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Minnesota Snowmobile Trails Assistance (“grants-in-aid”) Program

# **Trail Improvement Grants Manual**

May 2021

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# Introduction

## Definitions

**AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE** - Person responsible for the administration of the contract for either the Sponsor or the Department of Natural Resources.

**GROOMING** - Snow grooming is the process of loosening or breaking up heavily compacted or icy snow and placing the snow back down in an equally compacted smooth condition.

**TRAIL IMPROVEMENT** - Trail improvements as they relate to the Minnesota Snowmobile Trails Assistance Program are infrastructure developments, acquisitions, or repairs of a Snowmobile Grant-in-Aid Trail that is above and beyond the responsibilities to maintain that trail as defined by the terms of the established Maintenance and Grooming grant. These responsibilities are defined in the Snowmobile Trails Assistance Program Maintenance and Grooming Manual.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNIT (LGU)** - The political subdivision that has agreed to work with the snowmobile club in the development and maintenance of a trail. This can be a county, city, township, or village.

**RESOLUTION** - Official record of the LGU where they agree to sponsor a snowmobile or trail club and/or trail, certify that the various benchmarks have been met, and administer the grant from the DNR.

**SNOWMOBILE CLUB** - A formal organization that has contracted with a LGU to maintain and operate a local snowmobile trail.

**SPONSOR** - The local government unit that has agreed to work with the snowmobile club.

**SUFFICIENT RECORDS** - Records that are necessary to verify that the club and sponsor have completed certain benchmarks. These will include at a minimum:

- Invoices of repairs/significant expenditures;
- Liability insurance evidence (as required);
- Log of volunteers and man-hours spent on the various trail activities. This log should include date, number of people working on the trail, number of hours, equipment used, type of work done, and section of trail worked on; (an example is included in the Program Forms Section) signed by a club representative.

## Program Summary

### PROGRAM BACKGROUND

In 1973, the Minnesota Legislature delegated the responsibility of administering a cost-sharing program for the development and maintenance of snowmobile trails to the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The goal of this program was the creation and maintenance of locally initiated trails that were financially assisted by the state. This program was named the "Minnesota Trails Assistance Program," and is popularly known as



the grants-in-aid program or simply the GIA program. The DNR has been delegated the responsibility of administering the funds appropriated by the legislature for the GIA program. The Legislature has subsequently provided programs to cover cross-country skiing, off-highway 4x4 trucks, off-road motorcycles, and all-terrain vehicles.

DNR staff, in consultation with stakeholders, sets program policy and guidelines, budgets for program funding and provides for auditing of grants. Department of Natural Resources Regional Parks and Trails Managers and Area Parks and Trails Supervisors are responsible for reviewing and processing necessary program forms, providing technical assistance when requested, monitoring trails for actual performance of disbursed activities, and conducting informational meetings with local organizations. The Area Parks and Trails Supervisors are the main contact for local organizations. See Appendix D for information on identifying and contacting your Area Supervisor.

## **TRAIL IMPROVEMENTS AND DEVELOPMENT OF GRANT-IN-AID TRAILS**

While the majority of grant-in-aid funding is dedicated to maintaining the existing GIA trails throughout Minnesota, grants-in-aid for trail improvements and development are also available. These grants are reimbursement-based where eligible costs are matched at up to 75 percent. A guideline for project eligibility is that the total cost of the project should be at least \$10,000. See the [Eligibility Guidelines](#) section for more information.

## **Responsibilities and Roles of Stakeholders**

### **Snowmobile Clubs:**

- Secure a local government unit as a sponsor.
- Enter into an agreement with the sponsor to physically perform the development work identified in the application.
- Complete tasks in a timely way and submit documentation to the sponsor as required for them to be reimbursed for development activities.
- Maintain sufficient records as defined under the [Definitions](#) section within this instruction manual to satisfy the auditing needs of the trail sponsor and DNR.
- Adhere to the guidelines contained in this instruction manual.
- The Department of Natural Resources very strongly recommends that clubs partially shield their volunteers from the consequences of injury by securing appropriate insurance coverage. Obtain sufficient insurance if necessary and required by the sponsor to protect the interests of the club as well as the local government unit sponsor.
- Obtain sufficient permission from each landowner on which the snowmobile trail is located.
- Clubs may incorporate to protect themselves further.

### **Local government unit/Sponsor:**

- Pass a resolution to serve as the sponsor and submit that to the DNR along with the application form. If there is an executed resolution for Grooming and Maintenance grants that is written to allow for the addition of the trail improvement grant funds, a new resolution is not required but a copy of the resolution must be submitted with the application.

- Be responsible for certifying to the DNR completion of the approved trail improvements necessary to initiate payments and provide a quality snowmobile trail.
- Work with DNR to verify that the local club is adhering to the various guidelines contained in this instruction manual.
- The DNR strongly urges the sponsors to similarly enter into contracts with their snowmobile clubs. These contracts will provide your unit of government with safeguards in the event that monies will have to be reclaimed by the State.

**State/Department of Natural Resources:**

- Initiate application process and respond to submitted applications.
- Provide the Grant Agreement for the sponsoring local government unit.
- Disburse funds for development upon receipt of appropriate reimbursement requests from the sponsor.
- Conduct random program and fiscal reviews to evaluate performance in coordination with sponsors and clubs and to evaluate appropriate accounting procedures and compile needed information for future statewide or system-wide audits (see page 7).

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# Application Process and Program Procedures

## Eligibility Guidelines

Eligible projects for the trail improvement program must be above and beyond the responsibilities of the existing maintenance and grooming grant. A project that meets this criterion is defined as having a **total cost of at least \$10,000 (which would translate to a grant request of at least \$7,500)**. Trail improvement grants include the following types of projects:

### 1. Major Reroute Projects

- a. Major reroutes includes rerouting an existing trail to preserve trail continuity.
- b. Major reroute projects are generally a result of the following:
  - i. Landowner permission changes;
  - ii. Development issues on the trails existing corridor area; and,
  - iii. Safety issues.

### 2. Major Rehabilitation Projects

- a. Major rehabilitation projects are generally a result of the need to do the following:
  - i. Improve trail safety;
  - ii. Widen trails;
  - iii. Improve trail surface; and,
  - iv. Improve trailhead facilities.

### 3. Bridge Projects

- a. New placement of a bridge on an existing trail that currently has no existing bridge.
- b. Replacement of a bridge because of deficiencies.

### 4. Acquisition Projects

- a. Acquisition projects are proposals to acquire existing trail routes.
- b. Acquisition projects may also include proposals to acquire new trails and/or facilities.

### 5. New Development and Additions to the GIA System

- a. New development projects include projects to add new or existing trails or facilities to the GIA system, including alignments.
- b. The DNR annually determines if new development projects will be funded. The eligibility of new development projects will be officially communicated through a formal letter and posted on the DNR's Snowmobile GIA website.

## Environmental Review Considerations

Many new development projects and some trail relocation initiatives will require some level of environmental review. This may include, but not be limited to Natural Heritage Information System (NHIS) review, DNR Area Team reviews, and formal review such as an Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW). Sponsors and related clubs should work with Parks and Trails Area Supervisors on determining which requirements they will need to address as they move forward with their projects. For additional information, please visit the Minnesota Environmental Quality Board's website regarding [Environmental Review](#) and the [Environmental Assessment Worksheet \(EAW\) Process](#).

**DNR staff will assist in reviewing potential environmental review needs and requirements during project review phases.** Should an EAW be required or determined necessary, DNR staff will work directly with the club, organization, or Sponsor to ensure appropriate completion of all environmental review requirements, including those in accordance with Minnesota Environmental Review Rules ([Minnesota Rules, Chapter 4410](#)).

## Procedures

**NOTE: UNDER NO CONDITION CAN CONSTRUCTION TAKE PLACE ON ANY PARCEL OF LAND, PRIVATE OR PUBLIC, UNLESS A SIGNED PERMIT HAS BEEN SECURED IN THE NAME OF THE SPONSOR.**

The Minnesota Trails Assistance Application projects must comply with the following procedures.

**1. Trail user organizations/clubs must submit application forms to the sponsor.**

- a. One (1) copy with signatures (copies or scanned signatures are allowed).
- b. One (1) copy of the trail validation map of the existing trail system and proposed development (assistance provided by DNR). The map must identify the following:
  - Where new bridges, rest areas and parking lots are located or will be located;
  - Where new connections or relationships to other trails, if any; and,
  - Minor and major relocation areas showing old and new alignments.

**2. The sponsor will submit the above items, along with a supporting resolution, to the DNR Area Parks and Trails Supervisor for review. Electronic submissions are recommended.** See Appendix D for information on identifying and contacting your Area Supervisor.

**APPLICATION FORMS MUST BE RECEIVED BY STATED DEADLINES.** Projects may require an environmental review.

**3. Upon approval of the application, the Area Parks and Trails Supervisor will submit a contract agreement to the sponsor. The sponsor will then process three (3) copies of the contract agreement with signatures on each copy and return all copies to the Area Parks and Trails Supervisor.**

**4. The DNR will notify the sponsor, in writing that the agreement has been executed.**

**NOTE:** Do not begin any work on your trail improvement project that you expect reimbursement until your area supervisor has notified you to do so and you have an award letter from the State of Minnesota in front of you.

5. **Timetable:** The schedule set below is designed to help all parties involved in the program in planning trail work and setting up funds so work can proceed.

A. **Application:** These forms must be received by the DNR regional office by **stated deadlines**.

B. **Requests for Reimbursement:**

- i. Requests for Reimbursement for summer and fall construction or maintenance are due no later than stated deadlines.
- ii. Subsequent Requests for Reimbursement may be submitted monthly by the calendar months.
- iii. ALL Requests for Reimbursement must be received by the DNR no later than stated deadlines for that year's work.
- iv. Payment of Requests for Reimbursement: If Requests for Reimbursement are executed properly and all necessary signatures and invoices are included in the request, the DNR will pay the requests. Requests submitted improperly will be returned for proper execution.

## Project Priorities

The first priority for funding any grant-in-aid will be maintaining existing trails that are receiving acceptable use. The order of priorities used in determining funding of a trail improvement project will be stated in the current grant solicitation.

## Selection Process

Trail Improvement Project Applications are submitted to Parks and Trails Area/Region officials. The following outlines the process for selecting and approving trail improvement grants-in-aid.

1. Parks and Trails Area/Region staff identify regional priority projects. Those that meet the above priorities and meet regional priorities are recommended for funding to the DNR Central Office.
2. The DNR Central Office review proposals in conjunction with Parks and Trails Area/Region recommendations.
3. DNR Central Office and a representative from each of the four state DNR regions score the proposals based on the established selection criteria.
4. DNR Central Office then approve or deny the requests for project funding based on the above priorities, statewide distribution, and funding availability.

5. Award letters are distributed permitting the work to begin.
6. Signed contracts must be returned to eligible for reimbursement.

