion on impacts to grants and snowmobile registration fees if SnowTRAC not funded in 2004. The Capital Budget has already passed the House. Jody Simpson indicated we have about 72 hours to advocate for support of SnowTRAC funding. The legislature ends on May 20<sup>th</sup>. Discussion on the budget document. We need to concentrate on the finance committee right now.

*Patsy:* Shared telephone numbers of House and Senate members to call.

## **STAFF REPORT (JIM RENKERT)**

Your packets include a couple of Brochures, Lisa Murkowski's bill and press release, and a follow-up email. Sent an email of the bill to Colleen McGuire-Washington Snowmobile Administrator, who circulated it nationwide via email. This morning we received an email response from Christopher Dowes, Federal Highway Administration, who oversees all recreational trail money, with comments on the bill. In other news, State Parks is awaiting the appointment of a new director.

### 2000 GRANTS

*ASSA-Safety*-They owe the program money for not properly completing their original grant. They got an advance; we may have to begin a collection process. Discussion with Bruce, he suggested calling Kevin Hite. Jim said a certified letter was sent last year with no response. Christine will talk to Kevin and see where it stands now.

*Hatcher Pass*-Brochure is done and in your packets. It will be distributed by State Parks.

*Trail Mix*-Project complete and the final report submitted.

*Mat-Su, Point Mackenzie* - Being closed soon, expiring.

*Wasilla, Winter Trailhead* - Extended until July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2003.

*Wasilla, Trail grooming* - Being closed, don't think they did any grooming this year.

*Eklutna Cabin* - Submitted final progress report, will be closed.

*Eagle Song Lodge* - A somewhat problematic grant. A certified letter was sent to them requesting they refund us a total of \$7,700.00, they appealed it. The Commissioner remanded it back to Parks. Parks requested they supply more information supporting and justifying their expenses. They submitted information as of a week ago that we will review. Sending out a letter today stating we received this information and will respond in 2-4 weeks.

### 2001 GRANTS

*White mountain* - Submitted a request for reimbursement. When we reviewed the request we noticed they had spent \$5,700 for labor. Their budget application had no funds budgeted for labor. We denied reimbursement for labor.

*Copper Country, Trail Survey* - Original grant was for grooming. When access issues were discovered, the grant was amended to a surveying and mapping project modeled after the Lake Louise project. New grant agreement signed in February.

*Brevig Mission* - There was a change in grant administrators. The project was done but documentation has some problems.

*Anchorage Snowmobile Club* - They submitted a request for reimbursement but they still need to send a copy of the cancelled check. They should also submit a request for an extension.

### 2002 GRANTS

*Shatoolik* - We sent a closure notice at the end of February. They submitted a request for an extension but we have not heard anything else.

*Fairnet* - The advance they received was returned. Grant closed.

*B.A.A.R.T.* - Project completed and grant closed.

*Alaska Mountain Safety Center* - This project has been a real success. Jill Fredston took the cd version and sent it to Doug Chabot with the US Forest Service in Montana. Chabot

modified it for use in the western US and Canada and printed 75,000 copies. Currently being circulated throughout the Western US and Canada.

*Fairbanks Police Department* - This was the all-time highest scoring grant application. They got an advance last year but have only used part of it, although they did do a lot of programs. Due to limited riding last two winters, they did more classroom programs. They want to make available statewide a lot of the materials produced. Expires end of May.

*North Slope* - They requested final reimbursement, we need some final documentation.

*Village of St Michael* - No progress reports submitted.

*Ohogamiut Traditional Council* - No progress reports submitted.

*Interior Trail Grooming* - No progress reports submitted. Lee heard the project was going well and the trail was groomed and used all winter.

*Caribou Hills Cabin Hoppers* – Project completed and grant closed.

### 2003 GRANTS

*Caribou Hills Cabin Hoppers* - Signed grant agreement. Not much grooming done this year due to lack of snow.

*Mat-Su Borough* - Signed grant agreement. Good to go.

*Alaska Snow Cats, Petersville* - DOT issued a permit to Parks, but we are on hold until the funding issue is decided. Grant agreement has not been signed.

Discussion on grant money and where the unused monies will go. Further discussion on subject postponed until that item on the agenda.

*Aleknagik* - Signed grant agreement, but have not heard anything yet.

*Valdez Snowmachine Club* - Submitted a progress report last week and requested reimbursement.

*B.A.A.R.T.* - Teaching a lot of free classes. Has been very well received.

*Iron Dog* - They have a new director who proposed some changes to the grant. Asked her to send a revised schedule. Marianne will contact her find out status. Discussion on extending grant period.

*Curyung Tribal Council* - Submitted progress report for review.

### FINANCIAL REPORT

All Administrative monies have been used up. We are broke.

### TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT

Please sign TAs and give them to Teri.

### REPORT ON 2002 SNOWMOBILE REGISTRATIONS.

Registrations are up to 40,000 in 2002 statewide from 38,000 in 2001. Discussion. Along with a staff member from the Alaska Mental Health Trust Land Office, Jim and Cliff did a field inspection on part of the Iron Dog Trail and Houston Lake Loop Trail. We are close to finalizing easements for the Iron Dog Trail and Flat Lake Connector Trail. We hope to finalize the Houston Lake Loop Trail as well. Part of the trail goes along the Matanuska Electric Association inter-tie, which could be an issue. Discussion.

**Break @ 10:30 am, Reconvened @ 10:35 am**

**SNOWTRAC STATUS AND 2004 SNOWMOBILE TRAIL GRANT FUNDING**

*Jim:* Because this is the Governor's budget, DNR staff cannot lobby for reinstatement. It is up to public and clubs to convince Legislature to fund. If they don't hear public outcry they won't fund.

Discussion on DMV registration handout. 40,000 snowmobiles are registered in Alaska.

*Jim:* The number of motor vehicle registrations are used by Federal Highways to estimate how much of the gas tax goes back to a state. An estimate of unregistered machines is also factored in. If the numbers go down than the money goes down. Discussion on the FY02 numbers.

Discussion on snowmachine registration. Concern that people will not register if none of the registration money is returning to projects to benefit snowmobiling.

*Bruce:* Stated his belief that the money was appropriated and that, unless told otherwise, State Parks should act like this is SnowTRAC money. We have made statements to Grantees that we would consider extensions. We have good grounds to fund those grants that are active and have shown good history.

*Mark:* I think we have a precedent with this money. In the past, we used unallocated grant funds for other purposes.

*Greg:* One comment that I have heard is "why should I care about SnowTRAC funding when you don't give out the money that you have?" Some people have suggested that maybe the standards are too high. He disagrees with this. The State can't just give the money away without rules. Sometimes we are kind of stuck and this gives us a black eye in the community. We may not get the support we want.

*Bruce:* Suggested the Administration explore what costs will be and discuss at the next meeting. We should approve the admin fees for 2004. We should have the foresight to allocate an admin percentage out of the \$106,000 remaining. This would provide evidence that we consider the money ours regardless as to how this plays out.

*Mark:* I agree with the percentage for the admin cost. As far as the \$106,000, we have enough money to do another grant run. Even if we don't get money in this year's budget, we have this money and it should go out to the snowmobile community

Further discussion on getting zero new funds and continuing the grants that all ready exist.

*Jim:* We could do something slightly different with the appropriation instead of grants. The Department of Transportation has the Statewide Transportation Improvement Projects (STIP) - People nominate projects that are reviewed and ranked. They then run down the ranking and fund them till they run out of money. Something similar here is maybe instead of grants we ask for specific projects that you would like to see done with a specific dollar amount, and then those are reviewed and then we run down through those. Could also develop a grooming pool.

*Craig:* That is exactly what he was going to bring up. Give us a letter of why you think this project should get a high ranking. Take the money that we do have and allocate to the projects that have the highest priority.

Discussion.

*Scott:* Expressed appreciation to the Committee for willingness to let members of the public participate. Acknowledged Mat-Su Assemblyperson, Jody Simpson, bringing to his attention that there is a line item in the governor's budget regarding grant funding. Indicated he would like to hear this group discuss a Resolution.

*Marianne:* We will entertain a Resolution to that effect immediately following lunch. Discussion on resolution and guidelines of resolutions. Discussion on phone calls at lunch and other contacts.

Discussion on the safety issue and linking Lisa Murkowski's Bill.

### **SENATOR LISA MURKOWSKI'S NATIONWIDE BILL**

Discussion on Lisa Murkowski's nationwide snowmobile bill. It may be difficult for a freshman senator to pass a bill her first year. Christopher Dowes from the Federal Highways Administration reviewed the bill. His initial impression is some states would not support the bill as written because they do not have snowmobiling and it is unclear where the money would come from. Senator Murkowski is the chair of the Senate Transportation Committee. She held a hearing in the Mat-Su Valley that Jody attended. According to Jody, at least half the testimony at the hearing was on trails. The bill was developed from a trail grant that the Mat-Su Borough put together. Both Senators Murkowski and Stevens are very interested in trails and snowmobile issues. Jody encourages the committee to mention the registration numbers for snowmachines and ATVs as well as the gas tax figures.

Discussion.

### **Adjourned for lunch @ 11:40 am, Reconvened @ 1:15 pm**

#### **DISCUSSION ON RESOLUTIONS TO SENATE FINANCE ON FUNDING**

Marianne presented copies of three documents to Committee. Document #1 is Resolution 99-1, document #2 is to Commissioner of DNR, and document #3 is to Legislature.

Review of past resolutions for example. Discussion.

Greg moved "to accept document #2 and send it forward to the Commissioner." Craig 2<sup>nd</sup>. Discussion. Review of Resolution changes. Motion carried unanimously and unofficially supported by all members of the public present.

Craig moved "to accept document 3 as written." Greg 2<sup>nd</sup>. Discussion on specifying the distribution of the resolution. Agreed it should be distributed to Commissioner of DNR, Governor Murkowski, and all Legislators. Motion carried unanimously.

### **SENATOR MURKOWSKI'S NATIONWIDE BILL**

(Cont.) For information and discussion

*Jim:* Christopher Dowes is the Federal Highways Administration person in charge of the recreational trail fees in Washington D.C. Every state sends through their snowmobile administrator the number of registered snowmobiles.

*Lee:* Indicated that when he originally heard about this it was almost duplicating the Recreational Trails program. He thought there would be double dipping on the motorized money, but when I read this here, it is not. It is just to take that section that was derived from snowmobiles and make sure that it actually goes to snowmobiles. It could have the effect of reducing what would be in the recreation trails program, or just a modification.

Doesn't know if this will really do much for us, it is not going to change the amount of money. Although it may insure that the snowmobile revenue goes more towards snowmobile, where as now it goes more towards non-motorized.

Discussion.

*Jody:* Several of us from Mat-Su Borough spoke with delegation. They specifically asked us about the gasoline tax. What are the needs? We were surprised that they were talking about this at that time. Bill(?) Wolf from Murkowski's office was interested in how the money would be divided. One of the issues we talked about was the fact that we can't do our trail dedications until we get recorded legal access. A lot of the upfront time and money required is not funded through Federal Highways money.

Discussion on Sea Trails, TEA-21 legislation, TEA-LU, ATV clubs.

*Jody:* One of the issues that she heard was multiuse.

*Craig:* We are reforming a snowmobile club in the Petersville area. They spoke about making it a multi-use club. There were a lot of snowmachiners that did not want to involve ATVs because of the environmental impact. The good thing about winter trails is that they are on rivers and across frozen bogs that won't support ATVs.

*Lee:* This is a good starting point. If the ATVs see this as a threat they may get their language in there, and in the end motorized recreation may see more funding.

Discussion on this motorized and non-motorized use exclusion or not, and fuel tax.

*Lee:* Support for the gas tax from the non-motorized users was brokered by giving them a 30/40 split. It is a new year and there is a new congress and maybe that isn't the big issue anymore. This is going to change the Recreational Trail Program. Can't increase snowmobile funding without decreasing someone else. He thinks it is a good thing, putting the money back to where it comes from.

*Mark:* Are you sure this isn't an attempt by our congressional delegation to change the funding formula to percentage of fuel tax that goes to the TRAAK Program, as opposed to trying to change the million dollars that is in there, trying to get a million two hundred thousand by being more accurate in the counting of the snowmobiles being used? It is not necessarily how the money is spent at the state level, it is that the federal government is not taking enough time and care in figuring how much of the fuel tax actually go into this program. They are trying to get a bigger chunk to get into the program.

*Jim:* According to the Recreational Trails Program – Snowmobile Estimate for Alaska Federal Highways uses the registration numbers along with a factor of 5% to estimate the unregistered snowmobiles (30,000 for Alaska).

Discussion on the states getting money that do not have snowmobiling and ATVs getting registered as snowmobiles. Why should they get a pool of the money from snowmobiles?

*Jim:* This has to pass through Congress and large population states with OHV/ATM users may vote against it.

Discussion on the 30/30/40 formula. 30-motorized, 30-non-motorized, 40-multi-use (diversified, safety and education).

*Lee:* Thinks the board should take a position on this issue.

*Craig:* Thinks it is like any bond put in front of a group of people, it depends on who makes the strongest statement.

Discussion.

*Jack:* It seems to me that there is a problem with the separation of snowmobiles from OHV's. We don't have to separate the two; we are low impact compared to off road

vehicles. In his opinion this could be resolved with planning. There is sufficient terrain for all. I think they all can be accommodated when considering the impact.

Discussion.

*Jody:* I think this is so useful and should be passed on to Sen. Murkowski. I am sure that she would value all of your points.

Discussion on this being added to the TRAAK board agenda also.

Discussion on passing this information on to Sen. Murkowski in a letter or sending this section of the minutes.

*Mark:* He enjoyed this discussion very much. In this 30 30 40 split formula, there is 30% going to a group it doesn't or shouldn't benefit. This bill seems to fix this funding formula because it seems to very tightly restrict where these dollars can be used. He thinks that benefits the snowmobilers.

*Lee:* With the exception of states that the 30% motorized is less than the total revenue of snowmobiles, then that would not benefit the snowmobilers.

*Jim:* Suggests that a letter be sent to Sen. Murkowski in support of the idea of the bill along with some questions.

Greg moved "to send a letter supporting the concept of the bill and a copy of the minutes to Senator Murkowski." Christine 2nd. Motion carried.

**NOTE TO STAFF:** Put this section of the minutes and circulate to the board before the letter goes out.

**Break @ 2:30, Reconvened @ 2:35.**

### **STATEWIDE TRAILS NONPROFIT GROUP (JIM RENKERT)**

There has been some discussion for a couple years on forming an Alaska Statewide Trails nonprofit organization to facilitate trail development and obtain corporate foundation monies for trail projects. The model for this in Alaska is Trail Mix, Inc. in Juneau. Trail Mix is a nonprofit that obtains funding from the US Forest Service and the City of Juneau. They have received several Recreational Trail grants along with one Snowmobile Trail grant. Trail Mix has been very successful in filling in some of the gaps with agencies. The idea of a statewide trails nonprofit is to form a statewide group. Bruce Friend is on the steering committee for this.

*Bruce:* The next meeting of the statewide trails nonprofit is April 28-30<sup>th</sup> at the Campbell Creek Science Center. Draft bylaws and a nonprofit description of the group have been written up. Among other things it aims at being a clearing house of information and a source of revenue, that would be viewed as not confrontational to motorized, non-motorized, and so on. The motorized community seems to be fairly under represented on the Steering Committee, as there are only two of them. A lot of agencies are taking part. He has always thought there is a lot of room in this area to get better at bringing groups together. The challenge is how motivated the motorized group gets in bring in more money, ethics, and input. The difficulties have been just getting enough money together to even plan a meeting. Where? Cost of getting the people there? Jim has a list of people on the Steering committee.

