



Snowmobile Advisory Council Infrastructure Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, July 8, 2025

DNR Service Center, 107 Sutliff Ave, Rhinelander WI and via Zoom

Committee Members Present: Gary Hilgendorf - Chair, Joel Enking, Mike Holden (Zoom), Bob Lang, Andy Malecki, Sue Smedegard,

Other Council Members Present: Tara Krall, Don Mrotek, Holly Tomlanovich

DNR staff attendance: Jillian Steffes, Patrick Anderson, Kurt Byfield, Chris Halbur, Jeff Pennucci

Public attendance: Rebekah Luedtke (WCFA), Nathan Matter (GTS), Dave Newman (AWSC) and other members of the public

1. Call to order at 10AM

2. Agenda Repair

- None

3. Acceptance of minutes of previous meeting

Motion to approve previous meeting minutes by Andy, 2nd by Sue. MOTION PASSED

4. Committee Chair Comments – Gary Hilgendorf

- Meeting today to review applications for completeness and ask clarifying questions.

5. Public Comments

- None

6. DNR Funding Report – Jillian Steffes

- HANDOUTS
 - Snowmobile Grant Application Summary for 2025-26
 - Copies of Grant Applications Available Online
- Low snow year. Trail pass revenue sales and registrations down which will affect our available funding.
- Bridge Inventory is now loaded into SNARS. We have 1,800 bridges in the snowmobile trail system. If bridges needed rehab every 30 years, we'd have to fund 60 bridge rehabs a year. We do not have sufficient income/revenue to cover this.
- Jillian attended the International Snowmobile Congress in Canada (PEI), and attended the International Association of Snowmobile Administrators (IASA) meetings. Jillian is Secretary of the IASA.
- We are anticipating supplemental requests this year (Iron, Oneida, Vilas, Forest, possibly more).
- The 2025-27 Biennial Budget includes a \$1 million allocation to Washburn Co for the Trego crossing, out of the DOT budget. Washburn will work with DOT on the details. We will leave the existing ATV/Snow grants open for expenses that might not be covered by DOT.
- Thermoplastic coating on road crossings have historically NOT been covered by the snowmobile trail aids program. Recently, DOT has asked that the clubs/counties pay for the initial expense. Historic negotiations were DOT lobbied to keep 50% of the snowmobile gas tax revenue included the need to fund expenses such as this. A reminder to DOT about this may be in order, to encourage them to assist with this aspect of trail project costs. I will try to meet with Bob Fasick (DOT) on this topic.

7. Observations of the Audit Ad Hoc

- An ad hoc group reviewed SNARS entries to look for common problems, inconsistencies, etc.
- Common problems include;
 - equipment hours exceeding labor hours, or cutting VERY close. Machine idle time is not eligible, need to set the chainsaw down to drag debris off the trail.
 - Clubs using the 'boosted' HP rating rather than the manufacturer's base HP rating. (Should not base rate on boosted HP).
 - Pulling MAJOR trailers with low HP equipment, like 493 trailer pulled by an ATV/UTV.
- Confirmed that we do not pay for vehicle mileage (pay per hour, not per mile) nor time spent to negotiate with landowners.
- Discussion among members about eligibility of time spent going to pick up supplies/signs. Ultimately determined to be eligible if the materials are a funded trail IF the individual county/club to allow it as a reasonable use of their \$300/mile.
- Ad hoc members sent a list of questionable items to Jillian for review and ultimate determination.
- For the future, DNR will look to schedule an 'audit training' for County staff session, and record it for future reference.

8. Information & Action: Equipment/Groomer Rates, Labor Rates

- The equipment ad hoc committee met and came up with some ideas about potential updates for the 2025-26 season. Changes are primarily to modify rates to reflect DOT changes. Also compressing some of the tractor, truck etc categories to simplify.
- Collaboration with ORV Council would be good, as the two Councils should ideally adopt the same rate sheet. DNR will work to schedule a meeting between the two groups prior to Aug 25.

9. Information & Action: Review Snowmobile Grant Applications

- Questions recorded on the funding request spreadsheet, see attachments.
- Discussion about shared-use bridges such as snowmobile plus logging. If snowmobile covers the initial cost and the county covers the 'increased capacity' cost, is the Council comfortable with that? (FYI, Snowmobile did cover such a request recently in Iron County).

10. Committee member reports, comments and items

- Gary – Can Council members see the bridge inventory in SNARS? Yes, state admins, state viewers and county coords can see.
- Bob – Inviting Willy from KBIS to give a presentation at a future meeting.
- Andy – Possible grade acquisition in the future of the railroad line between Marinette and Crivitz. Also, glad to see improved pictures.
- Mike – ask manufacturers what the useful life should be for their prefab bridges?
- Tara – pleased to see many bridges have gotten inspections done for this year.

11. Items for next meeting

- Willy from KBIS (bridge inspector) will give a presentation on bridge inspections at the Feb meeting. DNR will record that segment for future use and reference.

12. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn by Andy, 2nd by Bob. MOTION PASSED
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