## Proposal Evaluation

All responses received by the application end date and time will be reviewed by the DNR. Proposals will first be reviewed for responsiveness to determine if the minimum requirements have been met. Proposals that fail to meet minimum requirements will not advance to the next phase of the evaluation. A 100-point scale will be used to create the final project evaluation recommendation. Please see the current request for proposals for the current scoring guidelines for project priorities and evaluation factors.

### Mandatory Requirements (Scored as Pass/Fail)

The following will be considered on a **pass/fail basis**:

1. Proposals must be received on or before the due date and time specified in the solicitation.
2. Proposals must meet the programmatic Request for Proposals requirements.
3. Proposals must meet the minimum match requirement of 25% of the total project costs.
4. Total project cost must be more than \$10,000, which equates to a minimum grant request of \$7,500.
5. An Authorized Representative and Local government unit must be specified.
6. Required attachments are included with the proposal.
7. If the Local government unit has not been awarded a grant in the past, a resolution must be attached to the grant application.

### Project Priorities (all points assigned if deemed to best fit the assigned project type)

To meet the MnUSA recommended order of project priorities used to determine funding of a submitted trail improvement project, the project type for each proposal will be assigned a score according to the most appropriate priority specified below:

1. Major Rehabilitation Projects
2. Bridge Projects
3. Major Reroute Projects
4. Acquisition Projects
5. New Development and Additions to the GIA System

### Evaluation Factors (points assigned will range based on how well it meets set criteria)

The factors and weighting on which proposals will be judged are:

1. Site and Project Quality;
2. Need/urgency of proposed work;
3. Cost-benefit of proposed work;
4. Project readiness and Timeline;
5. Level of environmental impact and permitting required;
6. Club Membership and Community; and,
7. Club Goals.

It is anticipated that the evaluation and selection will be completed within a month of application deadlines.

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## Financial Management

### Allowable Costs and Charges

#### Allowable Charges

All the charges listed below must be directly related to the acquisition, rehabilitation, and development of the GIA trail system outlined in the application. No other charges will be accepted without prior approval from your Area Parks and Trails Supervisor.

#### ***Administration Charges (75% Reimbursable)***

##### ***(No More Than 15 Percent of Total Grant)***

1. **Mileage and Labor:** These charges may be reimbursed for preparing the paperwork and forms for the program, bookkeeping, paying invoices, attending necessary county board or DNR meetings, and obtaining bids for equipment rentals.
2. **Stamps:** The cost of mailing necessary DNR forms, billings, bid requests, or maps. It is suggested that a list of mailings and materials mailed be kept on file.
3. **Telephone Calls:** Long distance calls directly related to trail administration to vendors, the sponsoring agency, landowners, and the DNR will be accepted. It is suggested that a list of calls be kept on file.
4. **Office Supplies:** The purchase of materials needed to fulfill the programs administration such as writing, typing, and copying materials are acceptable. Office space rental is **not** an acceptable charge.
5. **Maps Used to Administer Grants:** The cost of county maps that are to be submitted to the DNR as required by the program are reimbursable.
6. **Meeting:** The DNR allows charges for essential personnel to attend meetings directly related to the program. The general rule will be not more than four (4) people for a trail committee meeting and not more than two (2) people for a governmental meeting. Club meetings are **not** acceptable as chargeable meetings. Rental of meeting rooms is **not** an acceptable charge.
7. **Computer Time:** The cost of using computers shall be reimbursed as part of the administrative portion of the grant. The origin of cost, such as number of hours, or equipment rental, or materials should be described on the worksheet. The Allowable Cost for figuring reimbursement can be found in the Allowable Costs section.

#### ***Land Acquisition Charges (75% Reimbursable)***

1. **Mileage and Labor:** These charges are acceptable for alignment work, checking ownership records, and landowner contacts.
2. **Maps:** The cost of securing maps necessary for aligning trail routes is reimbursable. County highway maps and topographic maps are acceptable. Aerial photography maps should receive DNR approval since costs can be extremely high.
3. **Permits and Easements:** The program has done extremely well to date with landowner cooperation and low permit or easement costs. Costs incurred are reimbursable.

#### ***Development and Charges (75% reimbursable)***

1. **Mileage and Labor:** These charges are reimbursable for construction and rehabilitation of the trail system. A worksheet must be filled out for reimbursement identifying hours and dates work was performed.
2. **Equipment Rentals:**
  - A. Heavy equipment work is reimbursable as needed for construction. The operator or vendor of the heavy equipment must be identified and an invoice submitted to the DNR for payment.
  - B. Bids: When equipment cannot be rented at the allowable costs, bids must be secured for the necessary equipment. Three (3) hourly bids must be secured from vendors in your area. If three (3) bids cannot be secured, list the vendors contacted, date contacted, and vendor's response. When the bids have been secured, the Area Parks and Trails Supervisor must be contacted and approve the bids. After approval, the equipment can be hired. The bids are then submitted with the Request for Reimbursement. ***NOTE: Before any equipment rental or work is done, the rental costs must be within the allowable limits. If these limits cannot be met, bid procedures must be strictly adhered to or billing will not be processed.***
  - C. Hand power equipment rental is reimbursable. The operator or owner of the equipment must be identified on the worksheet for payment.
3. **Material:** Charges may be submitted for materials used directly on the trail system. Materials may include, but are not limited to lumber, paint, signs, gates, posts, fencing, culverts, fill, grass seed, bolts or other hardware, etc. If you have a question on any materials, it is best to contact your Area Parks and Trails Supervisor. See Appendix D for information on identifying and contacting your Area Supervisor.
4. **Contracted Work:** Work that is contracted to complete the development work is reimbursable subject to going through the proper bidding procedure. In addition, all bidding must also follow regular standards established by the Sponsor.



## Grant-in-aid Allowable Costs

For the most current updates, always check the grants pages on the DNR web site.

### Snowmobile Program GIA Allowable Costs Labor and Equipment

The Snowmobile Program GIA Allowable Costs Rates covers all costs for operation of equipment, depreciation, overhead, all maintenance, field repairs, fuel, lubricants, tires, OSHA equipment and other costs incidental to operation. Standby equipment costs are not eligible. Equipment must be in actual operation performing eligible work in order for reimbursement to be eligible. Rates for equipment not listed will be furnished by DNR upon request.

**Labor (one rate for all activities) \$20.00/hour**

**Mileage rates for vehicles:**

ATV, motorcycle, car, pickup, 4x4 truck=\$0.54/mile  
1 to 2-ton=\$0.84/mile  
2½-ton and up=\$1.06/mile  
semi-tractor/trailer (for heavy equipment transport) = \$2.00/mile

**Add on to vehicle or equipment rate when actively hauling/dumping materials or using attachments:**

Dump boxes on trucks or trailers:

3 cy or less =\$5.00/mile or hour  
over 3 cy and under 8 cy =\$6.00/mile or hour  
over 8 cy and under 12 cy =\$8.00/mile or hour  
12 cy and over =\$10.00/mile or hour

3-point attachments (like disc, box blade, drag, or planer) =\$15.00/hour

Power take-off (PTO) or hydraulic-powered attachments (like powered flail mower, brush mower, post hole auger) =\$20.00/hour

**Power tools/small equipment** (Examples include, but are not limited to, chainsaw, weed whip, hand-held brush saw, pole pruner saw, power generator, push/riding/pull-behind mowers, hand held portable post-hole auger) = \$5.00/hour

**Equipment and attachment hourly rates by horsepower (hp) range:** (Examples include, but are not limited to, tractor, tractor with loader, skid-steer, skid steer with loader, excavator, stump grinder, front-end loader, dozer, grader)

less than 25=\$20.00/hour  
26 to 50=\$35.00/hour  
51 to 80=\$50.00/hour  
81 to 105=\$65.00/hour  
106 to 157=\$80.00/hour  
158 to 205=\$90.00/hour  
206 to 250=\$100.00/hour  
over 250=\$120.00/hour

Above rates derived with input from MN DNR Grant-in-aid Allowable Costs Updated 4/29/2009, Reference IRS 2016 standard mileage rate for transportation or travel expenses (business standard mileage rate), FEMA's SCHEDULE OF EQUIPMENT RATES, September 15, 2010; DOT Federal-aid Policy Guide 23 CFR 635 A, ACOE

## Reimbursement Procedure

The Reimbursement Form found later in this manual is to be submitted to your Parks and Trails Area Supervisor from the Sponsor. The Area Supervisor will review and then approve the payment/invoices based on allowable costs and charges referenced above. Parks and Trails Area/Region offices process and approve all payments and charges defined as eligible by this manual. Only costs accrued after an award letter are eligible for reimbursement and a fully executed agreement between the State of Minnesota and the Local government unit must be in place before eligible costs will be reimbursed.

### Reimbursement Instructions

The Request for Reimbursement Form must be used to summarize the invoices and costs. Use the Worksheet Form to document the following:

1. Date the work was done.
2. Operator's or volunteer's name.
3. Number of hours of labor time.
4. Rate per hour (taken from Allowable Costs page).
5. Total cost of labor (multiply #3 \* #4).
6. Name the mode of transportation used (pickup, ATV, etc.). If different types of modes of transportation are used, use a separate line for each type (e.g., pickup truck on one line, ATV the next line).
7. Number of miles being claimed.
8. Rate per mile (taken from Allowable Costs page).
9. Total cost of transportation (multiply #7 \* #8).
10. Name of types of heavy equipment or power equipment used. Include make and model for heavy equipment. Use one line for each piece of equipment being used (e.g., bulldozer on one line, backhoe the next line, etc.). See NOTE section below for instructions for entering INVOICES for purchased goods or services.
11. Number of hours equipment is used.
12. Rate per hour (taken from Allowable Costs page).
13. Total cost of equipment used (multiply #11 \* #12).
14. Total Cost (add #5 + #9 + #13).
15. Fill in the type of work done and the location.
16. Fill in the Expenditure Type (Adm = Administration; Acq = Acquisition; Con = Trail Construction; Reloc = Trail Relocation; Fac = Trail Facilities).
17. Add all costs in boxes #5 to get Grand Total Labor Costs.
18. Add all costs in boxes #9 to get Grand Total Transportation Costs.

19. Add all costs in boxes #13 to get Grand Total Other Equipment Costs.
20. Grand Total for this page (add #17 + #18 + #19).
21. Trails Administrator's Signature.
22. Date the worksheet was completed.

### Entering Invoices for Purchased Goods/Services over \$100

An invoice must accompany all Requests for Reimbursement for purchased goods or services over \$100. When invoices for purchased goods and services are included, please enter:

- "Invoice" and the **Invoice Number** in Operator's Name column (#2);
- the **invoice amount** in the Total Cost Column (#14);
- the **explanation for the expense** in the Type of Work and Location column (#15); and,
- complete **Expenditure Type** column (#16).

## Accounting and Audit

The Sponsor shall maintain books, records, documents, and other evidence relevant to this grant and in such detail that will accurately document all project costs for which payment have been received. The Sponsor shall use generally accepted accounting principles and these records shall be retained for six (6) years after this grant terminates. The State, its representative, or the legislative auditor shall have the right to examine this evidence and the Sponsor shall make them available at the office at all reasonable times during the record retention period. Records shall be sufficient, as defined in the Manual to reflect significant costs incurred and volunteer donation of time, equipment, and/or materials in performance of this grant.