Discussion.



*Jim:* I was informed at lunch that a new Alaska State Parks Director has been appointed. His name is Gary Morrison and he has thirty years of experience with the US Forest Service. He will be located in Anchorage.

### **ALASKA TRAILS CONFERENCE, OCTOBER 2003, ANCHORAGE (JIM)**

The 2003, Alaska Recreation and Parks Association meeting, the Rivers Management meeting, and Alaska Trails conference will be in October. The Alaska Trails conference will be October 16 & 17 at the Egan Center. That is Thursday & Friday, with possible Saturday morning or evening sessions on Thursday & Friday. The Alaska Recreation Parks Association part will be the previous two days (Tuesday & Wednesday). Discussion of the draft agenda. Registration will be around \$100 to \$150.

*Bruce:* He has a couple of contacts for West Yellowstone and a good one for ATVs from Utah. He can also help with a contact from Minnesota. Polaris may be willing to help sponsor someone. He will get information.

Some ideas for breakout sessions were a session for successful grantees to speak on their projects and a grant writing session. The group really liked the successful grantees idea.

### **NEXT SNOWTRAC MEETING**

If we are not funded, we still need to have some type of meeting to determine the disposition of the unfinished business.

Discussion of date for the meeting. August 15, 2003. 9:00 am to 4:00 pm.

### **COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS**

*Christine:* Hopes that everybody makes the calls and passes the information on to get the money back in the budget.

*Lee:* He brought information from the Fairbanks Borough Advisory Commission meeting, which came from Mat-Su/Susitna Borough Community Development Department. It was regarding development of uniform Ethics and Etiquette statements for trail users in Alaska. It is a resolution on this subject. Thinks it would be useful for SnowTRAC to adopt.

They are trying to get this distributed to trail groups statewide and get everyone on board. Jim has an electronic version and will send to all members.

*Jim:* Some of you may know that the Park Service is working on a backcountry management plan. They have a draft out. There are meetings this weekend. He brought a copy of the executive summary for everyone. He also brought a copy of their comment form for those interested in commenting. They want to hear what context and what bits and pieces you like. There are some really big changes planned, one of which is the use of corridors in the preserve area.

Brief discussion. Good points to put on the feedback form.

*Bruce:* In thinking about SnowTRAC one thing that crosses my mind is the limitation of \$15,000 for a grant. If we are funded, I think maybe we should increase amount and get more professional groups applying for grants. I think the quality of our grant applicants would be much better. What he sees is that the grants are so small that they are not useful for the activities that we would like to see happen. We are sitting here with \$50,000 left

over, in this case more. He would like to open this up for thought process whether is actually ever comes to pass or not.

*Craig:* Wants to speak on the same issues. This is something that was brought up in our last meeting. In working with Pat Owens in the Mat-Su borough in trying to develop a corridor. One of the things that we have done is we actually when out and brush lines based on some GPS coordinates. They came back and ran the mapping with some money we had. The trail system that was developed there, the \$15,000 dollars would mainly groom Safari Lake Trail and that would be it. It wouldn't hit any of the secondary trails. If there was more money we could impact a much larger area. We could possibly groom a system as opposed to just a trail.

*Greg:* The club that he's involved with is a little bit bigger than some. One reason that we do so well is because of its overall size and because we use pull-tabs for a lot of income. One of the things that are going to be killing nonprofits is the change that Gov.

Murkowski has on pull-tabs. According to his sources, it is going to impact his club about 50%. By the time we have that, the SnowTRAC goes away, if TRAAK cuts back we are dead. Here we are looking at least maintaining what we have, doing well, and having the equipment to do it. Pull-tab changes will affect every nonprofit out there.

On another note regarding committee seats, if we do survive and actually have seats anymore, he is way overdue on a seat change or reappointment.

*Mark:* He would like to take his time to see if we can map out a strategy in case funding doesn't get into the budget, because it is a real possibility. He would like to put it out to everyone. Discussion. There was suggestion for contacting Senator Lyda Green. Senator Wilkins would be a strong help. Bill Williams in the House, co-chair of finance.

Discussion of a bill. To guarantee the success of SnowTRAC takes two hands, the director and the legislature. One more idea is to raise the registration on snowmobiles. Discussion. Could have a hard time on this unless the money stayed in the program.

*Marianne:* We all seem to be in agreement. Is the Legislative Committee Chair (Mark Wilkes) willing to accept the responsibility of contacting Sen. Lyda Green with support of Craig Seibert, Bruce Friend, and Christine Noakes?

*Mark:* Agreed to monitor the budget very closely. If it doesn't (get in) then he will contact all members. It wouldn't hurt to call Sen. Green. Suggested we might ask Senator Elton to sponsor a bill. Good strategy to get to both parties in both Senate and House.

*Jody:* Thanks for letting her sit in and be here.

*Joe:* If SnowTRAC is going to go to the Legislature for short term funding this year, why not ask them to establish a proper snowmobile program like other states? Still bring in the volunteers like we do now, but have staff do this stuff. He thinks it might be time to do it a different way.

Discussion. Go for the short term and look for the long term. Suggestion that it be added to a future agenda.

*Christine:* That is what we need, we need it in there as a line item. That is where she thinks Sen. Lisa Murkowski's bill will probably join in with that. Discussion.

*Marianne:* If acceptable, the Legislative Committee will monitor this. When you need us to jump in and help, let us know. If we need to go down this road then we will reset our gears and invite the public members to be a part of this process.

*Mark:* Make your calls.

*Marianne:* If in the Legislature's wisdom and the Governor's decision that this group is not funded in the future, she wants to say it has been a great honor to work with each member. Thank you each for your time and work. This weekend is not too late to be making your calls. Put it on a personal level and call the people in your district. If you know of someone not in your area and that are part of the Finance Committee, please make that call. When we adjourn the meeting, we will finalize the resolutions.

**MEETING ADJOURNED 3:51 PM.**

SnowTRAC Committee Meeting  
632 West 6<sup>th</sup> Ave., Anchorage  
January 31, 2003

Meeting called to order at 9:33am by Chair Marianne Beckham. Quorum present.

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT**

Marianne Beckham, Chair - Anchorage

Matt Divens – Fairbanks

Christine Noakes – Big Lake

Craig Seibert – Trapper Creek

Lee Johnson, TRAAK Board Liaison, - Fairbanks

Kenton Bloom – Homer

Bruce Friend - Anchorage

Frank Woods – Dillingham

Mark Wilke – Juneau

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT**

Greg Barclay - Soldotna (excused)

**Staff present:** Jim Renkert and Teri Gilpin (ASP)

**Public:** Pat Kukertz-Anchorage Snowmobile Club President, Murph O'Brien- Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT), Dave Heier-DOT

Chair Marianne welcomed all committee members and public attending.

Discussion on where the snowmachining is happening. Turnagain, Lost Lake, and Hatcher's Pass are all closed. Paxson and Eklutna have decent snow. Petersville and Big Lake there is very little snow and not much riding. Juneau Forest Service opened some trails, had one night of good riding before it rained. Fairbanks and Big Lake had just enough snow to ride locally, but hard on the machines. Airboat Trail was pretty good. Tanana Flats was not bad. Bristol Bay has bare ground, still on 4-wheelers.

No alternates or proxies. Greg Barclay was absent and his alternate, Howard Davis, was unavailable.

**APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER MINUTES**

Chris moved "to accept the minutes from November 8, 2002." Kenton 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Marianne made a change on page two; Marianne spoke on behalf of SnowTRAC instead of ASRA. Lee wanted a change on page eight; DOT said they were not in priority order. Lee disagreed; they should not be listed that way. Minutes approved as corrected. No objections.

**AGENDA ADDITIONS/REVISIONS**

Break at public appearances. Lunch at 11:30 am at LaMex. No changes to agenda.

**CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS**

Discussion of the format of conflict of interest. Conflicts of interest should be declared at every meeting.

*Marianne:* declared a conflict of interest with ASSA, ASC, and Iron Dog.

Jim led a discussion on the operating procedures and ethics. Read from item 21. These are only draft operating procedures that have not yet been finalized. Discussion on whether these ethics apply to the SnowTRAC committee or not.

The Municipality of Anchorage also has a conflict of interest provision. Similar to state's but different. Suggestion to marry the two documents and bring something together that the board could adopt so that this is all very clear and not in flux. Discussion.

Jim spoke with a DNR ethics attorney. Ethics attorney said that SnowTRAC should come up with their own and adopt that. We need to finalize this.

*Bruce:* declared conflict on ASSA and ASRA

*Christine:* no longer on B.A.A.R.T.'s Board of Directors, still on Response Team as volunteer.

*Mark:* on the board for Trail Mix, Southeast Alaska Avalanche Center, and Juneau Snowmobile Club. Mark asked, "Is lobbying allowable?" Marianne responded that we will address this.

*Matt:* Fairbanks Snow Travelers member, Iron Dog volunteer, Fairbanks Convention Visitors Bureau, Alaska Travel Industry Association, Chamber of Commerce, and Princess Tours

*Frank:* declares conflict with Tribal Council

## **OLD BUSINESS**

Need to resolve the alternates and proxies issue. Discussion. Frank shared information on what he found. Section needs to be simplified and cleared up. Will work on this at the next meeting.

## **Break @ 10:28 am, Reconvened @ 10:30 am**

## **PUBLIC APPEARANCE**

*Pat Kukertz, Anchorage Snowmobile Club-President.* He had spoke with some SnowTRAC members, and it became clear that there was some confusion with the Anchorage Snowmobile Club's grant status. Here to confirm/figure out what their status is, are they short on paperwork and if so what do they need to get in? Open grant was to groom the trails of Chugach State Park. They are currently on a 1 or 2 year extension and it doesn't look like they are going to be able to get much done this year. They are hoping for another extension for next year. ASC wanted to make sure they are in good standing with SnowTRAC.

*Marianne:* My perception is that Anchorage Snowmobile club is in good standing with us. We will discuss extension in a little bit. As far as paperwork goes, Jim will address that.

*Craig:* When we spoke on the grants from 2000 and 2001, there were lots of loose ends.

*Jim:* Anchorage Snowmobile Club has one denied. If there are questions on this grant, copies of the score sheets are available for the applicant to review. As far as the grooming grant, we have a progress report, but it was missing information. We need receipts or a copy of the cancelled check for reimbursement.

*Lee:* a clarification on terms, this grant did not score high enough, not denied but disqualified.

Discussion on clarification of a receipt and an invoice, what is covered with the grant (maintenance, gas oil). Discussion of extension, scope, and flex budget.

#### PETERSIVILL ROAD REPORT

*Marianne:* Restated that the grant to Randy Crosby was for \$15,000 to groom a 17-mile trail with conditions. DOT had oversight and we had to comply with regulations. Randy could get a permit, but it had to go to State Parks and then Parks would permit.

*Jim:* Grant was awarded conditionally. Before grant agreement could be signed, all DOT conditions had to be fulfilled.

*Murph O'Brien-State DOT:* With certain conditions (public notice, support from the borough, address non-motorized concerns, miners), a permit could be issued. Letting the miners know raised a question on public road access and right of way.

We would hope ideas would come from working with the community. We're looking at this from a broader picture. Signage has been proposed, but still needs some work. The other issue is the non-motorized users. We want to know what has worked before and what information can be provided to us.

*Jim:* He has been playing phone tag with Kevin Hite about a plan. Trying to work this out.

Discussion.

*Bruce:* We have to take a little risk. There is not a lot of season left, and some disappointed users. Discussion.

*Murph:* What DOT is asking for is how the risks are going to be mitigated. How can we get this to work? There is some signage, but needs more communication and details. Discussion on signage and how other places have addressed this.

*Mark:* Normal rules of the road apply, why do we need to come up with a new set?

*Marianne:* We need to establish use of this road. There have been times when trucks, snowmachiners, walkers, and four-wheelers have all met on this road.

Discussion.

*Dave Heier-State DOT:* There are statutes that deal with this, but it doesn't apply to snowmachiners; it applies to licensed drivers. The same for speed limits.

Discussion on users of this road, signing, and making it a winter trail. Making people aware of the multiple users and the possible dangers. Discussion on this area not being marked or groomed.

*Murph:* This is what we want to hear and see, something so that the information gets out. It is better to get the community and organization involved.

Discussion on maintaining, marking, and signing.

*Craig:* This is a project that the community is behind and should have been handled months ago. This should have been a non-issue. If there was same interest here as Hatcher's Pass, this could have been resolved. This road has been multi-use for years.

*Frank:* Suggested adopting an ordinance for non-motorized and motorized use.

Post signage stating that this is a multi-use trail, non-motorized users have right of way.

Post signs for the non-maintained season.

*Kenton:* The process is frustrating for both sides. Coming up with a plan and example so that there is a starting point.

Discussion on designation of route, funds, and policies.

*Mark:* Suggested spelling it all out: non-maintained times, all of the multiple users, and carry it from state to each level.

*Marianne:* Is there something that SnowTRAC can do to help move this along?

*Dave:* We need a plan, everything else is worked out. We need details and then we can issue a permit. This was made clear to Randy.

*Murph:* If there is a need for more public notice, we can do that.

Discussion on coming up with a plan for Randy.

*Marianne:* I have a problem with the board coming up with a plan for Randy. It is not the board's responsibility, it is his.

Discussion.

Discussion on speed limits. The state is the only one that has say in limits.

*Marianne:* Subject is closed. We want to see this happen, but we are not writing the plan. Thank you to Dave and Murph for coming. Thank you to each board member for their comments.

### **STAFF REPORT (JIM RENKERT)**

#### **FORAKER GROUP**

Brochure in folder. Discussion on the background of this group. Encouraged the board to look at the training offered and check out the web site.

#### **ADMIN FINANCIAL**

Unused funds from 2002 were \$5,000, and last year there was \$74,000. Total of \$106,000 of unused funds, and more coming back. Discussion of the possibility of the funds being swept back into the States Operating budget. Per Jim, Accounting section said no. Discussion.

### **Break for lunch @ 11:40 am, Reconvened @ 12:50 pm**

#### **TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT**

TA's turned in. Members will complete travel and send in with original receipts.

#### **2000 GRANTS**

*ASSA-* never submitted proper documentation. They need to refund us everything. Sent them a certified letter, haven't heard anything back. Unused portion will return to the program. They got an advance of \$10,650. Was turned over to our Accounting Section for collection. Craig suggested delegating grants among board members for more regular contact. Discussion on contacting, forward funding, collecting of debts, and credibility. Chris volunteered to contact Kevin, get facts from Jim.

*Hatcher Pass-* Brochure sent to the printer.

*Lake Creek-* Going to submit a reimbursement, lots of good press on this project.

According to Mark Wilke new USFS supervisor worked with them everyday. Discussion on getting the good press out there to be seen.

*Kroto Creek-* There was left over money; they got a second grant and have not yet used all that money. If not used, it will be closed and the money will return to the fund.

*Point Mackenzie-* Discrepancies in the stuff they submitted, so we will get a letter off to them, we may need more receipts.

*City of Wasilla, Winter Trailhead-* They want an extension thru July 1, 2003. Discussion on extension. Christine moved “to extend this grant to July 1, 2003.” Bruce 2<sup>nd</sup>. Discussion. Motion passed.