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# Program Forms

## Description of Forms

The following forms have been included to identify the basic paperwork necessary for the Trails Assistance Program. See the DNR's website at [www.dnr.state.mn.us/grants/recreation/gia\\_snowmobile.html](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/grants/recreation/gia_snowmobile.html)

- ❑ **Trail Improvement Project Application:** This form is the formal application from the Sponsor to the State of Minnesota for the development project.
- ❑ **Sample Agreement between Sponsor and State:** This form is the formal grant agreement between the local government sponsor and the State/DNR.
- ❑ **Request for Reimbursement:** This form is to be used to request reimbursement for allowable costs related to the development project as outlined in the application.
- ❑ **Operator's Work Log:** This form should be used to itemize costs and should accompany the Request for Reimbursement.
- ❑ **Sample Landowner Permission Form:** This form is designed to help clubs to obtain private landowner permission for trails.
- ❑ **Elements of a Sponsor Resolution:** This is an explanation of the information a Sponsor resolution should contain.

## Trail Improvement Application



### MINNESOTA SNOWMOBILE TRAIL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FY20 TRAIL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT APPLICATION

**Project type (Select all that apply):**

- ☐ Major Rehabilitation Project   
 ☐ Bridge Project   
 ☐ Major Reroute Project  
☐ Acquisition Project   
 ☐ New Development and Additions to the GIA System

#### Applicant Information

1. Trail/Club Name (Same as Regular Grant):	2. Unit of Government Sponsor:	3. Date:
4. Project Title:		
5. Trail Administrator Name:	6. Trail Administrator Signature:	
7. Address (Street, Box Number, City, State, Zip Code):	8. Home Phone Number:	9. Work Phone Number:
10. GIA Trail Number:	11. Miles of New Trail Construction (If Applicable):	

#### 12. Grant Request and Matching Funds

Grant Request:	\$	Source of Cash Match (describe below in the box next to \$ amount, including GIA grooming and maintenance grants):	Are match funds secured? (Yes/No)	Grant-in-Aid Funds (Yes/No)
Matching Funds	\$			
(25% match required):	\$			
	\$			
Total Project Cost:	\$	(Grant Request + Matching Funds must equal Total Project Cost)		

MINNESOTA SNOWMOBILE TRAIL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM  
FY20 TRAIL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT APPLICATION

**Project Cost Breakdown and Explanation**

13A. ADMINISTRATION Explanation:				TOTAL \$
13B. ACQUISITION Explanation:				
Labor \$	Mileage \$	Equipment \$	Materials \$	TOTAL \$
13C. CONSTRUCTION Explanation:				
Labor \$	Mileage \$	Equipment \$	Materials \$	TOTAL \$
13D. FACILITIES Explanation:				
Labor \$	Mileage \$	Equipment \$	Materials \$	TOTAL \$
14. Total Cost (Sum 13A – 13D): \$		15. Total Grant Request (Up to 75% of Total Cost): \$		

MINNESOTA SNOWMOBILE TRAIL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM  
FY20 TRAIL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT APPLICATION

**16. Project Description** (Provide a detailed description of the project sufficient enough to understand the project. Also, briefly explain why it is important for this project to be funded. Attach additional pages as needed.):

**17. Project Urgency** (Is there urgency to move ahead with this project now? What consequences are foreseen if it is not funded? Attach additional pages as needed.):

MINNESOTA SNOWMOBILE TRAIL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM  
FY20 TRAIL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT APPLICATION

**18. Environmental Impact and Permitting** (Provide a detailed description of the project's impacts and anticipated permits required. Describe the potential impact to natural resources by the project and efforts to avoid or mitigate adverse effects. This includes considerations for trail design and construction practices, control measures, surface erosion, fish and wildlife populations, damage to wetlands or other ecologically sensitive natural resources, and historical/archaeological sites. Attach additional pages as needed.):

**19. Project Readiness** (What is the current status of the project? Can the project begin immediately? What major activities must still be accomplished before the project can begin? Will the project be completed within the appropriation timelines? Attach additional pages as needed.)



MINNESOTA SNOWMOBILE TRAIL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM  
FY20 TRAIL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT APPLICATION

**20. Cost-Benefit** (Describe the cost in relation to the value provided by the proposed project. With limited funding available, how urgent is the proposed project in relation to the cost? Attach additional pages as needed.)

**21. Connectivity - If applicable** (Describe how the trail project contributes to the overall connectivity of the trail system in the area. Specifically, how well does the project connect existing trail networks or fill critical gaps within the trail system? How well does the project help promote connectivity among trail networks statewide? Attach additional pages as needed.)

**22. Club Membership and Community Demographics -** (Describe the composition of your club and the communities your club serves.)

**General Club Membership: Do you have members that identify as:**

White **Yes / No** Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin **Yes / No**  
Black or African American **Yes / No** Asian **Yes / No** American Indian or Alaska Native **Yes / No**  
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander **Yes / No** Middle Eastern or North African **Yes / No**  
Other Race, ethnicity, or origin **Yes / No**

**Number of Members:** less than 39 years old \_\_\_\_\_ 40-59 years old \_\_\_\_\_  
60+ years old \_\_\_\_\_

**Club Board Membership: Do you have members that identify as:**

White **Yes / No** Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin **Yes / No**  
Black or African American **Yes / No** Asian **Yes / No** American Indian or Alaska Native **Yes / No**  
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander **Yes / No** Middle Eastern or North African **Yes / No**  
Other Race, ethnicity, or origin **Yes / No**

**Number of Board Members:** less than 39 years old \_\_\_\_\_ 40-59 years old \_\_\_\_\_  
60+ years old \_\_\_\_\_

**23. Club Goals -** (Describe the club's community engagement goals. How does the club communicate the work they do (i.e. newsletter, Facebook, website, etc.)? What events does the club host to reach new parts of the community (i.e. youth snowmobile clubs, community dinners, etc.)? What is the club planning or doing to increase the number and diversity of club members? Attach additional pages as needed.)

MINNESOTA SNOWMOBILE TRAIL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM  
FY20 TRAIL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT APPLICATION

24. Sponsor Approval		
24A. Unit of Government Sponsor:	24B. Telephone Number (Include Area Code):	
24C. Address (Street, Box Number, City, State, Zip Code):		
24D. Authorized Signature of Sponsor (electronic or scanned signature accepted):	24E. Title:	24F. Date of Signature:

25. Required Attachments
25A. <input type="checkbox"/> Project Location Map, Including Existing Trail in System, Miles of New Construction, Miles to be Added to System, and any Trail Facilities and/or Bridges
25B. <input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor Resolution (Annual resolution from Maintenance and Grooming GIA grant is acceptable, if applicable)
25C. <input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor's most recent fiscal audit
25D. <input type="checkbox"/> Documentation of Required Permits and Approvals (if applicable)

DEPARTMENT USE ONLY		
Certification by Department of Natural Resources		
Recommended Grant Amount: \$	Explanation if Different from Request (Or Attach):	
Authorized Signature:	Area Parks and Trails Supervisor	Date of Signature:
Authorized Signature:	Area Parks and Trails Manager	Date of Signature:

## Sample Agreement between Sponsor and State

### STATE OF MINNESOTA GRANT CONTRACT AGREEMENT

#### SNOWMOBILE GRANT-IN-AID PROGRAM FY 2022 TRAIL IMPROVEMENT GRANTS

Contract #/PO:		
Local Unit of Government Sponsor:		
Trail/Club Name:		
Grant Amount:	\$	

This grant contract is between the State of Minnesota, acting through its **Commissioner of Natural Resources** ("STATE") and **[GIVE THE FULL NAME OF THE LOCAL UNIT OF GOVERNMENT SPONSOR, INCLUDING ITS ADDRESS]** ("SPONSOR").

#### Recitals

1. The Snowmobile Grant-in-Aid Program is established in [Minn. Stat. §84.83](#) to provide grants to local units of government for the improvement of snowmobile trails and the State is empowered to enter into this grant.
2. The State is in need of the services of the Sponsor to provide the trail improvements of the following trail(s) specified in this grant contract agreement: **[List Trail and Club Name(s) for each approved GIA, and if this contract includes more than one GIA per Sponsor, list the dollar amount identified for each trail/club here]**.
3. The Sponsor has applied to the State for a grant for the above identified trails and has submitted the Snowmobile Grant-in-Aid Program Trail Improvement application form, required attachments, and resolution or official minutes of the Sponsor authorizing the proposed trail improvements unless an annual resolution from maintenance and grooming grants has already been submitted for the fiscal year. The submitted application form and required attachments are hereinafter referred to as the "Plan."
4. Attachment. The Sponsor's resolution or official minutes are attached and incorporated into this grant contract agreement, unless an annual resolution from maintenance and grooming grants has already been submitted for the fiscal year.
5. The Sponsor represents that it is duly qualified and agrees to perform all services described in this grant contract to the satisfaction of the State. Pursuant to [Minn. Stat. §16B.98](#), Subd.1, the Sponsor agrees to minimize administrative costs as a condition of this grant and to follow the code of ethics pursuant to [Minn. Stat. §43A.38](#) in administration of this grant.
6. Attachment. The Sponsor's resolution is attached and incorporated into this grant contract agreement.

#### Grant Contract

##### Term of Grant Contract

Effective date:

July 1, 2021 or the date the State accounting system shows sufficient allotment or encumbrance balance in the fund, allotment, or appropriation to meet this grant contract agreement and per [Minn.](#)

[Stat. §16B.98](#) Subd. 5 and Subd. 7. Per Minn.Stat. §16B.98 Subd. 7, no payments will be made to the Sponsor until this grant contract is fully executed.

Expiration date:

June 30, 2023, or until all obligations have been satisfactorily fulfilled, whichever occurs first pursuant to [Minn. Stat. §16A.28](#) Subd. 5 regarding permanent improvements of a capital nature. This expiration date includes the certification period as authorized in Minn. Stat. Ch. 16A.2, Subd. 6.

Survival of Terms:

The following clauses survive the expiration or cancellation of this grant contract: 8. Liability; 9. State Audits; 10. Government Data Practices and Intellectual Property Rights; 12. Publicity and Endorsement; 13. Governing Law, Jurisdiction, and Venue; and 15. Data Disclosure.

Incur Expenses:

Notwithstanding Minnesota Statutes, section 16A.41, expenditures made on or after July 1, 2019 are eligible for reimbursement. Expenses incurred by the grantee or its subcontractors prior to contract execution (as permitted by Minnesota Statutes, section 84.026, Subd. 4(1)) require written pre-approval by the state's authorized representative prior to expenditure.