*City of Wasilla, Trail grooming-* No snow to groom, got an extension to 3/31/02. Last fall they came in and wanted to do a different project, grooming a section of the Iditarod. Through discussion with Tim, they are not going to pursue this. They do want to extend their trail-grooming grant. Discussion on this grant getting extended, and on limiting the number of grant extensions, possibly having an expedited reapplication process. This will be taken up during the next grant cycle.

*Eklutna Cabin-* We should be getting final report in the next two weeks. They have \$1400.00 left. Has been a successful project.

*Eagle Song-* State Parks accounting did an audit of all four grants (one Snowmobile Trail Grant and three Recreational Trail Grants). For their snowmobile grant they were awarded \$11,000, got an advance of \$8,300. The audit found a number of discrepancies. Certified letter sent informing them they need to reimburse the State a total of \$7,700. Discussion.

*ASSA-* Certified letter sent to them in May. No response. We are going to close.

#### 2001 GRANTS

*Fairbanks Snow Travelers-* They have \$200.00 left. We are going to close and return the money to the fund.

*White Mountain-* They have \$5,500 left. We requested a progress report, said they would submit next week.

*Copper Country-* Changed their project scope to surveying. They need to be approved and sent a new grant agreement. Craig moved “to accept change in project scope to surveying.” Christine 2<sup>nd</sup>. Discussion. Motion passed.

*Big Lake-* Held up because not all easements in place. Big section of the Iron Dog trail that we finally have Mental Health Trust looking at, hoping they won’t come back with any major problems.

*Brevig Mission-* They said they would get something to us; if not in 30 days, we will close.

#### 2002 GRANTS

*Shaktoolik-* Have heard nothing from them. If no response in 30 days, we will close.

*Fairnet-* They received an advance of \$3,200. They will return the advance and we will close. The contact person moved away.

*Alaska Mountain Safety Center-* Snowmobile avalanche brochure completed. Printed 60,000. Discussion.

*Fairbanks Police Department-* Received an advance of \$11,000. They did get a program going. We gave them a one-year extension because they did not spend much money. They have a safety program scheduled for early March at Chena Lakes.

*Kroto Creek:* Asked for a one-year extension due to not much snow.

*North Slope Borough-*They requested a reimbursement of \$9,100. We need photos and documentation first.

*St Michael-* No progress reports received.

*Ohogamiut Traditional Council-* No progress reports received.



*Lake Louise-* Haven't received anything recently. Mat-Su Borough is paying for a state employee to work on them.

*Chena Hot Spring:* Haven't received anything from them. We have contacted them a couple of times, but no response.

*Lee:* Spoke with the contact person and asked them to contact Jim. Even if there is nothing to report, they still need to submit something or contact us.

## 2003 GRANTS

*Cabin Hoppers-* They never got the grant agreement; we sent another one.

*Mat-Su Borough-* signed their grant agreement and is good to go.

*Alaska Snow Cat-* Still working on their permit.

*Valdez Snowmobile Club-* They called with a couple of questions, working on things. They were interested so we are sending some of the new snowmobile avalanche brochures.

*Curyung-*All day workshop on avalanche safety training, Saturday 10-5 and Sunday 10-4. Free and open to all ages and all communities.

*B.A.A.R.T-* Christine helped with a training class last week. Last year alone 4,000 people were educated, most were school age.

*Iron Dog-* They have a new executive director. She requested that some changes be made to the grant. We haven't heard back from them yet. Consider extending. Discussion. Need to have a response with in thirty days.

## Trails and Recreation Access Across Alaska (TRAAK) BUDGET

There are two parts to TRAAK funding 1) Recreational Trail program, and 2) DOT Statewide Transportation Improvement Projects (STIP). They get 11.5 million dollars a year for STIP projects that include projects like trails, bike paths, and trailheads. A change in administration has changed this amount. They are going to reduce the TRAAK amount and move it into the highway projects. The TRAAK Board may also be done away with. Discussion. The primary staff for TRAAK is DOT, other staff is DNR and Fish and Game. Meeting on Tuesday with the Acting DOT Commissioner and the TRAAK board.

Two issues to discuss- Snowmachine Position, and Suggestions regarding the next grant cycle.

**Break @ 2:05 pm, Reconvened @ 2:10 pm**

## SNOWMACHINE COORDINATOR POSITION IN STATE PARKS

*Marianne:* In the first few months of SnowTRAC there was a vote that this money would not go to a bureaucratic position. With the volume of work being done now, I would now support a full time snowmobile grant coordinator position for the intent of managing the snowmobile grant program, and to work with state parks and other interested parties on a trail system including snowmobile trails.

*Frank:* Not only are we in a dilemma with the administration changes, we haven't spent all of our money. With the money it is use it or lose it. In the lower forty-eight, they promote snowmobile safety in general. We can't do this if we don't have the manpower. He is in support of this position.

*Craig:* He is not in favor of any additional state employee positions. He would like to see it from a private sector, not to get bogged down by the bureaucracy. Someone with a passion for the sport, not just about being on the job.

*Lee:* Thinks that there is a need for a full time coordinator, however there are so many unknowns about where this administration is going. He feels that the state should already be doing this. Until we have an idea of where things are going, should wait.

*Matt:* Aside from the Administration, or regardless of what we feel, will this position help more grants be awarded?

*Kenton:* He was there for that meeting where the initial vote took place. He once did a job with a similar situation. They ended up hiring a full time agency coordinator because it worked better and gave more credibility to the program. He understands the need for a full time coordinator, and is in full support.

*Bruce:* There need to be a more clear focus on where the state is going in terms of support or not of our current system. We need more time, and a better perspective. Not in favor of this position at this time. Doesn't see this position in our best interest.

*Christine:* Eventually, but not now. We do need to go in that direction because people do need to be trained.

*Mark:* Having spent time talking with legislatures, and legislative staff, one issue that keeps coming up is the fact that there is no safety program in Alaska. Changes in laws, which were relatively minor, almost failed because they (the legislature) were hung up on this issue. We, as leaders in the snowmobile community, have to take a leading role in addressing safety. We can't do it solely with volunteers and we can't do it ourselves. I think it will take a full time staff person.

Discussion on participating in the hiring of this position, job specifications.

Discussion if DOT does this instead of DNR, and who has the money to get this done.

*Christine:* Suggested that this be on the next agenda to discuss.

*Marianne:* 1 hour on next agenda.

Discussion on criteria of this position. Further discussion on the coordinator position, money for this position, and the safety program.

*Marianne:* Your assignment for the next meeting-Each of you represents some one and some area. Discuss this with snowmobilers that you come in contact with. At least 15 people. Present this to them as if the money were available, would they be in support of a position at the state level to coordinate the SnowTRAC grants, safety and education program, and an Alaska state trails system.

*Lee:* This may be a good opportunity to educate people on what the money is going for.

#### SUGGESTIONS FOR THE NEXT GRANT CYCLE

Bruce's suggestion: Grooming grants that are turned back due to lack of snow, but in compliance, receive expedited handling during the next grant cycle.

Craig's suggestion: An intermediate step for grants that are good, but lacking elements in the application.

Discussion on grant process, clarifying the grant and scope of services. Also discussion on a grooming pool. So much money being tied up in grants that can't use it. Possibly come up with a grooming pool so that places that do have snow can use it.

*Bruce:* One thing we might consider is to suggest to people that are going to apply, is to use someone to help through the grant writing process, instead of us having a meeting to pre-review. Helping to get a good grant submitted off the bat.

*Marianne:* Shared that with the city they have done a workshop on grant writing. Discussion on this workshop idea.

*Kenton:* Would be happy to facilitate, idea of a web site for grant writing.

*Bruce:* Love the idea, but would like to turn it over to someone that professionally does this stuff. (Foraker group)

*Frank:* Not too up on the idea. It would be helpful, but I agree with Bruce, on a group that does this with no conflict of interest.

*Lee:* Some years ago when Ron Crenshaw was involved with TRAAK, they did this, but the people that need the help weren't coming to the workshops. So he is not really sure if this would really help. If the applicant needs help, they should be asking the organization not the board members. Try to keep the board members out of the technical part.

*Marianne:* With the city, we don't do the technical, but just answer the question.

*Lee:* It would be good if other entities were aware of this application process, then maybe they could also help people put together better applications.

*Craig:* I think a workshop is a good idea. An on-line project of some kind would be a good idea. There are people in this state that write grants. We could attach to the application a message, if you need help contact this/these person/people in your area. And in addition to this, these workshops will be available.

*Matt:* I don't think we have the resources for these workshops. Give an example application.

*Jim:* Grant applications include samples of good application responses.

*Mark:* A well-written grant is a strong indicator of a real good grant recipient. We need to be real careful on trying to lower the bar. If it is not a good grant, let's not fund it. I don't think that we should proof the grants; we need to have a level field.

*Christine:* Mention on the application that having a good application needs to have good follow through.

*Jim:* One thing that we did is adjusted the scoring for needs and benefits. SnowTRAC committee members have to be careful about coaching applicants. You have to review the grant applications and remain impartial. For the first time, this past year two unsuccessful applicants contacted me for their score sheets.

*Marianne:* Two things to think about, my suggestions: adjusting either, our policy and procedures, or make it clear in the grant; future grant eligibility may depend on past performance and/or non-performance of grants. Should we base future grants on past performance? (If not in compliance for one, not eligible for another?) We need to limit the number of extensions.

*Craig:* When it comes to some of these, we need to be somewhat lenient, towards the first time grantees.

Brief discussion. Several committee members made comments that applicants need to aspire to minimum level to obtain a grant. We need to keep the bar fairly high.

## **AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING**

Next meeting April 18, 2003

For the next meeting, look at two sections, safety education and use of state public transportation- chapter 2.

### **COMMITTEE COMMENTS**

*Jim:* Looking back to 4 years ago and where we are now, we are making progress. SnowTRAC committee members are the leaders in the snowmobile community. At this time, state parks has an acting director. No word yet on who our new director will be.

*Kenton:* Two snowmachine groups on the Kenai Peninsula, the Caribou Hill Cabin Hoppers and the Homer Snowmads. Communication between the two groups could be improved.

*Bruce:* Being new in this group, it seems sometimes, the process of grants, maybe is there a consideration for a larger grant?

*Lee:* Parks Highway Plan, two rounds of meetings already held. If anyone is interested, there is some good stuff related to trail heads and available on State DOT web site (Dave Post, Manager 269-0520), Central Region Planning. Winter Transportation Study, Chapter one, page one, the fourth bullet is not true. There was a huge piece of information that was left out. He will bring to the next meeting or e-mail link.

*Craig:* Keep in mind we are developing something new here and we are learning as we go. We are constantly getting bombarded with changes. It is okay to remain unsatisfied, rather than dissatisfied. We are not perfect and we are moving in the right direction. This grooming pool is a great concept.

*Marianne:* We need to think about the criteria of the pool.

*Matt:* The Fairbanks North Star Bureau met in September. One of their recommendations was to use funding to survey and purchase easements for all trails proposed. It ties in with the coordinator concept. It would be nice if it were someone friendly to the sport. Discussion.

About the earlier conversation, he is in favor of the coordinator position but not too soon. Grooming pool is a great idea.

*Mark:* We really do a lot of very good work and it is helping snowmobiling become a safer sport. We have a lot to look forward to. I think getting to know some of the grantees is a great idea and maybe do a meeting in the different areas.

*Christine:* It's a good idea to get around, to see where the members live and what it's like for them. The pool idea is great.

*Bruce:* Is it possible that the date of granting let each year is a result of the funding we got from the first year? Maybe we don't fit the criteria of the people applying for the grants because of the timing of grant submission.

Discussion on the grant process, availability of money, and overlapping problem.

Discussion on the grooming pool. Board research project, Marianne will do this with help.

Christine moved to adjourn.

**MEETING ADJOURNED 4:02 PM**

SnowTRAC Committee Meeting  
Foraker Room, Egan Center  
Anchorage, Alaska  
November 8, 2002

Meeting called to order at 9:38 a.m. by Chair Marianne Beckham. Quorum Present.

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT**

Marianne Beckham - Anchorage

Matt Divens – Fairbanks

Lee Johnson - TRAAK Board Liaison – Fairbanks

Craig Seibert – Trapper Creek

Greg Barclay - Soldotna

Bruce Friend - Anchorage

Christine Noakes – Big Lake

Frank Woods – Dillingham

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT**

Kenton Bloom – Homer (excused)

Mark Wilke – Juneau (excused)

**Staff present:** Jim Stratton-Director, Jim Renkert and Teri Gilpin (ASP)

**Public:** Peter Porco-Anchorage Daily News, Dwayne Adams-Land Design North, Tim Krug-City of Wasilla, Joanne Yerkes-Skwentna, Cliff Larson-DNR-ML&W, Dwaine Schuldt-Chair of the Girdwood Trails Committee, Jennifer Heck- Citizen, Jerry Gregory-Deshka Landing& Lower Susitna Drainage Assoc., Dwight Neal-citizen, Paul Prusak-DOT in Fairbanks, Pat Owens-Mat-Su Borough

Introduction of visitors and committee members.

There were no alternates or proxies.

Greg moved “to approve minutes from August 23, 2002 as submitted”. Craig Seibert 2nd. Motion approved.

**AGENDA ADDITIONS/REVISIONS**

Tim Krug, City of Wasilla, added under Public Appearances. Jim Stratton requested the Directors Report be moved up in the agenda before staff reports.

**DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

Jim Stratton gave his final Director's report. As of noon on December 2 he will step down as Alaska State Parks Director and start a new job. Stratton discussed his experiences as director. As the agency leader it was a privilege to work with new people and try a new outdoor recreation activity: one he otherwise may not have experienced. As director, it was his responsibility to represent the outdoor activities of all Alaskans. Early on in his tenure he asked, "What can parks do to support snowmobiling?" The response he got was to support the passing of the point of sale registration legislation and the establishment of a snowmobile trail grant program. Through the efforts of many people, point-of-sale legislation passed in 1998 and registration began in 1999. In 1999, the

SnowTRAC Committee created to oversee the grant program. State Parks established SnowTRAC with four representatives from the Alaska State Snowmobile Association (ASSA), two from the Alaska Snowmobile Representatives Alliance (ASRA), one from rural Alaska, and two representatives from the multi-use trail community. State Parks worked hard to build a level of trust to allow this program to move forward and succeed.

In 2000, the first grant was made. With SnowTRACs guidance, the Division of Parks has made 27 Acquisition, Development, and Maintenance grants, and 19 Safety and Education grants, totaling almost \$400,000.

SnowTRAC is now looking at other issues facing the snowmobile community such as trail dedication, state rules and regulations, and a comprehensive statewide safety and education program. Stratton would like SnowTRAC to review all of the state's current laws and regulations along with similar laws and regulations in other states. Upon review, recommendations can be made to the Legislature to clarify and consolidate Alaska's snowmobile laws. A good focus would be on young riders. Stratton wants Jim Renkert to get back to his primary job with the Alaska Heritage Trails Program and trail easements. To do this, State Parks needs to create a position to work only on snowmobile issues. This person would support SnowTRAC, manage the grant program, and develop a statewide safety and education program.

Stratton said he is very proud of the partnership developed between Alaska State Parks and the snowmobile community to make Alaska a better and safer place for riding. This is government making a difference. He has enjoyed starting this program, watching it grow and thanked everyone for their time and energy serving on the board. He concluded with the hope that each of the committee members would continue to serve, and are successful with the next director.