## Sponsor's Duties

The Sponsor agrees to construct, operate, and maintain the proposed trails in accordance with the guidelines contained within the current Minnesota Snowmobile Trails Assistance Program Trail Improvement Manual, hereinafter referred to as the "Manual" as accepted or amended by the State and available on the Snowmobile GIA Program webpage at [http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/grants/recreation/gia\\_snowmobile.html](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/grants/recreation/gia_snowmobile.html). All work will be the responsibility of the Sponsor, its employees, or the sponsor's agent provided the agent is registered as a nonprofit corporation with the State of Minnesota. The Sponsor, who is not a state employee, will:

**2.1.** Comply with required grants management policies and procedures set forth through [Minn. Stat. §16B.97](#), Subd. 4 (a) (1).

**2.2.** Proceed to acquire necessary interests in lands on the Trail. The Sponsor must acquire land in fee, easement, lease, permit, or other authorization for said Trail. The term of said interest shall be no less than four (4) months between November 15 of any year and April 1 of the succeeding year. For each parcel of land crossed by the Trail, the Sponsor shall obtain from the owner of said parcel a permit, lease, easement, deed, or other authorization for said crossing in accordance with Minnesota Statutes Chapter 604A. The Sponsor shall certify that the necessary interests in the land have been obtained and are on file with the Sponsor or the sponsor's agent.

**2.3.** Complete activities in this Grant Contract Agreement for the trails approved by the State listed above according to the guidelines of the Manual as stated in the application, including cost worksheet(s) and map(s) as accepted or amended by the State that is the approved work plan and budget on file with the State's Authorized Representative.

**2.4.** Perform services to provide the trail(s) for public use in accordance with the guidelines in the

Manual, which shall include but are not limited to:

- (a) The Sponsor will provide adequate maintenance and grooming on the Trail, which shall include keeping it reasonably safe for public use;
- (b) provide sanitation and sanitary facilities when needed;
- (c) provide other maintenance and grooming as may be required and in accordance with the trail grooming guidelines established in the manual.

The Sponsor and not the State is responsible for maintaining signs and the maintenance and grooming of the Trail.

**2.5.** Expedite establishment and construction of the trail(s). If the Sponsor fails to expedite establishment and construction of trails or fails to provide for adequate maintenance, the State may withhold payments to the Sponsor and/or terminate this Contract.

## **Time**

The Sponsor must comply with all the time requirements described in this grant contract. In the performance of this grant contract, time is of the essence.

## **Consideration and Payment**

### ***Consideration.***

The State agrees to disburse funds to the Sponsor pursuant to this Agreement based upon the satisfactory completion receipt of the request for reimbursement as identified below. This grant shall not exceed the Grant Amount as specified on page one of this agreement or as amended. Funds not earned and paid out will be canceled annually at the end of the State's fiscal year (June 30).

### ***Compensation.***

Compensation in an amount not to exceed \$«Amount\_Awarded», according to the breakdown of costs contained in Attachment A. Project Scope and Budget, which is incorporated and made part of this contract.

### ***Matching Requirements.***

Grantee certifies that the following matching requirement for the grant will be met by «Grantee\_Organization\_Name». The total project cost is \$«Total\_Cost». Grantee agrees to match at least enter Match Amount of this project cost.

***The State shall disburse funds to the Grantee pursuant to this contract on a reimbursement basis not to exceed seventy-five (75) percent of its eligible costs, as described in Section 25.***

## **Total Obligation.**

The total obligation of the State for all compensation and reimbursements to the Sponsor under this grant contract will not exceed \$[ENTER THE TOTAL GIA FUNDING FOR THE FISCAL YEAR HERE].

### ***Payment.***

The local unit of government must submit a request for reimbursement and attach worksheets furnished by the State for all costs incurred in acquiring, and developing the trail, all in accordance with the Manual. Additionally, the local unit of government must submit original receipts of actual purchases exceeding \$100.00. Further, the first request for reimbursement for costs incurred by grooming must be made by January 31, and the last day of every month thereafter while costs are incurred during the grooming season.

1. First Payment: Upon receipt of the request for reimbursement evidencing acceptable trail costs of \$500.00 or more for acquisition or development the State agrees to reimburse the local unit of government for approved costs in accordance with the Manual. The State shall not be required to pay for any services provided by the local unit of government, which the State determines to be unsatisfactory as determined by the State's authorized representative.
2. Subsequent Payments: Each thirty (30) successive days after the first payment, the local unit of government may submit invoices evidencing trail costs. Payments shall be made to the extent of authorized reimbursement, or until this agreement is terminated.

### ***Contracting and Bidding Requirements.***

Per [Minn. Stat. §471.345](#), grantees that are municipalities as defined in Subd. 1 must do the following if contracting funds from this grant contract agreement for any supplies, materials, equipment or the rental thereof, or the construction, alteration, repair or maintenance of real or personal property

- (a) If the amount of the contract is estimated to exceed \$100,000, a formal notice and bidding process must be conducted in which sealed bids shall be solicited by public notice. Municipalities may, as a best value alternative, award a contract for construction, alteration, repair, or maintenance work to the vendor or contractor offering the best value under a request for proposals as described in [Minn. Stat. §16C.28](#), Subd. 1, paragraph (a), clause (2)
- (b) If the amount of the contract is estimated to exceed \$25,000 but not \$100,000, the contract may be made either upon sealed bids or by direct negotiation, by obtaining two or more quotations for the purchase or sale when possible, and without advertising for bids or otherwise complying with the requirements of competitive bidding. All quotations obtained shall be kept on file for a period of at least one year after receipt thereof. Municipalities may, as a best value alternative, award a contract for construction, alteration, repair, or maintenance work to the vendor or contractor offering the best value under a request for proposals as described in [Minn. Stat. §16C.28](#), Subd. 1, paragraph (a), clause (2) and paragraph (c).
- (c) If the amount of the contract is estimated to be \$25,000 or less, the contract may be made either upon quotation or in the open market, in the discretion of the governing body. If the contract is made upon quotation it shall be based, so far as practicable, on at least two quotations which shall be kept on file for a period of at least one year after their receipt. Alternatively, municipalities may award a contract for construction, alteration, repair, or maintenance work to the vendor or

contractor offering the best value under a request for proposals as described in [Minn. Stat. §16C.28](#), Subd. 1, paragraph (a), clause (2)

- (d) Support documentation of the bidding process utilized to contract services must be included in the grantee's financial records, including support documentation justifying a single/sole source bid, if applicable.
- (e) For projects that include construction work of \$25,000 or more, prevailing wage rules apply per; [Minn. Stat. §177.41](#) through [177.44](#) consequently, the bid request must state the project is subject to *prevailing wage*. These rules require that the wages of laborers and workers should be comparable to wages paid for similar work in the community as a whole. A prevailing wage form should accompany these bid submittals.

### **Conditions of Payment**

All services provided by the Sponsor under this grant contract must be performed to the State's satisfaction, as determined at the sole discretion of the State's Authorized Representative and in accordance with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, ordinances, rules, and regulations. The Sponsor will not receive payment for work found by the State to be unsatisfactory or performed in violation of federal, state, or local law.

### **Penalties**

If its determined performance was not met, the State reserves the right to reduce payment in the following year's agreement or to exclude the Sponsor from participation in the Snowmobile Grant-in-Aid Program.

### **Authorized Representative**

The State's Authorized Representative is [NAME, TITLE, ADDRESS, TELEPHONE NUMBER, EMAIL], or his/her successor, and has the responsibility to monitor the Sponsor's performance and the authority to accept the services provided under this grant contract. If the services are satisfactory, the State's Authorized Representative will certify acceptance on each invoice submitted for payment.

The Sponsor's Authorized Representative is [NAME, TITLE, ADDRESS, TELEPHONE NUMBER, EMAIL]. If the Sponsor's Authorized Representative changes at any time during this grant contract, the Sponsor must immediately notify the State.

### **Assignment Amendments, Waiver, and Grant Contract Complete**

#### **Assignment**

The Sponsor shall neither assign nor transfer any rights or obligations under this grant contract without the prior written consent of the State, approved by the same parties who executed and approved this grant contract, or their successors in office.

#### **Amendments**

Any amendments to this grant contract must be in writing and will not be effective until it has been



executed and approved by the same parties who executed and approved the original grant contract, or their successors in office.

### ***Waiver***

If the State fails to enforce any provision of this grant contract, that failure does not waive the provision or the State's right to enforce it.

### ***Grant Contract Complete***

This grant contract contains all negotiations and agreements between the State and the Sponsor. No other understanding regarding this grant contract, whether written or oral, may be used to bind either party.

### ***Liability***

The Sponsor must indemnify, save, and hold the State, its agents, and employees harmless from any claims or causes of action, including attorney's fees incurred by the State, arising from the performance of this grant contract by the Sponsor or the Sponsor's agents or employees. This clause will not be construed to bar any legal remedies the Sponsor may have for the State's failure to fulfill its obligations under this grant contract.

### ***State Audits***

Under Minn. Stat. §16B.98, Subd.8, the Sponsor's or the sponsor's agent's books, records, documents, and accounting procedures and practices of the Sponsor, the sponsor's agent, or other party relevant to this grant agreement or transaction are subject to examination by the State and/or the State Auditor or Legislative Auditor, as appropriate, for a minimum of six years from the end of this grant agreement, receipt and approval of all final reports, or the required period of time to satisfy all state and program retention requirements, whichever is later.

### ***Government Data Practices and Intellectual Property Rights***

#### ***Government Data Practices***

The Sponsor and State must comply with the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, [Minn. Stat. Ch. 13](#), as it applies to all data provided by the State under this grant contract, and as it applies to all data created, collected, received, stored, used, maintained, or disseminated by the Sponsor under this grant contract. The civil remedies of [Minn. Stat. §13.08](#) apply to the release of the data referred to in this clause by either the Sponsor or the State. If the Sponsor receives a request to release the data referred to in this Clause, the Sponsor must immediately notify the State. The State will give the Sponsor instructions concerning the release of the data to the requesting party before the data is released. The Sponsor's response to the request shall comply with applicable law.

#### ***Intellectual Property Rights***

- (a) Intellectual Property Rights. The State owns all rights, title, and interest in all of the intellectual property rights, including copyrights, patents, trade secrets, trademarks, and service marks in the Works and Documents created and paid for under this contract.
- (b) Obligations.

1. Notification. Whenever any invention, improvement or discovery (whether or not patentable) is made or conceived for the first time or actually or constructively reduced to practice by the Sponsor, including its employees and subcontractors, in the performance of this contract, the Sponsor will immediately give the State's Authorized Representative written notice thereof, and must promptly furnish the Authorized Representative with complete information and/or disclosure thereon.
2. Representation. The Sponsor must perform all acts, and take all steps necessary to ensure that all intellectual property rights in the Works and Documents are the sole property of the State, and that neither Sponsor nor its employees, agents, or subcontractors retain any interest in and to the Works and Documents. The Sponsor represents and warrants that the Works and Documents do not will not infringe upon any intellectual property rights of other persons or entities. The sponsor will indemnify, defend, to the extent permitted by the Attorney General and hold harmless the State, at the Sponsor's expense, from any action or claim brought against the State to the extent that it is based on a claim that all or parts of the Works and Documents infringe upon the intellectual property rights of others. The Sponsor will be responsible for payment of any and all such claims, demands, obligations, liabilities, costs, and damages, including but not limited to, attorney fees. If such a claim or action arises, or in the Sponsor's or the State's opinion is likely to arise, the Sponsor must, at the State's discretion, either procure for the State the right or license to use the intellectual property rights at issue or replace or modify the allegedly infringing Works or Documents as necessary and appropriate to obviate the infringement claim. This remedy of the State will be in addition to and not exclusive of other remedies provided by law.