Marianne spoke on behalf of SnowTRAC thanking Jim Stratton for his involvement, bids farewell to him, and wished him Good Luck with his new job.

## **STAFF REPORTS**

GRANT STATUS 2003 Ten grants were awarded for 2003. Several were awarded conditionally. One, a City of Wasilla acquisition grant, has subsequently been denied, as the city already owns the land. Grant agreements were sent out, we have received five back. Randy Crosby, Alaska Snow Cat, needs to obtain a DOT permit. Discussion regarding grooming Petersville Road. Paul Prusak from DOT Fairbanks should be arriving to speak on grooming in the DOT right-of-way.

GRANT STATUS 2002 These grants expired in October or will expire October next year. Southeast Alaska Avalanche Center-closed. Shaktoolik, they have called but have submitted no progress report. Maybe give them another month and then move to close. Fairnet, 75% advance but no progress report, they said they may apply for an extension. B.A.A.R.T., closed. Alaska Mountain Safety Center, snowmobile safety book, Jill Fredston requested a change in scope. Fairbanks Police Department requested and received a 75% advance last year. They have requested a 1-year extension. Submitted a

very nice progress report; have only used \$1,100.00 of their \$15,000 grant. Recommend a 7-month extension until end of May 2003.

Greg moved “to extend the grant to Fairbanks Police Department”. Matt 2<sup>nd</sup>, motion passed. North Slope Borough, missing photos of the snowmachine they purchased, another \$4,000 in reimbursement, just about done. St. Michael, no progress report. Ohogamiut Traditional Council, no progress report. Interior trail grooming, Chena Hot Springs, no snow to groom last year, no progress report. Have not heard anything from them, they have been contacted via e-mail. Caribou Hills Cabin Hoppers, closed. Lake Louise Phase II, closed. Continuing to work on trail easements in Lake Louise area. Mat-Su Parks, Kroto Creek trailhead, used \$4400 last year, \$5400 left.

Discussion on Alaska Mountain Safety Center change of scope request. Craig moved “to reopen the scope of services on this grant”. Chris 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Discussion on contents of the information card and price, time frame, and copy right issues. Greg moved “to approve request pending submittal of a budget, more information on content of brochure, and clarification of copyright issue”. Bruce 2<sup>nd</sup>. Motion passed.

GRANT STATUS 2001 Copper Country, submitted a letter yesterday providing information on the firm they selected for survey work. Forwarded to DNR Procurement Section for approval. Big Lake Chamber Of Commerce, trail grooming, if we get Iron Dog wrapped up we can move forward with grooming. Brevig Mission, grant has expired. Spoke with them in September, they’re still deciding on whether to request extension or relinquish. We will contact them one more time. They did purchase some supplies for project. Anchorage Snowmobile Club, no snow to groom the first year, did \$1,400 of grooming last year. They’ve submitted one progress report but did not include receipts. They’ve requested an extension for another year; recommend extension until April 30, 2003. All agreed to extend.

GRANT STATUS 2000. This was the first year of SnowTRAC grants. Eligibility requirements and documentation material have tightened up since then. ASSA was sent certified letters closing their two grants. They owe us money for one grant from an advance that they didn’t completely use. We’ve had no response. Alaska State Parks, Hatcher’s Pass brochure, spoke with DNR graphics person; she has material just needs to put it together. Committee would like this completed by end of the year. Trail Mix, Lawson Creek bridge project was changed to the Lake Creek trail project. Report in packet. They’re making good progress, may be done by the end of this month. Mat-Su Borough, Pt. McKenzie trailhead, kiosk has been received, they need to set up and send us photos. City of Wasilla, Tim Krug will give us a report. Eklutna cabin, project completed, some final receipts to be submitted. Close at end of the December. EagleSong, there is some disagreement between EagleSong and state over allowable expenses. They already own the equipment that they are submitting receipts for rental on. Parks accountant is not allowing this as a legitimate expense. Committee agreed.

FINANCIAL REPORT \$200,000 appropriated for 2003 fiscal year. We have used \$112,000 for grants. Year to date, we have used \$10,500 in administrative costs. We used \$900 for reprinting flyers, booklets, and brochures.

TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENTS Jim Renkert collected the signed Travel Authorizations and reimbursement forms.

New snowmobile position is working its way through Juneau to be placed on Workplace Alaska. We hope to have it posted by the end of the month. Public notice will be out next week on a section of the Iron Dog Trail. Continuing to work on Iron Dog; met with the Mental Health Trust Land Office to discuss obtaining a trail license for the part of the trail that crosses their land.

*Tim Krug from the City of Wasilla reported on their two 2000 grants (\$15,000 and \$10,500 respectively) on developing winter trailhead amenities and trail grooming.* After progress report on trailhead, Krug presented a request to change the scope of the trail-grooming grant. The City of Wasilla would like to turn the grant over to the Iditarod Trail Committee to groom in the City of Wasilla, along Knik-Goose Bay Road and along historic Iditarod Trail. Historic Iditarod has a 200-foot right-of-way. Discussion. Some questions regarding legal access, DOT right of way and RS2477.

*Paul Prusak-DOT, one of the authors of Snowmobiles in State of Alaska Rights-of-Way, Winter Transportation Study.* City of Wasilla's request goes back to the DNR conditions of the grant, applicant needs to go to DOT for proper authorization within the right-of-way.

*Jim Renkert:* One of the recommended revisions to state law in the Winter Transportation Study (WTS) is that local governments should work with DOT to obtain an encroachment permit within the right-of-way to designate a winter trail. The WTS Paul has put together is the baseline data on where Alaska is with respect to laws and issues regarding snowmobiles.

Further discussion on Wasilla request. According to Paul, for races and events within the DOT right-of-way, a permit is needed. DOT Northern Region Maintenance section has been issuing and they generally haven't been a problem.

With regard to grant, Marianne reiterated that SnowTRAC will not approve a grant that promotes trespass on anybody's land. We require documentation that shows approval of access. Paul, Tim, and Marianne discussed obtaining documentation for grooming this right-of-way. Discussion.

Scott Lapienne, commenting as a member of the public, mentioned that the Iditarod Sled Dog Race does not follow the historic Iditarod Trail Easement mentioned by Tim Krug. According to Lapienne, the Iditarod Trail Committee gets a permit every year to groom the section of the trail outside the historic trail. Outside of the historic Iditarod Trail route, there may be other landowners and agencies that need to be contacted.



Further discussion. This change of scope needs a better map that highlights routes. Committee would be in favor of changing the scope and allowing Iditarod Trail Committee to groom provided that City of Wasilla supplies better documentation of legal access and a map. Also, request that there can be no restrictions to snowmobilers for portions that Iditarod Trail Committee grooms for dog mushing.

Frank moved, “to approve the change in scope with the conditions of legal public access documentation and a map”. Greg 2<sup>nd</sup>. Discussion. According to Jim, Wasilla still has the original grant and can use that through March 31. Motion passed.

**Break @ 11:24am. Reconvened @ 11:29am**

### **PUBLIC APPEARANCES**

*Joanne Yerkes, Skwentna-Shell Lake area.* Ms. Yerkes made several comments regarding snowmachine use in Skwentna area. Snowmachines are the primary mode of transportation in the Skwentna area and are used differently than recreational snowmachines. According to her, area residents are concerned about protecting their private property and way of life. They support trails, but would like a policy of ‘do no harm’ adopted by recreational users. They would also like the residents and property owners better involved in dialogue regarding trail location and development. They felt this has not been happening. For example, they didn’t get notice of grants [Recreational Trail Grants not SnowTRAC grants] until after awarded. Other concerns are recreational snowmachiners going too fast and trespassing on posted private property.

*Bruce Friend:* Point well taken. This brings your concerns to light; I am also a remote landowner with some of the same concerns. I would ask by way of notice, that people being affected would bring more notice to committee.

*Pat Owens, Land Management Specialist-Mat-Su Borough:* Some comments on the grant reviewing process. The burden of proving legal access usually falls on the applicant, they however usually contact Pat at the borough for assistance. Pat suggested it would be helpful if, in the review process, each of the organized municipalities involved could actually review the grant; they would know what is/isn’t legal.

*Marianne:* Can’t see all of the different municipalities reviewing these grants, sounds too involved. Suggested that a summary that states intent of grant, location and access issues, if any. Municipalities could then input if they had any information.

*Pat:* Municipalities could help coordinate, with maps and legal access.

*Cliff Larsen, ML&W:* As a new DNR employee he is working on obtaining legal access on trails, much like the issues being discussed today. When looking at the grant applications, it is very important to have maps, who gave permission and how specific it is. He is also part of the AK Heritage Trails Program and will be a good resource for SnowTRAC.

*Jennifer Heck:* Average snow machiner, she is a supporter of snow machining and rides everywhere she can. Feels that this organization is a great forum.

*Dwigh Neal:* There is a DOT bike trail runs from Copper Center to Glennallen that has signs posted that say no winter snowmachine use. [According to Paul Prusak this is no longer the case] Yet here in the municipality there is a bike trail along the Glenn Highway that is unused all winter. The law needs to be changed.

*Marianne:* Clarified for all present that nothing we have been reviewing is going to overturn a municipal ordinance. The municipality still has the authority over the roads and trails within the MOA.

*Frank Woods:* We have a similar situation in Dillingham. DOT basically said, this is the law and we have to abide by the law. Until this is changed, it is going to be our biggest problem.

*Jerry Gregory-Lower Sustina Drainage Association:* Here on a fact-finding mission.

*Paul Prusak:* Addressed issues of legally riding a snow machine in a DOT right-of-way. Per Paul, it is legal with certain exceptions, such as controlled access. Discussion on legality of riding in the Municipality of Anchorage. Signs on the Copper Center bike path have been removed.

*Jim Renkert:* The DOT and State Parks brochure Alaska Snowmobile, Safety Laws, Rules and Regulations 2002-2003 shows where it is legal to ride snowmachines within the DOT right-of-way.

**COMMITTEE OPERATING POLICY AND PROCEDURES:** postponed until after lunch.

*Jim Renkert, City of Wasilla grant for two lots in the Buena Vista Subdivision.* This grant was approved in August with the condition the city provide proof of a willing seller. According to Tim Krug, the City of Wasilla already owns the property; the city just needs to pass an ordinance dedicating the land to public use. The question from DNR and SnowTRAC is, if the city already owns the property, why does it need grant money? The project was denied for this reason.

*Tim Krug:* Tim asked about using it for trail grooming on this property. Grooming could be authorized but a change in scope would have to be submitted along with details of the project and a review by SnowTRAC. He stated it would have been nice to get a letter saying there were conditions. The situation is that the land owner has transferred the land, but can still come back and pay money on it, back taxes. What the city of Wasilla is asking is if it can get money to do this public dedication. Discussion on what exactly the money is being spent on and what receipts will be submitted. The outcome was the money would pay for an expense incurred prior to the grant being issued. Grant rules do

not allow for this. Discussion. Outcome was the land was already purchased. Tim would like a possible scope modification to gain access.

*Lee Johnson:* If we look back to the Lawson project in Juneau, they came back with an alternate project with a lot of information and we approved. A change in scope could be considered for this project if Wasilla comes back with the details.

Committee Discussion.

**Adjourned for lunch 12:10pm.**

**Reconvened at 1:20pm**

### **OLD BUSINESS**

The SnowTRAC Committee Operating Policy and Procedures document has been updated. There are still some questions regarding proxies and alternates. Discussion. It was decided that there can be no more than 2 alternates per meeting, proxies can only vote on what the proxy vote is specifically for, the director of state parks needs to approve the alternates, and the alternates need to be from the same organization. The discussion was tabled until the next meeting. Research will be done on the definition of “alternate”.

### **ADOT& PFs WINTER TRANSPORTATION STUDY/SNOWMOBILE STATUTES AND REGULATIONS**

*Dwayne Adam, Land Design North, (consultants hired to work on the report):* Although he has not seen the final product, Paul Prusak has done a very thorough job. Land Design North is the primary author of the research. The report is a good summary of how other states deal with these issues and should help provide SnowTRAC with some guidance and direction.

*Paul Prusak, DOT:* The study has two recommendations: 1) Revise Alaska snowmobile laws and regulations. A stand-alone set of laws is needed under Alaska State Statute to specifically address snowmobiling. 2) Develop an Alaska Statewide Snowmobile Program. The study recommends that DNR, Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation take the lead role

*Marianne:* We do need to rewrite some of the laws. We also need a stand-alone chapter on snowmobiling that addresses all the various issues such as speed limits, liability, insurance, regulation, etc. This is part of what SnowTRAC wants to do. The Legislature made it very clear they want SnowTRAC to consider this and be proactive in ways to police ourselves.

*Paul:* Anecdotal story that he wanted included in the record. About 30 years ago in Ontario, the snowmobile situation was ugly; today it is completely different. It started with snowmobilers working with the public, agencies and working with their own people.

Ontario now has about 30,000 miles of trails, many of which are self-policed. Helps keep things under control and is much more accepted by the public.

Discussion on process SnowTRAC would follow. Objective is to bring forward a list of recommendations. Develop the ideas today and not an end product. Take it back to regions and groups and get feedback.

*Paul:* Suggested taking the laws and breaking them into categories. Take on a just a few at a time.

Matt moved “to present to the Alaska Legislature a stand-alone set of regulations specifically for snowmobiling by January 2004”. Frank 2<sup>nd</sup>. Motion passed.

*Lee Johnson:* Concerned that listing issues numerically gives the impression they are in number priority. List a different way. It was agreed that they were not in priority order. Is there anything else that should be included? Discussion, focused on helmet laws, liabilities, age limits, and operator licenses.

Discussion on Safety Education courses.

Topics were broken down into four groups: (no particular priority)

Group A: speed limits, operator licensing, youth insurance, operating a snow machine while intoxicated, equipment

Group B: winter use of trails, winter use of right-of-ways

Group C: liabilities, accident reports, inherent risk, insurance

Group D: state agencies, law enforcement, grooming, state right-of-ways

Discussion on possible teleconferencing, e-mailing, chat room forum, and web site posting. Jennifer Heck volunteered to set up the on-line forum; all she needs is email addresses for the set up. The chat room will be public. The committee liked the idea of teleconferencing and the chat room forum.

#### Tentative Time Line

January 03, April 03; July 03; November 03; the August meeting is strictly for grants.

Discussion on unused SnowTRAC grant funds to pay for teleconferences and administrative expenses. We could request these funds, but it would be up to the State Parks Director to approve.

*Jim Renkert:* Spoke with Randy Crosby at lunch. DOT will issue an encroachment permit to State Parks, who will then issue a permit to Crosby for the grooming of Petersville Road. DOT’s public notice on this should be going out next week. Discussion on the Petersville road project and right-of-way.

**Adjourned until 3:00 pm. Reconvened.**

Discussion of the A Category issues. (Speed limits, operator licensing, youth insurance, operating a snowmobile while intoxicated, equipment)

*Christine:* Snowmobile speed limits should coincide with the state laws, same as current state laws for other vehicles. Important we adopt some youth certification where they have to take a safety course. Fully agree with the 10 points for snowmobiling while intoxicated.

Committee discussion on underage and drunk driving. Driving while intoxicated (ages 14-21) can lose all future driving privileges.