## **Workers Compensation**

The Sponsor certifies that it is in compliance with [Minn. Stat. §176.181](#), Subd. 2, pertaining to workers' compensation insurance coverage. The Sponsor's employees and agents will not be considered State employees. Any claims that may arise under the Minnesota Workers' Compensation Act on behalf of these employees and any claims made by any third party as a consequence of any act or omission on the part of these employees are in no way the State's obligation or responsibility.

## **Publicity and Endorsement**

### ***Publicity***

Any publicity regarding the subject matter of this grant contract must identify the State as the sponsoring agency and must not be released without prior written approval from the State's Authorized Representative. For purposes of this provision, publicity includes notices, informational pamphlets, press releases, research, reports, signs, and similar public notices prepared by or for the Sponsor individually or jointly with others, or any subcontractors, with respect to the program, publications, or services provided resulting from this grant contract. All projects primarily funded by state grant appropriation must publicly credit the State of Minnesota, including on the Sponsor's website when practicable.

### ***Endorsement***

The Sponsor must not claim that the State endorses its products or services.

## **Governing Law, Jurisdiction, and Venue**

Minnesota law, without regard to its choice-of-law provisions, governs this grant contract. Venue for all legal proceedings out of this grant contract, or its breach, must be in the appropriate state or federal court with competent jurisdiction in Ramsey County, Minnesota.

## **Termination and Funding**

### ***Termination by the State***

The State may immediately terminate this grant contract with or without cause, upon 30 days' written notice to the Sponsor. Upon termination, the Sponsor will be entitled to payment, determined on a pro rata basis, for services satisfactorily performed.

### **Termination for Cause**

The State may immediately terminate this grant contract if the State finds that there has been a failure to comply with the provisions of this grant contract, that reasonable progress has not been made or that the purposes for which the funds were granted have not been or will not be fulfilled. The State may take action to protect the interests of the State of Minnesota, including the refusal to disburse additional funds and requiring the return of all or part of the funds already disbursed.

## **Termination or Reduction for Insufficient Funding**

The state can reduce or terminate this grant contract if:

- (a) It does not obtain funding from the Minnesota Legislature.
- (b) Or, if funding cannot be continued at a level sufficient to allow for the payment of the services covered here. Termination must be by written or fax notice to the Sponsor. The State is not obligated to pay for any services that are provided after notice and effective date of termination. However, the Sponsor will be entitled to payment, determined on a pro rata basis, for services satisfactorily performed to the extent that funds are available. The State will not be assessed any penalty if the contract is terminated because of the decision of the Minnesota Legislature, or other funding source, not to appropriate funds. The State must provide the Sponsor notice of the lack of funding within a reasonable time of the State's receiving that notice.

### ***Termination by Contract***

This grant contract may also be terminated upon mutual agreement by the State and the Sponsor.

### ***Funding***

The State's sole responsibility under this Agreement is to provide funds to the Sponsor. In the event that state funds become unavailable because of legislative or executive action or restraints, including but not limited to the Minnesota Legislature not appropriating sufficient funding for the program or there not being enough funding in the snowmobile account, the grant amount may be reduced or this contract may be terminated by the State. Due to variability in revenues to the snowmobile account, the State/DNR may reduce or not disburse funds for the third and/or fourth benchmarks.

## **Data Disclosure**

Under [Minn. Stat. §270C.65](#), Subd. 3, and other applicable law, the Sponsor consents to disclosure of its

social security number, federal employer tax identification number, and/or Minnesota tax identification number, already provided to the State, to federal and state tax agencies and state personnel involved in the payment of state obligations. These identification numbers may be used in the enforcement of federal and state tax laws, which could result in action requiring the Sponsor to file state tax returns and pay delinquent state tax liabilities, if any.

## Reporting Requirements

The Grantee shall submit a progress report, in the form prescribed by the State by May 1 of each year during the term of this grant contract. Upon completion of the Project, the Grantee shall certify to the State that the Project, as conducted, conforms to the approved Application. Said certification must be filed with the State prior to final reimbursement for the Project by the State. Forms will be provided by the State.

The Grantee is bound to financial and performance reporting requirements as noted in the approved Project Scope and Budget that is attached hereto as Attachment "A".

## Monitoring

The State shall be allowed at any time to conduct periodic site visits and inspections to ensure work progress in accordance with this grant contract, including a final inspection upon program completion. At least one monitoring visit per grant period on all state grants of over \$50,000 will be conducted and at least annual monitoring visits on grants of over \$250,000.

Following closure of the program, the State's authorized representatives shall be allowed to conduct post-completion inspections of the site to ensure that the site is being properly operated and maintained and that no conversion of use has occurred.

## Invasive Species Prevention

**18.1 Prevent or limit the introduction, establishment or spread of terrestrial invasive species during work.** The State requires active steps to prevent or limit the introduction, establishment, and spread of invasive species during contracted work. The Sponsor shall prevent invasive species from entering into or spreading within the Trail(s) by ensuring the cleaning of equipment prior to arriving at the Trail(s) site. Where there are multiple sites and at least one contains invasive species, the intent is to start work at the site with the fewest number of invasive plants, leaving the most heavily infested sites to last. The Sponsor's contractors shall make every effort to schedule operations and site visits to avoid the spread of weed seed. This applies to all activities performed on all lands under this grant agreement and is not limited to lands under State control.

Grantees and subcontractors must follow Minnesota DNR's Operational Order 113, which requires preventing or limiting the introduction, establishment and spread of invasive species during activities on public waters and DNR-administered lands. This applies to all activities performed on all lands under this grant agreement and is not limited to lands under DNR control or public waters. Duties are listed under Sections II and III (p. 5-8) of Operational Order 113 which may be found at [http://files.dnr.state.mn.us/assistance/grants/habitat/heritage/oporder\\_113.pdf](http://files.dnr.state.mn.us/assistance/grants/habitat/heritage/oporder_113.pdf).

TERRESTRIAL WORK SITES include:

The grantee shall prevent invasive species from entering into or spreading within a project site by cleaning equipment and clothing prior to arriving at the project site.

If the equipment or clothing arrives at the project site with soil, aggregate material, mulch, vegetation (including seeds) or animals, it shall be cleaned by grantee furnished tool or equipment (brush/broom, compressed air or

pressure washer) at the staging area. The grantee or subcontractor shall dispose of material cleaned from equipment and clothing at a location determined by the DNR Grant Administrator or their representative. If the material cannot be disposed of onsite, secure material prior to transport (sealed container, covered truck, or wrap with tarp) and legally dispose of offsite.

AQUATIC WORK SITES include:

The grantee shall prevent invasive species from entering into or spreading within a project site by cleaning equipment and clothing prior to arriving at the project site.

If the project site includes a water body, the grantee shall clean equipment and clothing as noted above, prior to entering and leaving the water body. Prior to leaving the water body, drain water from all equipment, tanks or water retaining components of boats (motors, live well and bilge). Immediately after leaving the water body, drain water from transom wells onto dry land.

**18.2 Cleaning and disposal of material cleaned.** If the equipment, vehicles, gear, or clothing arrives at the Trail with soil, aggregate material, mulch, vegetation (including seeds) or animals, it shall be cleaned by the Sponsor's contractor furnished tool or equipment (brush/broom, compressed air or pressure washer) at the staging area. The contractor shall dispose of material cleaned from equipment and clothing at a location determined by the State's Authorized Representative. If the material cannot be disposed of onsite, secure material prior to transport (sealed container, covered truck, or wrap with tarp) and legally dispose of offsite.

## **Pollinator Best Management Practices**

Habitat restorations and enhancements conducted on DNR lands and prairie restorations on state lands or on any lands using state funds are subject to pollinator best management practices and habitat restoration guidelines pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, section 84.973. Practices and guidelines ensure an appropriate diversity of native species to provide habitat for pollinators through the growing season. Current specific practices and guidelines to be followed for contract and grant work can be found here:

[https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/pollinator\\_resources/index.html](https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/pollinator_resources/index.html), **DNR Pollinator Best Management Practices and Habitat Restoration Guidelines.**

## **Accessibility**

Structural and nonstructural facilities and programs must meet all state and federal accessibility laws, regulations, and guidelines. Copies of accessibility guidelines can be downloaded off the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines website at <http://www.access-board.gov>.

## **Technical Assistance**

Upon the request of the Sponsor to the extent possible, the State will provide technical assistance with major problems encountered in the maintenance and grooming of the Trail.

## **Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion - Lower Tier Covered Transactions**

The prospective lower tier participant certifies, by submission of this contract, that neither it nor its principals is presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by any Federal department or agency.

Where the prospective lower tier participant is unable to certify to any of the statements in this certification, such prospective participant shall attach an explanation to this contract.

## **Whistleblower Protection Rights**

Recipient Employee Whistleblower Rights and Requirement To Inform Employees of Whistleblower Rights.

(a) This award and employees working on this financial assistance contract will be subject to the whistleblower rights and remedies in the pilot program on Award Recipient employee whistleblower protections established at 41 U.S.C. 4712 by section 828 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013 (Pub.L. 112-239)

(b) The Award Recipient shall inform its employees in writing, in the predominant language of the workforce, of employee whistleblower rights and protections under 41 U.S.C. 4712.

(c) The Award Recipient shall insert the substance of this clause, including this paragraph (c), in all sub awards or subcontracts over the simplified threshold. 42 CFR & 52.203-17 (as referenced in 42 CFR & 3.908-9)

## **Conflict of Interest**

It is the policy of the State of Minnesota to work to deliberately avoid actual and potential conflicts of interest related to grant making at both the individual and organizational levels.

A conflict of interest (actual or potential) occurs when a person has actual or apparent duty or loyalty to more than one organization and the competing duties or loyalties may result in actions which are adverse to one or both parties. A conflict of interest exists even if no unethical, improper, or illegal act results from it.

The Grantee, by signing this contract with the State, certifies it has read and understands the Office of Grants Management Conflict of Interest Policy 08-01, will maintain an adequate Conflict of Interest Policy and, throughout the term of the contract, monitor and report any actual or potential conflicts of interest to the State's Authorized Representative.

## **Additional Program Requirements (from program manual)**

The grantee must comply with program requirements, state and federal law, requirements of the award as well as the terms and conditions for closeout of the sub-award. All program requirements can be found in the award letter and most up to date program manual.