*Matt:* No speed limits in rural areas, urban area speed limits according to traffic, pedestrians, and weather conditions, etc. Case by case not a blanket speed. Snowmobile safety education required for users 16 and under, or have a guardian with you. No license required. Intoxication- current laws. Opposed to helmet laws. General philosophy: what is the minimum amount of restriction possible? Regarding snowmachine equipment, machines should have reflector, lights, exhaust that meets the manufactures specs. Opposed to loud pipes.

*Frank:* Speed limit maximum in urban areas is 25mph, enforce on state highway, bike paths are off limits. Sixteen and under should require a mandatory safety class. Even experienced drivers should have a safety class. Communicate to parents that if you are letting your child under 18 drives, you are liable. Fourteen and under needs to have parental or guardian supervision. If over 14, need to have proof of rules of the road education. Same as state standards. Dillingham has already put some of these in effect. (The board asked to see a copy of the Dillingham rules.) Mandatory helmets for 18 and under. Operator competency, be liable for their own equipment, riding style, ability, and responsibility.

*Greg:* Driving with regards to conditions, should be the same with any motor vehicle, reasonable speed for conditions. We need safety courses. For operating snowmobile while intoxicated, no difference than existing laws for any motor vehicle. I would say for helmet laws, we should look at the laws for motorcycles. There is a noise ordinance that I think should be followed.

*Craig:* I think the state already has got good guidelines for speed limits. In residential areas and areas where there are lots of people, speed should be reduced. There are people who will break the rules. We already have a good defined set of rules here. Everyone should start by taking a safety class, if nothing else as a refresher.

*Lee:* I agree that speed limits have been flushed out; we need to look at how they are applied (residential and urban). We could look at the authority for those who already manage recreational areas. I think that some sort of certification is needed, we need to look at the minimum age that one can get certification. Certainly in residential and more populated areas need to have some sort of regulation. Not necessary everywhere. Has no problem with this requirement for the younger riders.

Committee discussion. Outcome is that whatever rules are adopted do not burden the villages. Education in rural areas is also important.

Public comments:

*Joanne:* Speed affects the rural areas too, define the rural areas.

*Scott:* Any maintained trail (trail systems) needs to have speed limits, need to have some sort of law enforcement on machines on the trails. There should be a graduated certification process, corresponding to engine size and age. Helmets should go with the graduated situation too. Should have basic signaling, signal mirror, first aid bandages, lighting should have minimums and maximums. Should have a noise standards.

*Jennifer:* Speed limits should be what is posted otherwise they will not be followed. Under 16 you should be certified. Intoxication-I think the laws we have now are efficient. There is a decibel level, and it is higher than some people think it should be.

*Dwayne:* My only suggestion is that you are the policy making body, I think it is going to be easier than you thought.

*Paul:* I think any speed limit statute needs to start out as a reasonable and prudent law. I think it would be better to refer to residential areas rather than urban and rural. Highway speed is not necessarily a good guide. There needs to be a night guide. Youth training is going to be difficult because of money and manpower. Look at a youth education package as a standard. I think the states laws are good for intoxication. Equipment I feel is good, maybe a little research with manufacturers. Machine must be in good operating condition. Kids under a certain age need to wear helmets. Parents are liable for their kids. When parents make the decision to allow their children to ride, they take on that liability.

*Marianne:* I haven't heard anything that I disagree with, but I want to be on the watch for new bureaucracies. Certainly a safety course would be good but let's not built a whole new level of bureaucracy. Let's be realistic. I am a helmet person but I think as an adult you can make that decision, but definitely should be required for your children. I don't like speed limit, but I am willing to comply.

*Cliff:* Night limits reduce death rates. Equipment issue, I have research on the issue and manufacturers rate is 76 decibels at full throttle. There are ways to make them quieter and faster, that people don't necessary like because something about noise makes it better.

**DATE & AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING**

Chair Marianne and committee members set January 24, 2003 and April 18, 2003 quarterly meetings. We will continue working on these regulations. This will be the topic of our next two meetings, in depth. City of Wasilla will be coming back with new information on the Buena Vista project. In January, we may need to consider some

emergency grant repair funding, to repair some trails that were damaged due to recent flooding and earthquake.

*Marianne:* Thanked the committee members and public for their cooperation. She also thanked and congratulated Paul and his staff for the excellent document produced.

#### **COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS**

*Chris:* BAART is having a booth at ASSA convention with flyers. First class is November 23, for \$25.00. BAART will be giving seminars every hour on the hour (for 15 minutes) on Sunday at the convention. We will also have a schedule for all the classes all winter.

*Craig:* Consider a speed sign to show max speed and night speed.

*Lee:* TRAAK board meets on November 22 and 23. On the sound issue, working on a field protocol for sound. If we came up with a standard, they don't have a procedure yet.

*Marianne:* If we get a permit, November 30, 10am to 4pm, ASRA will hold an event in Javier del la Vega park. Safety education on how to operate a snowmachine and what gear to wear. Demo rides if there is snow, no alcohol, and helmets required. Kiddy area for kids to ride too.

**MEETING ADJOURNED 4:00PM**

## SnowTRAC Meeting

August 23, 2002

Meeting called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Chair Marianne Beckham. Quorum present.

### COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Marianne Beckham - Anchorage

Lee Johnson, TRAAK Board Liaison - Fairbanks

Craig Seibert - Trapper Creek

Frank Woods - Dillingham

Greg Barclay - Soldotna

Christine Noakes - Big Lake

Mark Wilke - Juneau

### COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT

Kenton Bloom - Homer (excused)

Bruce Friend - Anchorage (excused)

**Staff present:** Jim Renkert and Teri Gilpin, ASP

**Public:** Howard Davis (Caribou Hills Cabin Hoppers), Soldotna

There were no alternates or proxies.

Greg moved "to approve minutes from April 19, 2002 as submitted." Frank Woods second. Motion approved.

### CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATIONS

Greg Barclay declared a conflict with grant application #3, Caribou Hills Cabin Hoppers.

Frank Woods declared a conflict with grant application #21, Curyung Tribal Council.

### AGENDA ADDITIONS/REVISIONS

Jim suggested that public appearances be moved up on the agenda. Discussion. Committee agreed to 10:00 a.m. for public appearances. Frank moved "to approve changes to the agenda." Craig seconded. Motion approved.

### STAFF REPORTS

Jim Renkert announced Dale Bingham's retirement. Dennis Heikes is the new Mat-Su Area State Parks Superintendent.

### FY00 GRANT STATUS

- Certified letters were sent to the Alaska State Snowmobile Association regarding their two grants. They have not responded. On one grant they owe us almost \$1,200.00 for part of an advance they did not use.
- Have not heard from Trail Mix and Juneau Snowmobile Club lately regarding their change in project from Lawson Creek bridge to Lake Creek Trail improvements.
- The kiosk for the Point Mackenzie Trail Head, Mat-Su Borough has been received and should be going up soon. They requested an extension for their grant through March 2003.
- City of Wasilla Trail Head grant extended until 3/31/03.



- Mountaineering Club/Eklutna Cabin is extended to 12/31/02.
- EagleSong Lodge requested a reimbursement and an extension. Part of their reimbursement is being processed, and another part is being denied. They are protesting the denial. Discussion.

### **FY01 GRANT STATUS**

- Fairbanks North Slope Borough/Fairbanks Snow Travelers just about closed out, only \$241.00 left on the grant.
- White Mountain Volunteer Fire Department cabin project is almost finished.
- Copper Country Snowmobile Club has requested a change of project scope to a surveying, mapping and grooming project.
- Big Lake Chamber of Commerce, Trail Grooming, expires at the end of October.
- Brevig Mission has not submitted any progress reports. No response puts them in noncompliance.
- Ketchikan is closed.
- Pilch Land Surveying, Trail Grooming is completed and closed.
- Lake Louise Snowmobile Club, Phase I Trail Surveying Project is closed.

### **FY02 GRANT STATUS**

- Southeast Alaska Avalanche Center has submitted their final report.
- Fairnet, Statewide Safety Curriculum got an advance but we have received no progress reports.
- Alaska Mountain Safety Center, Snow Sense for Snowmobilers, Jill Fredston is working on it.
- Fairbanks Police Department and Fairbanks Snow Travelers, borough wide safety and education program also got an advance. They've sent in a progress report.
- North Slope Borough has submitted their final progress report.
- St. Michaels Trail Shelter, no contact.
- Interior Trail Grooming, Chena Hot Springs Winter Trail, no contact.
- Ohogamiut Traditional Council in Marshall, no contact.
- Caribou Hills Cabin Hoppers has a reimbursement request being processed.

### **FINANCIAL REPORT**

This year's budget is \$200,000. We over spent about \$3,000 last year, which was covered with parks operating funds. State Parks is working on hiring a part-time position to administer the grant program.

### **TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT**

Jim Renkert collected the signed Travel Authorization and reimbursement forms.

### **ASSA CONVENTION AND TRADE SHOW**

The convention is scheduled for November 9 & 10 at the Egan Center. State Parks has been invited to set up a complimentary booth. Discussion of display.

**Meeting recessed for a break @ 11:05 a.m.**

**Reconvened @ 11:23 a.m.**

Welcome Christine Noakes to meeting.

Mark Wilke reported on the results of the Legislation Committee actions in Juneau. Current law for Alaska required all persons to have a driver's license to operate a motor vehicle on public land. With the action of this committee, the law was amended to exclude off road vehicles on public land. Jim Stratton attended several meetings and spoke on our behalf. Discussion on regulations and safety being our primary work topic at the next meeting. Thanks to Mark for the good work.

### **GRANT APPLICATIONS**

Open discussion and general comment on the grant applications. Overall the applications had generally poor documentation. It did not appear that some of the applicants put a lot of time into their applications.

### ACQUISITION, DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE

*Grant #1* - Chugach State Park Snowmachine & Signage: Anchorage Snowmobile Club. Discussion on the non-compliance, quality of three quotes, and lack of details. Mark Wilke moved "the next grant application cycle include, in the instructions, three bids are required for goods or services over \$500." Craig Seibert seconded motion. Discussion. Motion and second was withdrawn.

**Break for lunch 12:00 p.m.**

**Reconvened @ 12:30 p.m.**

*Grant #1* continued. Continued discussion. Scored less than the 60 point minimum. **Score: 54**

*Grant #2* - West Lake Blvd Trail Underpass in Big Lake: Mat-Su Borough. Discussion on the legal access, lack of signatures, and letters of support. Discussion on the need for more detail. **Score 87**

*Grant #3* - Trail grooming and maintenance: Caribou Hills Cabin Hoppers, Clam Gulch. Discussion on the legal access on all parts of the trail along with letters of non-objection. Discussion of liability issues. Mark Wilke moved "we fund this grant with the stipulation that they groom only on the trail that they have legal access, and proof will be on file and part of the agreement." Frank Woods seconded. Motion passed. **Score: 89**

*Grant #4* - Public Use Dedication, Buena Vista subdivision: City of Wasilla. Discussion on the lack of support letters and lack of proof of property ownership. Funded on the condition applicant provides proof of a willing seller. **Score: 84**

*Grant #5* - Petersville Road Grooming and Signing: Alaska Snow Cat, Trapper Creek. Discussion and comments on the lack of attention and detail in this application. Frank moved "this grant be ineligible due to the lack of legal access and lack of permit or letter of permission." Mark second. Discussion. Motion failed. Discussion. Application is eligible.

Grant funding was approved on the condition the applicant obtain the necessary permits. Alaska State Parks will not sign the grant agreement until all permits are obtained. **Score: 78**

**Break until 2:00 p.m. Reconvened.**

*Grant #6* - Snowmobile Trail Improvements: City of Aleknagik. Discussion on the clarity of this application documentation, surveying, and match amount. It does not meet the 25% match amount. Discussion. Further discussion postponed. **Score: 82**

*Grant #7* - Ikpik Cabin: Native Village of Shismaref. Scored below the 60-point minimum. **Score: 40**

*Grant #8* - Nelchina Mendeltna Trail Survey. There was lack of documentation for approval letter, easement, and legal access. Mark moved "it not be funded due to the lack of legal access." Greg seconded. Motion passed. **Score: 65 DQ**

*Grant #9* - Kenai Peninsula Trail System: Alaska Snow Safaris. Scored lower than the 60-point minimum, no matching funds, and a letter stating no legal access. **Score: 53 DQ**

*Grant #10* - Amphitheater Mountains Trail Grooming: Denali Highway Trail Club Inc. Jim checked with the Alaska Department of Community and Economic Development and there is no organization incorporated as the Denali Highway Trail Club, Inc. Discussion of application and the misrepresentation of their legal status as an incorporation. Chris moved "they not be funded due to the misrepresentation." Seconded by Greg. **Score: 71 DQ**

*Grant #11* - Farewell Burn Trail Maintenance, Iron Dog Inc. Discussion on lack of proper documentation. Mark moved "to deny funding due to no legal access to groom." Frank seconded. Motion passed. **DQ**

*Grant #12* - Nelchina - Mendeltna Trail Development. Does not meet the 60-point minimum. **Score: 51**

*Grant #13* - Lake Louise Rec. Trail Development and Grooming: Lake Louise Snowmobile Club. Brief discussion on the lack of documentation. Does not meet the 60 point minimum. **Score: 54**

**SAFETY AND EDUCATION APPLICATIONS**

*Grant #20* - Avalanche Awareness Education and Safety Training: B.A.R.R.T. Good application, committee was impressed. **Score: 97**

*Grant #21* - Snowmobile Avalanche Safety, Curyung Tribal Council: Dillingham. Short discussion on the signage detail and rates. **Score: 78**

*Grant #22* - Iron Dog Racers Snowmobile Safety Awareness. Discussion on the lack of details and documentation. **Score: 79**

*Grant #23* - Snowmobile Safety Pamphlet Training, Supplies, and SAR Gear: Valdez Motor Sports Club. Short discussion on the lack of quotes for the phone, otherwise a good application. **Score: 86**

*Grant #24* - Wolf Pack Youth Safety Program: Lake Louise Snowmobile Club. Discussion on lack of mock up, outline of course, and bids on printing. **Score: 86**

*Grant #25* - Brevig Mission Traditional Council. Discussion on the lack of detail and documentation required. Does not meet the 60-point minimum. **Score: 55**

Collection of signed score sheets.

### **FUNDED GRANTS**

#### **Acquisition, Development, and Maintenance Projects**

2. West Lake Blvd. Trail Underpass	\$15,000.00
3. Caribou Hills Cabin Hoppers	\$15,000.00
4. Public Use Dedication, Wasilla	\$15,000.00
5. Petersville Road Trail Grooming	\$15,000.00
6. Aleknagik Trail Improvements	<u>\$ 9,689.00</u>
	\$69,689.00

#### **Safety and Education Projects**

20. BARRT Avalanche Awareness	\$15,000.00
21. Snowmobile Avalanche Safety	\$ 2,290.00
22. Iron Dog Racers	\$ 5,681.00
23. Snowmobile Safety Pamphlet	\$15,000.00
24. Wolf Pack Youth Safety Program	<u>\$ 5,250.00</u>
	<u>\$43,221.00</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$112,910.00</b>

*Revisit of Grant #6.* Discussion reopened. Chris moved “to give applicant an opportunity to bring their match in to line with 25% minimum.” Craig seconded. Discussion. If the match is not increased to the 25% minimum, then this grant will be denied funding. Motion passed.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

Review committee's Operating Policy and Procedures. Jim will distribute revised version via e-mail.