### **25.1 Reimbursable Costs.**

All the charges requested for reimbursement and match must be directly related to the acquisition, rehabilitation, and development of the GIA trail system outlined in the application. No other charges will be accepted without prior approval from your Area Parks and Trails Supervisor. Eligible costs shall be based upon the approved Application and can include the types of costs identified in the Manual provided they are solely related to and necessary for the completion of the Project.

### **25.2 Non-reimbursable Costs.**

Non-eligible costs for reimbursement means all costs not defined as eligible costs, including but not limited to those identified in the Manual that applies to sub-grantee and their associated trail club/organization or project partner.

## **COVID-19**

All work completed for this contract must adhere to the following conditions until all State executive orders related to COVID 19 are rescinded or expire.

Allowed activities and work performed should, to the maximum extent possible, be conducted in a manner that adheres to Minnesota Occupational Safety and Health Standards and the Minnesota Department of Health and CDC Guidelines related to COVID-19, including social distancing and hygiene.

The current list of Critical Sector Exemptions is maintained on the Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) website <https://mn.gov/deed/>

## Force majeure

Neither party shall be responsible to the other or considered in default of its obligations within this Contract to the extent that performance of any such obligation is prevented or delayed by acts of God, war, riot, disruption of government, or other catastrophes beyond the reasonable control of the party unless the act or occurrence could have been reasonably foreseen and reasonable action could have been taken to prevent the delay or failure to perform. A party relying on this provision to excuse performance must provide the other party prompt written notice of the inability to perform and take all necessary steps to bring about performance as soon as practicable.

### 1. STATE ENCUMBRANCE VERIFICATION

*Individual certifies that funds have been encumbered as required by Minn. Stat. §16A.15*

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

SWIFT Contract/PO No(s). \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. SPONSOR

The Sponsor certifies that the appropriate person(s) have executed the grant contract on behalf of the Sponsor as required by applicable articles, bylaws, resolutions, or ordinances.

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

### 3. STATE AGENCY

By: \_\_\_\_\_

(with delegated authority)

Title: \_\_Parks and Trails Division Director or Deputy Director\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Distribution:

Agency

Sponsor

State's Authorized Representative

## Attachment A

### PROJECT SCOPE and BUDGET

Recipient: «Grantee\_Organization\_Name»

Grant/Project #: «Project\_»

Grant Amount: \$«Amount\_Awarded»

Match: \$Fill in from application

Total Project Cost: \$«Total\_Cost»

Project Scope: «Project\_Summary»

Notes: The Financial Management Manual, payment request form and cost summary data sheet are available on our website at <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/grants/recreation/index.html>. Click on the trail program in which you are participating and look under the “For the Grantee” in the far left column for Project Administration. Click on Project Administration and go to Grant Expenditures and Requests for Reimbursement for the manual and forms.

INCLUDE MAP



Attachment B

RESOLUTION

SAMPLE

## Request for Reimbursement



### MINNESOTA SNOWMOBILE TRAIL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM TRAIL IMPROVEMENT REQUEST FOR REIMBURSEMENT

1. Trail/Club Name (Same as Regular Grant):		2. Unit of Government Sponsor:		3. Date of Request:	
4. Project Title:					
5. Reimbursement Period Start Date (For This Request):		6. Reimbursement Period End Date (For This Request):			
7. Expenditures					TOTAL
7A. ADMINISTRATION Explanation:					\$
7B. ACQUISITION Explanation:					\$
7C. CONSTRUCTION Explanation:					\$
7D. FACILITIES Explanation:					\$
8. Total Cost (Sum 7A – 7D): \$		9. Total Eligible Request at 75% (Q8 * 75%): \$		10. Available Grant Balance \$ Year	
11. Total Grant Request: \$		12. Grant Balance After This Request (Q10 – Q11):			
13. Development Accomplishments					
13A. Trail Miles Developed and/or Added to GIA System: Description:					
13B. Bridges Constructed To-Date: Description:					
13C. Parking Areas Developed To-Date: Description:					
14. Sponsor Approval					
I hereby certify that the materials and/or services show on this document and/or attached invoices have been delivered, that this is my only original invoice and is correct and just and that no part of same has been paid.					
14A. Signature of Trail Administrator:		14B. Telephone Number:		14C. Date of Signature:	
21D. Authorized Signature of Sponsor:		21E. Title:		21F. Date of Signature:	

1 of 2



MINNESOTA SNOWMOBILE TRAIL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM  
TRAIL IMPROVEMENT REQUEST FOR REIMBURSEMENT

15. Required Checklist

15A. Yes ☐ No ☐ Any Bids Required?

15B. Yes ☐ No ☐ Original Signatures?

15C. Yes ☐ No ☐ Signed Work Logs?

15D. Yes ☐ No ☐ Invoices Included for Purchases and Services Over \$100,000?

DEPARTMENT USE ONLY

THIS INVOICE APPROVED FOR PAYMENT BY:

Area Parks and Trails Supervisor

Signature:

Date:

☐ Partial

FY:

CFMS Number:

Amount:

Invoice Number:

☐ Final

## Sample Work Log

**MINNESOTA SNOWMOBILE TRAILS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

### OPERATOR'S WORK LOG SHEET

Trail Name			Sponsor			Year									
Date Month/ Day	Operator Name	Labor			Mode of Transportation	Transportation			Other Equipment Used (Include Make & Model)	Other Equipment			TOTAL COST	Type of Work & Location	Expenditure Type
		Hours	Rate	Cost		Hours	Rate	Cost		Hours	Rate	Cost			
				\$				\$				\$	\$		
				\$				\$				\$	\$		
				\$				\$				\$	\$		
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				\$				\$				\$	\$		
				\$				\$				\$	\$		
		TOTAL	\$		TOTAL	\$		TOTAL	\$						

Revised 10/1/2019

## Sample Landowner Permission Form

### LANDOWNER PERMISSION

THIS PERMIT is granted on \_\_\_\_\_, by \_\_\_\_\_  
the Landowner(s) to \_\_\_\_\_ the Sponsor to establish and/or maintain the  
\_\_\_\_\_ Snowmobile Trail.

That \_\_\_\_\_, the (record owners, contract for deed purchasers, lessees)  
in consideration of \_\_\_\_\_, grants this permit over  
and upon the following described premises situated in the County of \_\_\_\_\_, State of Minnesota,  
to wit: (complete land description)

#### SUBJECT TO:

1. This permit shall be continuous and will terminate upon sale of the land, or upon notification in writing to the Sponsor six (6) months prior to termination by the Landowner(s).
2. The right-of-way shall be open to the general public for snowmobile use.
3. The Sponsor shall at all times have the right to enter upon said right-of-way for any purpose necessary to the performance of lawful powers and duties.
4. The Landowner(s) shall have the right to close said right-of-way during any emergency, with the approval of the Sponsor.
5. The permit is for a \_\_\_\_\_ foot width over the route to be used.

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Landowner Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Address and Phone Number)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Club Representative)

NOTE: All Trail Permits are to be made out to the **Sponsor** not the club. Permits can be made out to club only if the Sponsor has specifically given written permission and authority to the club, and the club has been incorporated.

## Elements of a Sponsor Resolution

A sponsor/local government unit resolution should include the following information:

- ❑ A statement that the local government unit will act as legal sponsor for an application for the DNR Snowmobile Trails Assistance Program.
- ❑ A statement that the local government unit may enter into agreement with the State of Minnesota for the specific grant program mentioned above.
- ❑ A statement that the local government unit will comply with all applicable laws and regulations as stated in the agreement.
- ❑ A statement recognizing an individual (in many cases a local government auditor) who will act as a fiscal agent on behalf of the local government unit.
- ❑ Date – besides including the date the resolution is adopted, please ensure your resolution meets one of two acceptable formats:
  1. For the purposes of executing an agreement with the state, resolutions not having an explicit length of duration expire after one (1) year. Please make sure your resolution is dated such that the year duration includes the beginning of the FY22 appropriation (July 1, 2021).
  2. Resolutions may have a duration of up to five (5) years, provided that specific begin and end dates are explicitly identified. Please make sure your resolution is dated such that the year duration includes the beginning of the FY22 appropriation (July 1, 2021).

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# Appendix A: Elements of a Successful Trail

## Trail User Maps and Public Information Guidelines

Accurate maps of the trail system should be prepared for free distribution to users. They should be available at the trailhead, DNR offices, and other locations convenient to the public and at a minimum should include the following data:

1. Trail Name or Names.
2. Trail Location -- Give directions on how to get to the trail system parking lot from the nearest town and major highway. A small state map showing the general location within the state could also be useful.
3. Trail Length -- Show the number of miles/km for each segment or loop.
4. Trail Use -- Identify loops or segments designated for snowmobiling use, as well as trails closed to snowmobiling if the potential for conflict with other users exist, e.g., cross-country skiing.
5. Trail Connections -- Identify other trails the trail connects to such as: State Parks, State Forests, State Trails, or other Grants-In-Aid trails.
6. Trail Information -- Give name, address and phone number of an individual who may be contacted for information, contact the local chamber of commerce to identify them as the local contact. The phone number of the local conservation officer may also be helpful.
7. Bridges -- Show all bridge crossings.
8. Roads -- Identify maintained state forest roads and portions used as trails; also identify roads not maintained, but suitable for snowmobiling.
9. Mark on map and/or list locations where the following services would be available:

Gas	Repair services
Food	Medical facilities
Lodging	Law enforcement offices
Nearest DNR office	Other helpful information

10. Develop a grid system for safety purposes or locating facilities.
11. Basic Safety Tips -- Speed limit, driving on lakes/thin ice, frostbite, trail signs, etc. Statements concerning speed and alcohol should be included on the map.
12. It is helpful to put a date somewhere (bottom right-hand corner for consistency) on the map so the most current maps are in circulation.

13. Identify all roads on map, and have corresponding signs posted on trails to help trail users know where they are at all times.
14. Clearly identify all state asphalt paved bike trails where metal studs are prohibited.

County base maps are available from the DNR that show snowmobile trail alignments. These base maps are available for most counties from the Parks and Trails Unit. Check with the Area Parks and Trails Supervisor for your county. See Appendix D for information on identifying and contacting your Area Supervisor.

## Trail Design and Construction Guidelines

Minimum riding surface for one-way trail should be eight (8) feet or a reasonable width based on the conditions.

Minimum riding surface for two-way trail should be ten (10) feet or a reasonable width based on the conditions.

An additional two (2) feet should be cleared outside the trail surface. Minimum turning radius is 100 feet, unless marked.

Branches and obstacles above the trail should be cleared to a height of ten (10) feet.

Reflective signs should be placed on the right side of the trail on posts at reasonable intervals (see Appendix B - Snowmobile Trail Signage Manual from the MN DNR's Trail Planning, Design, and Development Guidelines, 2007).

## Signing Suggestions

In general, signing on trails should be designed to provide direction, information, and safety for trail users. Major signing areas are at the trailhead, trail junctions, and in areas where safety of the user is involved. Trailhead and trail junction signs will provide maps showing route designation, distance, traffic flow direction, and location of support facilities. Safety signs will caution users of steep slopes, bridges, or highway crossings, and other hazardous trail conditions.