### **DATE & AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING**

Friday, November 8 @ 9:30a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Conference Room 640, City Hall, 632 W. 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Anchorage. Next meeting will review and discuss snowmobile regulations.

### **COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS**

Mark Wilke commented on the clarification of the policy for meetings. Chris Noakes commented that if you can't attend try to provide your scores through an alternate. Jim Renkert reviewed Regulations. Chair Marianne Beckham asked the committee members to bring a letter to the next meeting that states who their recommended alternate will be.

Alternates are subject to approval by State Parks director, Jim Stratton. Discussion on extra grant money. Possibilities are emergency fund and safety and education.

**PUBLIC APPEARANCES**

No members of the public asked to speak.

**MEETING ADJOURNED 4:15 p.m.**

**SnowTRAC Board Meeting**  
**April 19, 2002**  
**Anchorage City Hall**  
**Draft**

Meeting commenced at 9:37am, by chair Marianne Beckham, quorum present

**Committee members present:**

Marianne Beckham, Chair - Anchorage  
Kenton Bloom - Homer  
Lee Johnson - TRAAK Board Liaison - Fairbanks  
Christine Noakes - Big Lake

Greg Barclay - Soldotna  
Bruce Friend - Anchorage  
Mark Wilke - Juneau

**Committee members absent:**

Craig Seibert - Trapper Creek  
Frank Woods - Dillingham

**Staff present:** Jim Renkert and Jennifer Cook

**Visitors:** Howard Davis (Caribou Hills Cabin Hoppers), Joe Guanna, Paul Prusak (DOT Fairbanks) and Sara Doyle (Land Design North)

There were no proxies or amendments.

Motion passes for approval of minutes from January 25, 2002 meeting with two corrections.

**Agenda Additions/Revisions**

Mark Wilke wants to add resolution in support of House Bill 397(Licensing Bill). Now is number 11.5 on the agenda

No other changes to agenda. Joe Gauna may come in and give a presentation regarding Broad Pass. Will be under public comment section.

Motion passed to accept the revised agenda.

**SnowTRAC Committee Operating Procedures**

Jim Renkert discussed his additions:

1. Paragraph 2, Specific Objective and Purposes of SnowTRAC - add to last sentence "to help Alaska build and maintain a statewide snowmobile trails system, and to promote statewide snowmobile safety and education".
2. Paragraph 3, Membership - added to the first sentence "appointed by the Director, Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation. Six of the nine members will be selected from names submitted to the director by the Alaska State Snowmobile Association (ASSA) and the Alaska Snowmobile Representative's Alliance (ASRA)".
3. Paragraph 22, Adoption and Amendments - added "Director, Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation and the SnowTRAC Committee". Before it only read SnowTRAC Committee.

Lee Johnson questions the word committee in paragraph 20; the word committee is not understandable. Mark Wilke questions who can assign a proxy in paragraph 9, Proxies. Lee Johnson says there are two levels of alternate, one ongoing that would be able to vote and the other, who just shows up in replacement who can't vote. Jim Renkert will send the draft electronically. This will be on the next agenda to do a final adoption.

### **SnowTRAC Committee Term Links**

Jim Renkert reported on when each member was appointed and when their term will expire. Jim stated that under the operating procedures, we want three terms to expire a year. Marianne Beckham asked the board if there is anyone who does not wish to be reappointed, none spoke up. Jim states that if you cannot fulfill your term and you resign that the term length stays, it goes with the term not the person. Marianne then asked if there was anyone being proposed that would not be able to serve for their term, none spoke up.

Motion by Greg Barclay: To approve term limits as the way they are written. Second Kenton Bloom. Everyone agreed. Motion carried.

Discussion on the maximum number of term lengths you can serve. If you don't have a term limit, it's harder to add one in later. Mark Wilke said, "You should never have a volunteer resign. "

Motion by Greg Barclay: Moved to limit terms on the board to three terms of three years apiece, total of nine consecutive years. Second Bruce Friend.

Discussion: Marianne Beckham changed the motion to serving on the SnowTRAC Committee be restricted to nine years. Marianne made an amendment that states three terms, three years each, one seat not to exceed eleven years. Marianne stated the motion made by Greg Barclay on term limit for SnowTRAC would be three consecutive terms of three years each in one seat subject to approval by the director of State Parks and the committee, second by Mark Wilke. Motion carried unanimously. Mark makes motion that this gets added to the operating procedures. Will be added under the membership paragraph.

### **Election of Officers**

Discussion on which officers need to be elected. Chris Noakes nominated Marianne Beckham to be chair, Marianne accepted. Marianne nominated Mark Wilke to be vice chair. Mark accepts, then declines and states he would be a chairman for legislative issues. Mark nominated Greg Barclay as Vice Chair. The nominations on the table are Marianne Beckham as Chair, Greg Barclay as Vice Chair and establishing a legislative committee chairperson as Mark Wilke. No objections. Positions stand at one year.

### **Staff reports**

Committee member packets were handed out that included an agenda for today's meeting, travel authorization claim form, request for reimbursement, Snowmobile Trails Advisory Committee Resolution 2002-02, Draft Operating Procedures, SnowTRAC membership list, Ethics Disclosure Form, Ethics Information for members of boards & commissions (AS 39.52), 2002 Snowmobile Trail Grant Instructions, Appendix A 2003 Standard Provisions, Policies & Procedures Supplemental Provisions draft, and DMV vehicles registered in 2001 by government boundary.

#### **2000 Snowmobile Grant Status:**

Alaska State Parks, Hatcher Pass Snowmobile Brochure - finally making progress.

Trail Mix & Juneau Snowmobile Club, Lawson Creek Bridge - need to get amendment done so they can move forward. Voted on it in January to improve change in project. Jim needs to write up policy.

Alaska State Parks, Kroto Creek Trailhead, Petersville Road - Jim was at the trailhead two weeks ago. It is nice to see the snowmobile registration fee signs in use.

Mountaineering Club of Alaska, Eklutna Cabin - Has all their stuff in, ready to close out.

EagleSong Lodge, Sleeping Lady Trail - has all their stuff in, looks like it is close to being closed out.

SnowTRAC Meeting  
April 19, 2002

ASSA Snowmobile Trail Inventory, statewide - still do not have ASSA person for the interior. Howard Davis says they will have a meeting on Monday night. Marianne shares the information on the person she is requesting. Matt Divenn lives in Fairbanks. He is a member of Fairbanks Snow Travelers and ASSA, works for Prince Cruise Lines, and has a degree in finance. He and his wife are active snowmobilers; wife is teacher at Fairbanks North Star School Borough. Marianne spoke with him and he is willing to serve if ASSA appoints him. Discussion opens up on having him as President of Snow Travelers and on ASSA, which will be a conflict. He would have to declare conflict of interest when it came to voting.

2001 Snowmobile Grant Status:

Fairbanks Snow Travelers/Northern Lights Snowmobile Club, FNSB Borough wide Safety & Education Program - Jim received videos yesterday and has not had a chance to review them yet.

White Mountain Volunteer Fire Department, Snowmobile Shelter Cabin Refurbishing, White Mountain - have requested reimbursement. Jim states that Parks is behind in processing the reimbursement. (Greg Barclay has a conflict with the reimbursement process, there are small organizations/non-profit groups out there and they can be in a financial bind, there needs to be a way to help the process. Greg states this is a yearly problem with the reimbursement process. Lee suggests that SnowTRAC needs to send a letter to Jim Stratton to develop a back up on the process of having payments done in a timely manner).

Copper Country Snowmobile Club, Trail Grooming and Signing, Gakona - Jim is not optimistic that this project will get done.

Big Lake Chamber of Commerce, Trail Grooming, Big Lake - extended a year.

Anchorage Snowmobile Club, Trail Grooming - Eklutna Lake doing very well.

Lake Louise Snowmobile Club, Trail Surveying - nothing to report.

2002 Snowmobile Grant Status:

Back Country Avalanche Awareness & Response Team, B.A.A.R.T., Mat-Su Borough - all done, have submitted progress report, being processed for reimbursement.

Fairbanks Police Department & Snow Travelers, Borough Wide Safety & Education Program - received an advance on their grant. Saved a life this winter!

Caribou Cabin Hoppers, Nodwell Groomer Purchase, Clam Gulch - got an advance, and purchased their groomer.

2001 City of Wasilla Grant Request. - got one-year extension till March 31, 2003. Discussion opens on the letter to get another extension. The board's feelings all around is that if they want another grant they need to re-apply. The board also wants to hear a formal action on what Jim Stratton has to say. Mark Wilke brought up discussion on whether or not the board sends out a letter on extensions and how long the grantees have to finish the project. This topic was talked about at a previous meeting. Lee Johnson suggested for future meetings, the past minutes and resolutions be brought to review if we have any questions. Jim state's that this topic needs to be put in the policies again. Need to have some type of language added to the grant documents about extensions just to clarify so they understand the reference frame, that the money could be used somewhere else.

Motion by Mark Wilke: Moved that SnowTRAC recommend DNR deny City of Wasilla request for second extension based on the length of the extension, seconded by Greg Barclay. Unanimously Agree motion passes.



**b) Travel reimbursement**

Please sign TA's and submit them to Jim Renkert, and mail in original receipts with request for reimbursement form. Mark Wilke and Lee Johnson need to send back reimbursement along with receipts.

**c) 2001 Snowmobile Registration**

Reviewed Vehicles registered in 2001 by Government Boundary and broken down by community. Jim reported that there were 38,000 registered snowmobiles last year, which is up from 33,000 the year before. Mark made a comment that the first year the City and Borough of Juneau had 16 registered snowmobiles and now has 80. No other comments on state snow reports.

**d) IASA Western Chapter Meeting**

Jim Renkert attended the Western Chapter Meeting of the International Association Snowmobile Administrators (IASA) in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. He said it was a good conference, did a 160-mile ride in Yellowstone. There were about thirty IASA representatives from Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Wyoming, Montana, and California. Wyoming maintains 2,000 miles of snowmobile trails. Topics discussed at the conference were winter use management issues, wildlife and visitor issues, snowmobile law enforcement, avalanche forecasting, and grooming. One ride was on a multi-use trail with dogmushers. Next year the conference will be held in Oregon. Jim proposes that SnowTRAC host the 2005 conference in Wasilla. Lee Johnson states that ASSA is looking for a candidate to send down to Vancouver, Canada for the Snowmobile Congress Conference in June.

**e) Trail Easement Project**

Jim Renkert gave report on being able to make progress on a few trails. Kevin Keeler did what we hope is the final GPS on the Clam Gulch and Centennial Lake Trail. Need to get those done and then recorded. Lee Johnson asked to clarify why they have GPS issues. Jim states they went out and performed a GPS on several trails and did not follow the state minimum mapping requirements. Jim reports on the Iron Dog Trail stating DNR is going to pay for it. Used part of the grant for the Trail Easement Project, and part was being used for a survey. Got the money approved, and hired a surveyor. Went out with the GPS and found where the monument should go. That was done the first week of April. Iron Dog had to do a reroute around Knikatu Village Corporation Land. Jim stated that there is also a trail easement project fact sheet almost completed: New title is Alaska Heritage Trails Program.

Jim made the board aware of a Recreational Trail Grant that was awarded this year called Lower Susitna Drainage Association. They got a grant for grooming from Dshka Landing up to Skwentna. The Skwentna Community Council and the Skwentna Non-Profit Association have been contacting Kim Kruse, Marine Recreation & Trails Section Chief, with letters and phone calls the last two weeks. People are having problems with grooming out to the area. They didn't feel they were included in the approval process. One of their complaints is that the benefits are to private lodges. The trail takes off at Dshka Landing. It also brings a bunch of people to their community on the weekends. The community feels a bit overwhelmed. Chris Noakes states Dshka Landing is not privately owned.

**f) Safety and Education Position**

Jim Stratton wanted to make a full time position if the governor's bill had passed but it is not going anywhere. Wants to create a part time position, Stratton will pay salary, provide office, computer and wants to use \$10,000 in unused grant funds safety and education material for this position. He would like endorsement and support from the SnowTRAC Board. There was a discussion on what the funding is actually for. Mark Wilke feels the funding is a public safety issue not a DNR issue. The money for a statewide snowmobile safety program should really come out of the public safety budget, not out of the grant budget. Mark states that three snowmobilers died last weekend in the state of Alaska. The boards feelings on this issue is that they don't want to see grant money being used for the safety and education program. But would like to see a part time position that would handle all of the SnowTRAC grants and begin to facilitate a safety and education program. Lee Johnson brought up that this should be a grant proposal.

Bruce Friend stated this should be presented as a grant application in some way, but would like to see things clearly delineated as materials supplies and not personnel. The infrastructure to bring some of these safety programs together would have a conflict with personnel.

Motion by Mark Wilke: To support a half-time snowmobile coordinator position in state parks to handle all of the SnowTRAC grants. Begin to facilitate a statewide safety and education program, funding of \$10,000 out of unused grant funds for materials to start up a safety and education program. State Parks is strongly encouraged to seek other funding through the budgetary process for subsequent years. Second by Kenton Bloom, no further discussion. Motion passes without objection.

#### **Public Comment Period**

Joe Guanna makes a presentation, recommending that the legislature propose an opening of Broad Pass back to the original drainage on the west side. He gave an update on the Denali Park closure and will hopefully come up with a resolution. The original park is closed in the wilderness zone. Stated they filed a lawsuit and won, the same day Parks Service issued a second closure in the wilderness zone to all snowmobiles. Filed second lawsuit last spring. It was dropped with the agreement that a resolution would be found through congress. Delegation had committed to proposing legislation in congress to exempt the wilderness zone in Denial Park from the 1964-wilderness act on the east side of the range, only from the highway to the ridge line of Alaska range. This would exempt that portion from the 1964-wilderness act so that snowmobiling could be allowed in that area. The board approved that SnowTRAC would pass a resolution. Joe will draft up a resolution, then SnowTRAC will take a look at it. Marianne suggests that our legislative chair, Mark Wilke, work with Joe Guanna in drafting a letter with final approval by the SnowTRAC Board before it gets sent.

#### **Snowmobile Trails Advisory Committee Resolution 2002-02 - In Support of Funding a Snowmobile Safety and Education Training Position**

Mark Wilke motions to accept the resolution 2002-02 as amended, second by Greg Barclay. Motion passed without objection. Changes are that title becomes "Snowmobile Trails Advisory Committee Resolution 2002-02 - In Support of Funding a Snowmobile Safety and Education Program Position."

Lee Johnson would like to add to the 12th Whereas, after the word impact, add "Southcentral Alaska of 56.2 million; and public parks". Also on the last paragraph in the resolution, take out "by hiring a snowmobile coordinator" and replace it with "position".

This resolution will be distributed to the entire Legislature, Governor Tony Knowles, Lieutenant Governor Fran Ulmer, Commissioner Department of Natural Resources, Pat Pourchot, Director of Alaska State Parks, Jim Stratton and Commissioner of Public Safety, Glenn G. Godfrey. The SnowTRAC member's names will appear at the bottom, showing their support.