Signs on all trails should be kept at a minimum and be well placed.

Signs placed out on the trail should include reassuring blazers, caution signs, do not enter signs, stop signs, etc.

Placement of most signs should be on the right-hand side of the trail just off the main treadway but within clearing limits. Signs should be attached to posts placed two (2) to three (3) feet off the



treadway and three (3) to four (4) feet above expected snow depth. Attach them securely with lag screws or carriage bolts. Wood or metal posts may be used depending on location and availability.

The directional sign used on the trail should be trail junction blazers, directional blazers and reassuring blazers. Signs should be placed in open areas or in other areas where a trail user might become confused. *If uncertain about the effectiveness of signing, invite a non-local trail user to identify where deficiencies may exist.*

### **Suggested Signing Program:**

#### **1. Trailhead**

The following signs should be located near the parking lot at the start of the trail.

- A. Major Information Board      Map of trails  
Registration                      Distance of various routes  
Interpretive information      Rules and regulations  
Trail conditions                  Trail uses permitted and prohibited  
Emergency telephone numbers  
Address of person in charge of trail operation and maintenance (unit manager)  
Where to go and who to see in case of emergency
- B. You Are Here -- Should be located at the trailhead and at intersections with other trails.
  - i. if necessary, direction of trail (one-way, two-way)
  - ii. trail distances (miles or kilometers)
  - iii. location of facilities
  - iv. you are here location marker

#### **2. Information**

- A. Use Designation -- Should be located at all intersections where incompatible users may enter the trail.
- B. Interpretive -- Located at points of interest along trail. Consult regional naturalist for recommendations concerning interpretive signs.
- C. General Information -- Located and designed to provide information to trail users to assist or improve their ability to safely and enjoyably use the trail.

#### **3. Traffic**

- A. STOP                                  NRM 8.4.1.      Location: every traveled public road or railroad crossing.

- |                                    |             |  |
|------------------------------------|-------------|--|
| B. STOP AHEAD                      | NRM 8.4.2.  | Location: should appear 300 feet before traveled public road or railroad crossing.   |
| C. DO NOT ENTER                    | NRM 8.4.4A  | Location: ski or other trail intersections, one-way trails, prohibited areas.  |
| D. YIELD                           | NRM 8.4.3   | Location: intersections with other trails in open areas. May also be used at private trail crossing found on railroad grades.  |
| E. CAUTION                         | NRM 8.4.5   | Location: should be placed prior to all potentially hazardous areas such as cliff edges, rock falls, steep hills, congested areas, bridges, sharp ditches, and sharp curves.   |
| F. REASSURING BLAZER               | NRM 8.4.7A  | Location: where needed to reassure trail use is on the right trail, more in open areas, less in thick woods. May also be needed at unused road or trail intersections.   |
| G. DIRECTIONAL AND TRAIL JUNCTIONS |             |  |
|                                    | NRM 8.4.8C  | Location: based on trail junction. Directional arrows should be placed prior to sharp curves and turns; distance will depend on anticipated speed of user. On snowmobile trails, these signs should appear at least 50 feet prior to the turn, curve, or junction. |
| H. SNOWMOBILE SYMBOL               |             |  |
|                                    | NRM 8.4.22A | Location: start of trail and at trail intersections with other use trails.   |
| I. NO SNOWMOBILING                 | NRM 8.5.14B | Location: where needed to restrict snowmobile use.   |
| J. NO MOTORIZED VEHICLE PERMITTED  |             |  |
|                                    | NRM 8.4.14  | Location: where necessary to prohibit use, by Motorized vehicles except snowmobiles.   |
4. **Temporary and Special Signs and Decals**
- |                           |                     |  |
|---------------------------|---------------------|--|
| A. Trail Closed           | NRM 8.4.4D          | Location: at points where users could enter the trail. |
| B. Handicapped Accessible | No number available | Location: trailhead and facilities.                    |

- |                               |                     |  |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|--|
| C. Grant-In-Aid               | NRM 8.5.7           | Location: at intersections of DNR and GIA trails, also at GIA trail heads.   |
| D. Mileage Markers (optional) | No number available | Location: at intervals of miles and/or kilometers. Mileage markers can be very helpful to the trail user and manager. They let trail users know the distance they have traveled or must travel to return to the trailhead. They can help the manager easily identify maintenance problem areas and can be useful to help locate injured or stranded trail users. |
| E. Caution Truck Hauling      | NRM 8.4.9           | Location: Placed to provide warnings where logging or other trucks cross or share trail treadway.  |
| F. Stay on Trail              | NRM 8.2.20          | Location: Placed in areas where trespass from trail or environmental impacts are of concern.   |
| G. Ski Pass Required          | NRM 8.5.24          | Location: Place at all entry points to ski trails supported by state funds.  |

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## **Appendix B: Snowmobile Trail Section of Trail Planning, Design, and Development Guidelines**

Images from Section 7, Winter Use Trails, Pages 7.17-7.24 from State of Minnesota, Department of Natural Resources, 2007. "Trail Planning, Design, and Development Guidelines." Trails & Waterways Division, 500 Lafayette Road, St. Paul, MN 55155-4052. 306 pages.

**For online access** to this document, please visit:

[http://mndnr.gov/publications/trails\\_waterways/tgmanual/](http://mndnr.gov/publications/trails_waterways/tgmanual/)

## SNOWMOBILE TRAILS

The following guidelines provide general design and grooming parameters for snowmobile trails. As with other types of trails, the guidelines are not intended to be a substitute for site-specific design that responds to local conditions, development requirements, and safety concerns.

### TRAIL TREAD WIDTHS AND CONFIGURATIONS

The physical space required for the one- and two-way trails provides the base-line for determining the optional width for snowmobile trails, as the following graphic illustrates.

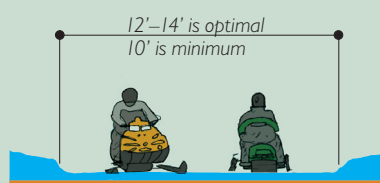
#### TYPICAL TRAIL WIDTHS FOR SNOWMOBILE TRAILS

The following defines the basic trail widths and directional configurations for snowmobile trails. (These correspond with the snowmobile trail configurations defined in Section 4 – Trail Classifications and General Characteristics.)



**One-Way Snowmobile Trail**

One-way trails are occasionally used in a snowmobile trail system where a moderate length loop is provided or the corridor is particularly narrow.



**Two-Way Snowmobile Trail**

Two-way trails are often the most practical and thus common type of snowmobile trail. These are well suited for longer, integrated trail systems with moderate to high use levels.

The trail widths shown in the graphic are general and are often modified to accommodate site-specific conditions. A 12- to 14-foot wide snowmobile trail is considered optimal to allow for ease of passing oncoming traffic. Going any wider is not always desirable since it requires more grooming and takes away from the setting and experience of being close to nature.

Trails wider than the optimal width are typically only provided where traffic is especially heavy, such as near a trailhead or between popular destinations. The need for a wider trail in these situations is field determined by the local trail sponsors. At busy trailheads and trail intersections, the first 200 to 300 feet of trail is sometimes a couple of feet wider to allow snowmobilers to wait along one side for their riding group to assemble and still allow for two-way traffic on the trail. The following photos illustrate common trail widths for snowmobile trails.



These classic two-way snowmobile trails are groomed to between 12 and 14 feet wide. The trail on the left runs through a northern forest where sightlines are more limited, which helps keep riding speeds lower. In the middle photo, the long abandoned rail-grade trail is very flat with long sightlines. Here, too, 12 to 14 feet is adequate to accommodate two-way traffic.

Near trailheads, the trail is sometimes groomed a few feet wider to accommodate riders grouping up alongside the trail.

## TRAIL CLEARANCE ZONES

The clearance zone is defined as the physical space above and on either side of the trail that is free from obstructions. A 12-foot minimum vertical clear area above the snow surface is recommended for all snowmobile trails, with 14 feet being required when larger grooming equipment is used.

The horizontal clearance zone should extend a minimum of 24 inches on either side of the groomed area. The horizontal clearance zone should increase at trail or roadway crossings to at least double the width of the trail and standard clearance zone – 32 to 36 feet for a two-way snowmobile trail. The clearance width should also be enlarged near a hazard, such as a bridge or culvert. The extent to which it is enlarged should be determined in the field based on site-specific conditions, taking into consideration sightlines and anticipated speeds. The following photos illustrate common clearance zones adjacent to snowmobile trails.



*This is a common example of a comfortable clearance zone adjacent to a groomed and tracked trail. The clearance zone is especially important where trees and brush are present on downhills. Note that by limiting the clearance zone, trail "creep" can be controlled, as can cross-country travel.*



*The clearance zone should take into consideration the terrain and sightlines. Even with rolling terrain, a couple of feet of clearance on either side of the trail is usually enough for a safe experience. However, the clearance zone should be widened whenever a rider's view is obstructed at normal riding speeds for the trail.*



*It is common and recommended that the clearance zone be widened at bridge approaches, hazards, and roadway crossings to give riders ample opportunity to react to trail conditions.*

## TRAIL GRADES, CURVES, AND SIGHT DISTANCES

Snowmobile trails should provide a variety of terrain consistent with the setting. An important distinguishing aspect of snowmobile trails is that they should cross contours at right angles to prevent the snowmobile from rolling over or sliding sideways and tearing up the trail.

As a general guideline, snowmobile trails should incorporate a variety of hills and undulating terrain to add interest. On hilly sections, grades between 10 and 25 percent are acceptable, although 10 percent or less is preferred for safety reasons and sightlines. (The grade percentage of a slope can be measured with a clinometer or calculated using the following formula: percent of grade = rise/run x 100.)

Steeper grades require adequate approaches and run-outs at least as long as the slope itself to give riders ample space to control their machines prior to entering a curve. It is important to maintain vegetation on trails traversing steeper slopes to prevent off-season erosion, which could cause a rough trail and hence grooming and snowmobile handling problems.

On grades of 8 percent or greater, consider separating the trail into uphill and downhill sections to avoid conflicts.

### CURVES

Curves should be as gentle as possible and well signed. Longer curves enhance rider safety and also make trail maintenance easier since snow is not as easily pushed to the edge as can be the case with a sharper turn. As a general guideline, a 100-foot or longer radius is recommended, with 50 feet being the minimum if adequate run-out space and sightlines are provided. Typically, a minimum of 15 feet of clearance zone on the outside of sharp curves is needed to allow riders to regain control if they enter the turn too fast. Warning signs should be provided up to 300 feet ahead of any sharp turn, especially those that require a change in speed.



*Longer, flowing curves with adequate sightlines are preferred for snowmobile trails. Sightlines should be long enough for the rider to react to oncoming conditions but not so long as to entice excessive speeds.*



## SIGHT DISTANCES

Sight distances are important on snowmobile trails, with final determinations dependent on the character of the trail and anticipated speeds. As a base-line, sightlines should generally be at least 100 feet and increase from there depending on site conditions and expected travel speeds. At 50 mph, a sightline of 300 feet or more is necessary, especially if a trail is icy. Where sightlines are compromised, warning signs should be provided at least 100 feet and up to 300 feet prior to a hazard. Hazards include roadway crossings, trail intersections, steep drop-offs, and sharp curves.