#### **ATV & Snowmobile Summit & Workshop**

Jim Renkert states that Greg Barclay, Howard Davis and Bruce Friend were at the workshop and, Craig Siebert was there for a portion of it. Greg Barclay gave a brief verbal report on the workshop, stated it was a good get together, well meaning, and in the end there was agreement on working towards a statewide non-profit trail group. Bruce gave his main focus, stating that everyone could agree that there needed to be a body formed as a non-profit organization that could help coordinate all the efforts of trail acquisition and trail conflicts that would bring the user groups together. There was also focus on getting a group together to push a non-profit for education, enforcement and for social issues. One noticeable feature about the workshop was that not all groups were represented adequately. Kevin Hite represented the motorized group as a whole. Bruce Friend had volunteered to represent the industry but had no other support. There were no other manufactures that came. The fuel industry i.e., Tesoro or Mapco were not there supporting motorized use of highway. Bruce would like to see SnowTRAC, ASRA, and other stakeholders step forward with volunteers that want to be part of these committees. The entire workshop was positive and well rounded.

**House Bill 397 - Sponsored by Representative Vic Kohring**

This bill is in reference to drivers licenses required to operate snowmachines and other motorized vehicles off road. There was a public hearing held for the house and the house passed the bill. There was also a public hearing from the Senate side. Marianne Beckham stated she had testified on behalf of SnowTRAC at the request of Representative Kohring's office on what the SnowTRAC Board had thought of this bill. Mark Wilke attended the house version. Mark also noted that Jim Stratton, Director of Alaska State Parks was there and testified in favor of the bill. Lee Johnson stated at the Senate of Transportation Committee meeting it did not pass. They need more time to review and they will contact SnowTRAC with specific questions or action they would like SnowTRAC for. Mark Wilke feels strongly that SnowTRAC should take some form of action on support of overturning House Bill 397. Marianne is going to draft a resolution and cover letter in support of House Bill 397 to be sent to Governor Tony Knowles, Lt. Governor Fran Ulmer, and the Alaska State Legislature that explains the intent to cover issues regarding snowmobile regulations. Will email this letter to the board, and pass it by Jim Stratton. No objection to the action.

**Winter Transportation Study (WTS) by Paul Prusak, DOT Fairbanks Statutes & Regulations Discussion & Sarah Doyle-Wilson, Land Design North**

Paul Prusak passed out a draft WTS DOT & PF Chapter 3: Alaska Snowmobiling Time to Update Our Laws and Regulations, and Snowmobile Laws In Northern Jurisdictions Appendix F and Appendix G Looking at Other Jurisdictions' Laws.

Paul said there are two recommendations DOT is making. Based on what he has heard from other states, Alaska is way behind. Every other winter state has a good snowmobile program, with some point of contact at the state level that looks after all the issues and works with the different groups, volunteers, and agencies. Alaska doesn't, that's first recommendation. The second recommendation is making sense of the laws and regulations. We need to come up with laws that outline the rules of the road. Chris Noakes would like to see an avalanche forecast center, we're the only snow state that doesn't have one. We're the second highest in deaths and first highest per-capita. Lee Johnson made a formatting comment on Appendix G, where in the first paragraph last sentence states "specific Alaskan areas of concerns." Number one is speed limits; it gives an illusion that the number one area of concern in Alaska is speed limit. Makes it more difficult for SnowTRAC Board when dealing with regulations when speed limits appear to be number one issue. Something needs to be done to put them in order or list alphabetically, because that is a contentious issue. Kenton Bloom is interested in youth and safety, trying to get a feel on how strongly Paul's department feels about youth and safety. Paul stated that the youth and education is a good law to take on and believes that it promotes responsibility. Mark Wilke referred to Appendix F- Looking at Other Jurisdictions' Laws, noticed that many states offer or require youth to take a certification course. Mark inquired about how the funding works for those courses. Is there federal or state dollars for this? Some states have registration fees or trail fees, which generates income. Greg Barclay stated that we need input from the Bush on their viewpoints. Everything that has been stated is our viewpoint, but everything we have been talking about may have a completely different viewpoint from the Bush. Don't want to do anything that would disrupt their way of life. The focus of the study was on the continuous highway system and didn't really look at the Bush's needs. Sara Doyle asks the SnowTRAC Board if it would be ok to put SnowTRAC names and contact information in the appendices showing that they support this. The Board agreed on just names or just SnowTRAC Board.

**Grant Application Discussion, Changes & 2002 Schedule**

Schedule for the grant applications to be available is May 1, 2002. The application period is May through June 2002. Applications must be postmarked no later than midnight June 30, 2002. In August SnowTRAC will review and rank applications, September grant awards announced, and in November funds are available.

2002 Snowmobile Trail Grant Instructions. In summary the changes are:

1. Item number three, Selection Process and Criteria; Jim Renkert would like to move the score up to sixty points. Discussion, boards' opinion is that they generally agree.
  2. Item number four, Source of Grant Funds: added, "subject to appropriation" before approximately, in the first sentence. Also under that paragraph, the last two sentences are new. Board agrees on change.
  3. Item number seven Public Access Requirement, is changed to "Proof of Public Access Requirement". Also in the first paragraph, now states and will be bolded **Note: legal access must be in place in order for a grant to be eligible for trail work. Grant applications must also include documentation proving legal access.** Board agrees on change.
  4. Item number eight, Other Requirements; bullet six, after the word "letters," insert, "and documentation," also add after first sentence, "letters and documentation must be current or dated within the last year." Board agrees on changes.
  5. Item number thirteen, Advanced Payments; now states "after the grant award winners have been announced and, upon written request and demonstration of need, Grantees may receive up to 75% of the approved grant amount in advance". Board agrees.
- Lee Johnson brought up purchasing equipment. Jim Renkert will find a place to add it in the 2002 Snowmobile Grant Applicant Instructions. Equipment purchases are limited to agencies and non-profit groups. Need to provide documentation to prove you are a non-profit organization. Board agrees. Howard Davis would like clarification on the definition of a receipt. This needs to be in the agreement to get reimbursement. Jim Renkert will make a definition.

#### **SnowTRAC Policies & Procedures, Supplemental DRAFT changes in approved Grants, Mid -Year & Emergency funding.**

SnowTRAC Grant Policies & Procedures, discussion held on adding amendments.

Motion by Kenton Bloom: To approve the amended SnowTRAC Grant Policies and Procedures Supplemental Provisions in the "Changes in Approved Grants and Mid-Year and Emergency Funding," second by Greg Barclay, no further discussion. Unanimously agree motion passes.

#### **Proposed New Logo - Chris Noakes**

Two logos designed by Chris were presented. The board voted on the blue lettering with the spelling being SnowTRAC. The logo has mountains in the background with one snowmachine in front of the mountains with blue coloring. The board all agreed, passes with subject to approval by Stratton.

#### **Trail Grooming Cost Standards Information - Greg Barclay, Kenton Bloom, Craig Seibert**

Greg Barclay showed a PowerPoint presentation from Caribou Hills Cabin Hoppers on trail grooming costs. The common goal is to preserve trails for future generations. Their fundraising proceeds are used to purchase and maintain equipment, develop safe trails and provide public access. The two machines they use to groom are a Pisten Bully 200 and Nodwell 110. Caribou Hills Cabin Hoppers have 132.5 miles of multi-use trails they groom. The presentation showed figures from two different time periods, using costs on the two machines from a grant report. The first time period was from February 14, 2001 through December 31, 2001 and the second period was January 1, 2002, to date. When reaching a price using a \$25 per hour for groomer's, operators, maintenance/repair and parts and repairs, the total cost of the first time period would cost a total of \$27,304.00. That breaks down to 830 miles groomed which equals \$32.90 per mile and 226 hours grooming, which equal \$120.80 per hour. With the same price of \$25 per hour the second year's total would be \$21,791.00. This year had a lot less parts and repairs than the first year. The second year broke down to 1368 miles groomed, which equals \$15.93 per mile, and 330 hours grooming would equal \$66.03 per hour. When adding all hours February 14, 2001 to date, 2198 miles groomed, would equal \$22.33 per hour and 550 hours grooming would equal \$89.24 per mile. So the question is, should you use a snowmobile to groom? Their opinion is that a snowmobile with a groom would not be able to keep up repairing the trail after use. At least two snowmachines and grooms would be needed to cover the miles per week. After one year of use the snowmachine would probably be ready to live in a scrap yard. So the answer is, no you should not use a snowmachine to groom.

Kenton Bloom spoke on snowmachine grooming. He looked at the depreciation of a snowmachine, labor, gas, oil and repairs. Came up with \$10 an hour for labor and \$20 total for renting one machine. This cost is averaging 1000 miles per year per machine. Will be using two machines at the same time. When grooming deep snow you will use rollers and for hard snow, use drags. The snowmachine will be used for grooming an average of 50 miles that includes snowmachine, multi-use and skiing trails. The groomed area is from 8 to 10 feet wide. Will be rotating out a machine every three years. Grooming every week.

Jim Renkert gave Craig Seibert's report on trail grooming costs. Craig has three categories. Large snowmachine with drag would cost \$25 an hour. Small snowcat \$50 an hour and large snowcat with tiller and blade, 12-18 feet wide, would cost \$100 an hour. Craig didn't specify if the cost was for operating, machine or both.

Board came up with having the grantee provide the equipment, number of hours and miles, operator, fuel and maintenance and also grooming frequency. The grantee will provide a grooming table with cost per hour and cost per mile.

**Date & Agenda for next meeting**

August 23, 2002, is subject to change, from 8:30am until done. Marianne brought up the idea of having a two-day meeting if need be. Location of the August meeting will be held on the third floor of City Hall, room 310. August agenda will be to review and rank the grant applications and final adoption of the SnowTRAC Committee Operating Procedures.

**Committee Member Comments**

Mark Wilke commented on programs that fund snowmachines, the programs do work. The most popular trail right now is Dan Molling Trail. Still riding on the trail because we were able to do improvements to the trail.

Bruce Friend asks about the state laws, what is the program there, how do we work on rules and regulations? Jim Renkert said you have the draft of Alaska DOT & PF, WTS, the final will be out and you should all get copies of that. Marianne stated that Paul said you might want to split up and take certain specific topics and discuss it amongst each subcommittee. Timeline for this, written up for the legislature by November, finalized by December and handed in by January.

Chris Noakes stated that we had the first ever snowmachine only, three-day class on avalanche, held in Petersville.

Marianne Beckham said they had a very successful Tesoro Arctic Man SnowGo Classic at Paxson. Was happy to report no avalanche deaths and the race only had one injury.

Marianne Beckham motioned to adjourn at 3:30. Seconded Kenton Bloom.

**SnoTRAC Board Meeting  
January 25, 2002  
Draft**

Meeting commenced at 9:30 a.m. quorum present

**Committee members present:**

John Johnson - North Pole	Greg Barclay - Soldotna
Marianne Beckham - Anchorage	Christine Noakes - Big Lake
Mark Wilke – Juneau	Craig Seibert
Kenton Bloom	Frank Woods
Lee Johnson	

**Staff present:** Jim Renkert, Jim Stratton, and Shannon Tucker.

**Visitors:** Jill Fredston (Alaska Mountain Safety Center)

Minutes for the August, 2001 meeting were approved as published.

.There are no proxies or amendments.

**Conflict of Interests:**

Agenda modified for conflict of interest

**Staff Reports:**

**2000 Snowmobile Grants Status**

**2001 Snowmobile Grants Status**

**2002 Snowmobile Grants Status**

**Director Comments: Jim Stratton**

**Administration Financial Report**

**Travel Reimbursements**

**Alaska Mountain Safety Center Presentation: Jill Fredston**

**Lunch**

**Grantee Report (Trail Mix, Juneau Snowmobile Club & Lawson Creek Bridge)**

**Winter Transportation Study Staff (Update)**

**Open Forum on Trail Grooming Costs**

**Election of Officers**

**Date & Agenda for the Next Meeting**

**Committee Comments**

**Adjourned @**

**SnoTRAC Board Meeting  
August 17, 2001  
Final Minutes**

Meeting commenced at 9:30 a.m. quorum present

**Committee members present:**

John Johnston - North Pole  
Marianne Beckham - Anchorage  
Mark Wilke – Juneau

Greg Barclay - Soldotna  
Christine Noakes - Big Lake

**Committee members absent:**

Kenton Bloom – Homer  
Frank Woods – Dillingham  
Craig Seibert – Trapper Creek

Bruce Richter – Anchorage  
Lee Johnson – TRAAK Board liaison

**Staff present:** Jim Renkert, Ron Crenshaw, Shannon Tucker, and Kim Kruse

**Visitors:** Albert Larson (Present for Frank Woods III), Sarah Wilson-Doyle (Land Design North), Howard Davis (Caribou Hills Cabin Hoppers)

Minutes for the April 6, 2001 meeting were approved as published.

Agenda modified for conflict of interest. There are no proxies or amendments.

**Conflict of Interests:**

John Johnson had a conflict of interest with both the Fairnet grant and the Fairbanks Police Department grant. Although he is not directly involved with these grants, he feels that some conflict of interest is present. He will not be voting on these projects.

Christine Noakes had a direct conflict of interest with the Backcountry Avalance Awareness & Response Team. She will not be voting on this grant.

Greg Barclay had a direct conflict of interest with the Caribou Hills Cabin Hoppers grant. He will not be voting on that grant.

**Staff Reports:**

Jim announced that he has received word that Bruce Richter is resigning from the SnoTRAC committee. ASRA will be asked to submit candidates for appointment to fill Bruce's seat.

**2001 Snowmobile Grants Status**

Caribou Cabin Hoppers grant will be closed out as soon as the state generates a check. The Chatanika Community Council Grant (Trail Maintenance Equipment) is closed out. Backcountry Avalanche Awareness & Response is submitting a progress report. Upon approval the grant will be closed out. Kotlik did not submit a grant agreement; their grant will be expiring next month. The Fairbanks Snow Travelers has submitted a progress report, but further clarification is needed in accounting before the grant can be processed.



### **2000 Snowmobile Grants Status**

Point McKenzie Trailhead submitted a request for reimbursement that is being reviewed. The City of Wasilla Trail grant is in litigation with some of the landowners in Wasilla. It may be some time before these issues are resolved. For their Trail Grooming grant, the City of Wasilla groomed once last year and submitted a progress report in June. The accounting department is reviewing the report for approval. The Sleeping Lady Trail has also submitted receipts and a progress report that are being reviewed. The Mountaineering Club of Alaska's grant for the Eklutna Cabin is almost finished. Their grant expires in March, but their progress report is expected at the close of this year's construction season.

### **Administration Financial Report**

Two hundred thousand (\$200,000) was appropriated. The appropriation breaks down into 69% Acquisition, Development and Maintenance, 17% Safety and Education, 14% for administration.

### **Travel Reimbursements**

Jim Renkert collected the signed travel authorization and travel reimbursement forms for reimbursement.

### **Alaska Trail Symposium (September 21-22)**

Ron Crenshaw suggested that there be a SnoTRAC booth at the Symposium. Board members are asked to attend the meeting for at least two days. All board members are registered. A number of rooms have been reserved for various meetings and workshops. A suite is being made available for a SnoTRAC reception and for a short SnoTRAC committee.

### **Guest Speaker:**

Sarah Wilson-Doyle from Land Design North presented a report on the "Winter Transportation Study" that they have been contracted to do by the Department of Transportation. Ms. Doyle also presented a flyer on snowmobile safety laws, rules and regulations that is to be distributed statewide. The main focus of the research was education and safety. DOT has been focused on solving the right-of-way problems, but the research has been inconclusive. Discussion followed regarding conflicting state statutes regarding operating motor vehicles.

### **2002 Grant Application Ranking:**

*Proposal #1* - Trail to Kintanga : Native Village of Savoonga. Discussion on the qualification of the grant included the lack of legal access information. The grant also had no letters of support and a score well below the minimum. **Score: 34**

*Proposal #2* - Lake Louise Recreational Trail Survey - Phase II. Lake Louise Snowmachine Club. The main point of discussion entailed categorizing the grant as an acquisition grant, the work that was completed the previous year and the application. **Score: 85**

*Proposal #3* - Nodwell Groom. Caribou Hills Cabin Hoppers. Discussion on the qualifications of the grant. Prior grants have been awarded to Caribou Hills Cabin Hoppers. **Score: 85**

*Proposal #4* - Tesoro Iron Dog 2000. Iron Dog, Inc. Discussion on the qualifications of the grant. The issues of food (1/3 of the total grant request), legal access and signage were discussed. Food expenses do not qualify as a grant expense. Legal access concerns at the beginning of the trail off Big Lake were raised. **DQ**

*Proposal #5* - Chena Hot Springs Winter Trail Maintenance. Interior Trail Grooming. The trail is one of the most used trails in the interior. The need for maintenance was agreed upon. **Score: 78**

*Proposal #6* -OTC Winter Trail Project. Ohogamiut Traditional Council. The board discussed usage. **Score: 73**

SnoTRAC Meeting  
August 17, 2001

*Proposal #7 - Bear Creek Trail Staking. Native Village of Koyuk. Discussion on the qualifications of the grant. The board came to agreement that the grant should have been a safety grant instead of an education grant. No match and non-responsive on legal access* **Score: DQ**

*Proposal #8 - St. Michael Trail Shelter. Native Village of St. Michael. Discussion about the qualification of the grant.* **Score: 73**

*Proposal #9 - South Fork Montana Creek Trail Improvements & Maintenance. Montana Creek Motor Musers: Discussion on the qualifications of the grant. No support, Right-a-way information absent and no cost benefit summary. Below minimum score.* **Score: 45**

*Proposal #10 - Amphitheater Mountains Trail Grooming. Denali Highway Trail Club, Inc: Discussion on the qualification of the grant included the lack of right-of-way information and letters of support. Legal access concerns were raised.* **Score: 57 DQ**

*Proposal #11 - Kroto Creek Snowmobile Trailhead Sanitation & Safety Project. Mat-Su / Copper River Area Office Alaska State Parks. Discussion on the need for letters of support from both the users and local business.* **Score: 59**

**Working Lunch: Discussion about Proposal #11 over lunch**

*Proposal #12 - Igloo Rescue & Training: Travis Butch Recer. Brief discussion on the grant. Did not meet the minimum score.* **Score: 12**

*Proposal #13 - Broad Pass Rescue & Recovery. Donna Recer. Brief discussion on the grant. Did not meet the minimum score.* **Score: 14**

*Proposal #14 - Snowmobile & Avalanche Safety Course. Southeast Alaska Outdoor Recreation. Discussion on the grant requirements.* **Score: 63**

*Proposal #15 - Fairbanks Northstar Borough Wide Safety & Education Program. Fairbanks Police Department & Fairbanks Snow Travelers. Discussion on the grant requirements and the need for curriculum in this area that is consistent. This grant application is very impressive with lots of support and community benefit. Could be a model grant application.* **Score: 97**

*Proposal #16 - Trail Marker Project. North Slope Borough. The grant applicant was a government agency. The group discussed the general qualifications.* **Score: 71**

*Proposal #17- Backcountry Avalanche Awareness & Response Team. Discussion on the grant included excellent letters of support, documentation and talk about education and awareness of avalanches in the area.* **Score: 93**

*Proposal #18 - Shaktoolik Snowmobile Safety & Awareness Project. Native Village of Shaktoolik/ Shaktoolik Transportation Dept. Discussion on the grant requirements: The camera, potluck, food and some transportation are provided by the grantee as part of the matching requirement. The grant is a supplement to a project funded by the native village.* **Score: 73**

*Proposal #19 - Snowmobile Safety: Curyung Tribal Council. Discussion of the grant. The paperwork was insufficient to approve the grant. Disqualified for insufficient information. The numbers also came in below the minimum requirements.* **Score: 47**

**Meeting recessed for a break @ 1:20 p.m.**  
**Meeting reconvened @ 1:35 p.m.**

*Proposal #20* -Snowmobile Avalanche Safety Education. Southeast Alaska Avalanche Center. Discussion about the need for two funded instructors. One instructor is for the motorized individuals and the other instructor is to stay with the individuals on foot. This raised the question of who should fund this grant. The individuals on foot may have qualified for a Trail and Recreation Grant. It was determined that the grant did qualify. **Score: 70**

*Proposal #21* – FairNet in Fairbanks, Standardized State Snowmobile Training & Education Program. The grant package included all pertinent budgets and information. The project is an education-based project that will help to develop curriculum in the state that promotes safety and education. The intent of the booklet is widespread distribution and education. The state will need to determine the legality of the copyright on the book. **Score: 78**

*Proposal #22* - Snow Sense for Snowmachiners: Alaska Mt. Safety Center, Inc: Discussion on the copyright of educational material, including books, videos and other materials. **Score: 96**

**Meeting Recessed for a break @ 2:30 p.m.**  
**Meeting reconvened @ 2:40 p.m.**

Grant applications #4 and #10 (Tesoro Iron Dog 2000 and Amphitheater Mountains Trail Grooming) were disqualified for legal access issues.

**Funded Grants:**

*Acquisition, Development & Maintenance Projects*

1. Lake Louise Recreational Trail Survey Phase II	\$15,000.00	
2. Nodwell Groom	\$15,000.00	
3. Chena Hot Springs Winter Trail Maintenance	\$15,000.00	
4. OTC Winter Trails Project	\$ 8,990.00	
5. St. Michael Trail Shelter	\$14,848.00	
6. North Slope Borough Trail Marker Project	\$15,000.00	
7. Kroto Creek Snowmobile Trailhead Sanitation	<u>\$ 9,800.00</u>	
		\$ 93,638.00

*Safety and Education*

1. Fairbanks Borough Wide Safety & Education Program	\$15,000.00	
2. Book Snow Sense for Snowmachiners	\$15,000.00	
3. Back Country Avalanche Awareness & Response Team	\$15,000.00	
4. Fairnet Standardized State Snowmobile Training & Education	\$ 4,350.00	
5. Shaktoolik Snowmobile Safety and Awareness Project	\$ 8,399.00	
6. Southeast Snowmobile Avalanche/Safety Education	\$10,000.00	
7. Ketchikan Snowmobile & Avalanche Safety Course	<u>\$ 5,765.00</u>	
		<u>\$ 73,514.00</u>
	Total	<u>\$167,152.00</u>

Proposed New Logo - Logo not available

**Date and Agenda for Next Meeting:**

John Johnston, Chair is resigning on October 31,2002. Agenda items for next meeting are: logo, status of past grants and accounting, filling vacant positions, list of grants awarded for 2002. Next meeting is at the Alaska Trails Symposium September 21<sup>st</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup>. Final date and time of meeting at the conference to be determined.

**Meeting adjourned at 4:00pm**

## **SnoTRAC Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting**

Minutes for December 17, 1999 – Anchorage, Alaska

To be approved at March 20, 2000 meeting

Meeting called to order by John Johnston at 9:25 am.

A quorum was present.

Members present: John Johnson, Randy Crosby, Marianne Beckham, Korey Cronquist, Rick Goozen, Greg Barclay, Kenton Bloom, and Lee Johnson.

Members absent: Jim Stimpfle (excused)

Staff: Jim Stratton & Ron Crenshaw.

Guests: Kevin Hite, Joe Gauna, Bill Davidson (Susitna Dog Tours - [www.susitnadogtours.com](http://www.susitnadogtours.com)), Dennis Heikes (state parks), & Kevin Keeler (National Park Service).

There were no changes to the minutes of the last meeting.

Welcome & introduction by State Park Director Jim Stratton. Jim announced that State Parks has requested \$188,000 in the Capital Budget this year to continue the snowmobile grant program. He invited SnoTRAC to tweak the evaluation process as needed and allocate this year's grant money as soon as possible to show good faith in getting the money allocated that was appropriated by last year's legislature.

Ron announced that committee member Deb Wells from Fairbanks has resigned, and briefed committee on reimbursement for travel and per diem.

Agenda changes. Greg wants to talk about committee members designating alternates to represent them when they are unable to attend. Randy requested a recap of the snowmobile grant application process.

John asked for declaration of conflicts by committee members. Marianne announced possible conflict with the Anchorage Snowmobile Club grant application because she's a member, and possible conflict with the Port MacKenzie trailhead project. Greg declared a possible conflict with the SAFEKIDS Coalition project. John declared a possible conflict with ASSA's application for Avalanche Safety project, and with the Fairbanks Snow Travelers application. Randy declared a possible conflict with Anchorage Snowmobile Club grant and with the Mat-Su Borough's snowmobile safety and rescue project.

A discussion of "alternates" followed. John reiterated the discussion from June 4, 1999 meeting that proxies from members who can't attend a meeting must be in writing by the

absent member and can only be given to another SnoTRAC member to use if there is a vote.

Motion: Greg moved and Ric seconded, that alternates be allowed.

Discussion: Members represent geographical areas and alternates would have to represent those areas.

Vote: 5 for; 1 against; 1 abstention.

Motion: Ric then moved and Greg seconded, that the discussion of alternates be tabled until 3:45pm.

Vote: Motion passed.

The committee next ranked the 22 projects submitted. Seven projects were in the Safety & Education category and 15 in the Development & Maintenance category. The five members who evaluated projects were John, Marianne, Kenton, Greg, and Randy. Their scores were totaled and ranking established within the two categories. *See attached ranking sheet.*

Each project was then discussed by the full committee. Based on the discussion, a motion was made on each, whether or not to fund, and for how much. If projects were funded but at a lesser amount than requested, a recommendation was sometimes made as to what the priority should be. Those recommendations appear on the *attached ranking sheet.*

Guest Bill Davidson called the committee's attention to a problem of recreational snowmobilers tearing up the trails used by locals to get to their cabins. He stressed the need for signs that would inform recreational riders which trails are for local access and which are for recreation. Bill suggested a sign that says "utility trail" with a graphic of a snowmobile pulling a sled.

The agenda items called "snowmobile videos", "trail signing standardization", and "update on snowmobile registration program" were postponed to the March 20<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Motion: Greg moved and Marianne seconded, to support State Park request for \$188,000 for 2001 snowmobile trail grant program with no new personnel.

Vote: Motion passed.

Kevin Keeler gave a power point program on surveying snowmobile trails using GPS survey technology.

Motion: Ric moved and Greg seconded, that SnoTRAC accept alternate representation of appointed members providing that:

1. Written acknowledgement by the appointed member (alternate or committee member?) be provided not less than 5 days before the meeting;
2. No more than three (3) successive unexcused absences by an appointed member (the Director's appointee or alternate?) cause an alternate to sit at a meeting.

3. A majority of the members present must accept said alternate.
4. Not more than two alternates be allowed at any meeting.

Discussion: None

Vote: Motion passed. 7 yes. 1 No.

Greg submitted in writing his alternate designation as Howard Davis of Clam Gulch.

Agenda items suggested for March meeting:

1. Snowmobile videos. (carry over from December meeting)
2. Trail signing standardization. (carry over from December meeting)
3. Update on snowmobile registration program.
4. Statewide Snowmobile Coordinator.
5. New Ethics Act interpretation from Attorney General.
6. Application revisions.
7. Evaluation process revisions.

Next SnoTRAC meeting March 20, 2000, City Hall, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Parks & Beautification Conference Room (same location as last meeting) in anchorage. The entire agenda will be review and recommendation of awards of grants.

Meeting adjourned at 4:40 pm.

Meeting minutes prepared by Ron Crenshaw.

December 30, 1999

This is the list of Snowmobile Trail Grant applications submitted for 2000 funding. The Snowmobile Trails Advisory Committee (SnoTRAC) ranked all projects using the criteria contained in the application, and recommended funding based on a combination of each projects rating, perceived need for limited snowmobile funds, benefits to snowmobilers, and availability of other funding sources for the project.

The "Amount Awarded" column is the grant amount recommended by SnoTRAC and approved by the Director.

<b>SAFETY &amp; EDUCATION PROJECTS</b>						
<i>RANK</i>	<i>PROJECT TITLE</i>	<i>APPLICANT</i>	<i>LOCATION</i>	<i>AMOUNT REQUESTED</i>	<i>AMOUNT AWARDED</i>	<i>NOTE</i>
1	Snowmobile Safety & Training	Alaska State Snowmobile Association	Statewide	\$14,200	\$14,200	
2	Avalanche Hazard Recognition Workshop	Fairbanks Snow Travelers	Fairbanks	\$1,100	\$1,100	
3	Hatcher Pass Snowmobile Brochure	Alaska State Parks	Hatcher Pass	\$5,000	\$2,500	SnoTRAC recommends private contractor
4	Curung Snowmobile Safety Project	Curung Tribal Council	Dillingham	\$1,000	\$1,000	
5	Child Snowmobile Awareness Safety Course	Kenai Peninsula SAFEKIDS Coalition	Kenai Peninsula	\$5,000	\$1,000	Recommend funding helmets
6	Snowmobile Rescue & Safety	Mat-Su Borough	Hatcher Pass & Big Lake Areas	\$9,580	0	
7	Winter Safety Clinic	Big Lake Chamber of Commerce	Big Lake	\$4,000	0	
<b>DEVELOPMENT &amp; MAINTENANCE PROJECTS</b>						
1	Eklutna Cabin	Mountaineering Club & State Parks	Anchorage	\$11,000	0	
2	Lawson Creek Bridge	Trail Mix & Juneau Snowmobile club	Juneau	\$15,000	\$15,000	
3	Kroto Creek Trailhead	Alaska State Parks	Kroto Creek - Petersville Area	\$5,460	\$3,960	Recommend funding latrine
4	Lake Louise Recreational Trails	Lake Louise Snowmachine Club	Glennallen	\$16,600	0	
5	Winter Trailhead Amenities	City of Wasilla	Wasilla	\$15,000	0	
6	Trail Grooming	City of Wasilla	Wasilla	\$10,500	\$1,750	
7	Sleeping Lady Trail	Eagle Song on	Mt. Susitna	\$20,000	\$7,530	

		Trail Lake	Area			
8	Upper Huffman & Ptarmigan Trails	Anchorage Snowmobile Club	Anchorage	\$7,000	\$4,500	Recommend grooming.
9	Point MacKenzie Trailhead	Mat-Su Borough	Point MacKenzie	\$15,000	\$3,500	
10	South Fork Montana Creek Trail Improvements	Montana Creek Motor Musers	South of Talkeetna	\$15,000	\$1,000	Not in Mat-Su Bourough trail plan.
11	Wet Gulch Trail survey	Mat-Su Motor Musers	Willow	\$10,000	0	
12	Big Lake Trail Grooming	Big Lake Chamber of Commerce	Big Lake & Susitna Valley	\$15,000	\$15,000	
13	Chatanika/Cleary Summit Trail Equipment	Chatanika Community Council	Fairbanks	\$15,000	\$15,000	
14	Equipment Purchase & Grooming	Alaska Snow Safaris	Turnagain Arm - Anchorage	\$10,000	\$10,000	
15	Susitna Landing Trail Grooming	Rons Riverboat Service	Susitna Valley	\$8,000	\$1,000	For trail signing only