The following photos illustrate a variety of trail grades, curve situations, and sightlines encountered on snowmobile trails.



The wide-open sightlines of this trail encourage riders to go faster. The lack of a clearly defined corridor also tempts riders to wander off trail onto adjoining private property, which can lead to trail restrictions. Where the corridor is not obvious, blazes along the trail are recommended to keep riders on the approved trail tread – and remind them of the consequences of not staying on the trail.



Approaching hills at a right angle is important with snowmobile trails to prevent rollovers. On steep slopes on two-way trails, separating the uphill and downhill sections is sometimes used to increase safety and reduce the potential for conflict. With the open sightlines and modest grade of this hill, two-way traffic on a single 12- to 14-foot tread works well.



Provide adequate visual cues of an approaching tight curve to enhance trail safety. From this direction, the gate and other signs at the trailhead alert the rider of the approaching curve. From the other direction, a warning sign is provided about 100 feet prior to the curve to alert riders to slow down and approach with caution.

## TREAD PREPARATION

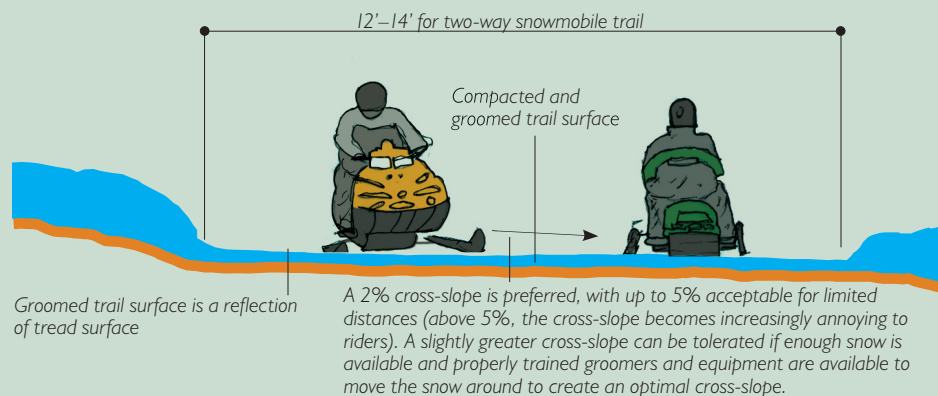
The tread refers to the underlying trail beneath the compacted and groomed snow. Proper off-season evaluation of trail alignments and tread surface preparation and maintenance is critical to setting the stage for quality snowmobile trails. The following considers the most important aspects of preparing the tread for winter use.

### TRAIL CROSS GRADES

The optimal snowmobile trail cross-section is of a consistent, even grade with a 2 percent cross-slope, as illustrated in the following graphic.

#### OPTIMAL SNOWMOBILE TRAIL CROSS-SECTION CHARACTERISTICS

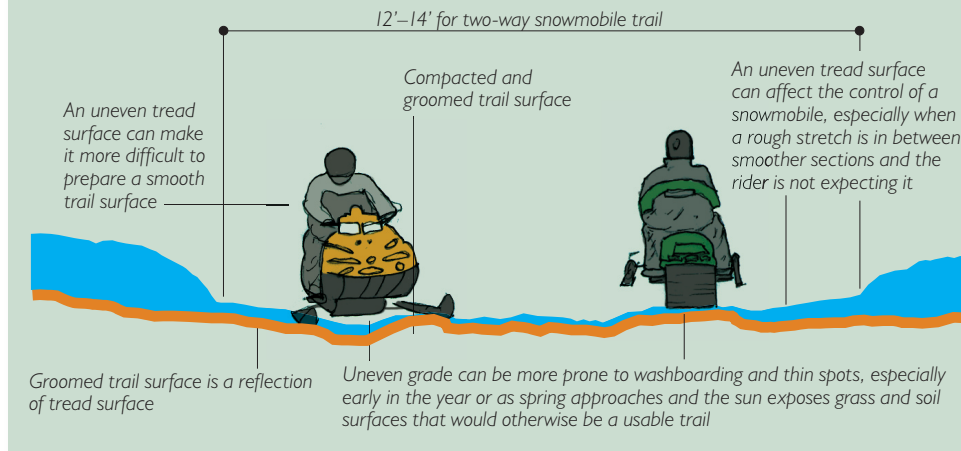
The cross-slope of a snowmobile trail is an important factor in creating a quality trail. Since the groomed trail surface tends to reflect what is underneath, the ground surface is worthy of due consideration as snowmobile trails are laid out during the off-season.



As illustrated, an evenly sloped grade across the trail is optimal for snowmobiling. Abrupt grade changes or general unevenness should be avoided to make trails easier to groom and more enjoyable to snowmobile on. The following graphic illustrates these conditions.

## EXCESSIVE TRAIL UNEVENNESS

Excessive trail unevenness negatively affects the ultimate smoothness of a snowmobile trail. It also requires more snow to establish a base and makes the trail more prone to washboarding.



The following photos illustrate some of the previously described cross-section conditions.



This even and smooth grade with vegetation and a slight cross-slope is ideal for a snowmobile trail.



This hard-packed, gravelled route through the forest makes for a pleasant snowmobile trail in the winter as long as its use is in sync with forest access rules.



The lack of ground cover on this steeper hill is allowing erosion to take hold, making the trail unsustainable for summer use and increasingly rough for winter use.

## TREAD SURFACE CONDITIONS

The tread surface is an important trail preparation and grooming consideration. A uniform grass surface is preferred across the entire width of the trail for a couple of reasons: 1) grass holds snow better than bare ground or paved surfaces and 2) grass helps prevent off-season use and erosion from creating an uneven surface.

The longer and heavier the grass, the more snow it will take to establish a base. Where feasible, mow the trail just before the season to prepare the tread and reduce the depth of base needed to create a usable trail. Under most conditions, a 6- to 12-inch snowfall is optimal to establish a base over a relatively short grassy ground cover.

Routine brushing/trimming of the woody material across the trail and on the edge of the clearance zone is also very important to maintaining the tread surface. All protruding rocks, logs, and other woody debris that would interfere with trail grooming and rider safety should be removed from the trail shortly before the season.

Although not as desirable as a natural or aggregate surface, asphalt is an acceptable surface when snowfall is sufficient. Laws pertaining to the use of studs should be considered when establishing a trail on an asphalt surface. Also, it should be expected that the snow cover will not last as long in the spring as it would on a grass-surfaced trail.



If not mowed, the longer grasses along this corridor require significantly more snow to create a usable base. Whereas mowing the trail just before the season has considerable merit, that has to be balanced against ecological and wildlife impacts, such as disturbing nesting birds. When trails traverse sensitive natural areas, the principles of ecological sustainability (as defined in Section 3) should be given due consideration. One important factor in this regard is waiting until as late in the season as possible before mowing to avoid disrupting nesting birds and bedded animals.



Tread drainage and erosion are important considerations for snowmobile trails. If drainage is poor and erosion pervasive, the tread surface will be compromised and become uneven, making it harder to groom and ride on. The most important factor in preventing erosion is making sure the trail is covered with a stabilizing ground cover during the off-season. Snowmobile trails that follow the fall line of a slope should also generally not be used for summer uses to avoid creating a single track that exposes the soils to erosion. In some cases, off-season grading and revegetation is necessary to fill in ruts, maintain drainage, and correct erosion problems.

### WETLAND AND WATER CROSSINGS

Wetland areas should be avoided when aligning snowmobile trails because the tread surface is often uneven, inconsistent, and unpredictable. Potential ecological impacts are another reason to generally avoid wetland areas. If a trail does cross a wetland, select the location carefully to minimize these impacts.

Lakes and rivers inherently pose safety issues and surface quality uncertainties and should therefore be avoided for formal trails.



*Designated use of lakes for snowmobile trails should be avoided given the many safety concerns, such as slush, thin spots, and unknown surface irregularities. There is also a temptation for riders to wander far and wide and also "skip" across open water.*

When water drainage crossings are necessary, culverts, boardwalks, or bridges should be used. Approaches to these structures should be smooth and level (up to a 5 percent grade) and with a clear sight distance of at least 100 feet. Bridge and boardwalk decks should be flush with the trail surface with narrow or no gaps between decking boards (to allow snow to accumulate and compact). A 10-foot-wide bridge or boardwalk is optimal, with 8 feet being the minimum acceptable. Each should have a weight capacity of 10 tons or more to accommodate maintenance equipment. All bridges must be designed to meet applicable DNR bridge standards (determined on a site-by-site basis). The following photos illustrate various tread surface and bridge conditions.



*A level, grass-surfaced corridor is optimal for snowmobile trails. Mowing the trail just before the season can reduce the amount of snow needed to create a usable base.*



*Approaches to culverts crossing drainages should be smooth and level. If the trail narrows or the shoulder is steep, place a warning sign at least 100 feet prior to the hazard.*



*If a summer-use bridge is used for a snowmobile trail, the surface of the trail and deck should be smooth and flush. The deck boards should have minimal gaps to hold snow. Railings are also required.*

## TRAIL GROOMING

Grooming snowmobile trails is a specialized activity that is part art and part technique. The International Association of Snowmobile Administrators (IASA) has done considerable research on this subject and has developed a resource guide for trail grooming entitled *Guidelines for Snowmobile Trail Groomer Operator Training*. The guide covers all of the fundamental aspects of trail grooming and is a highly recommended reference.

### For more information!

The grooming guidelines can be found on the IASA website ([www.snowmobilers.org/groomer\\_guide/GroomerGuidecomplete.pdf](http://www.snowmobilers.org/groomer_guide/GroomerGuidecomplete.pdf))

### GUIDELINES for SNOWMOBILE TRAIL GROOMER OPERATOR TRAINING

#### *A Resource Guide for Trail Grooming Managers and Equipment Operators*



Produced by



2005



A gateway at this midblock crossing helps snowmobilers and motorists more easily recognize the crossing. The level grade on both sides of the road (similar to a farm field access drive) also improves sightlines and allows the rider to more easily position for the crossing.

## ROADWAY CROSSINGS

Roadway crossings are an important safety concern for snowmobilers and motorists. All crossings should be well marked with signs, including Stop Ahead signs at least 100 feet prior to a stop sign. Snowbanks should be kept low at all crossings, with ample sightlines from both the trail and the roadway.

Where feasible, roadway crossings should be at intersections where motorists are expecting traffic from the side and thus more likely to recognize a snowmobile trail crossing. If midblock crossings are required, approaches should be as level as possible and sightlines extra long. To be level during the snow season, the approach should be designed to be 3 to 6 inches lower than the road during the none-snow season, where feasible. This will allow groomers to remove the extra snow dragged across the road by snowmobiles and to avoid creating a hump right before the crossing point.

Gateways on each side of the road can also remind riders that they are about to make a crossing and extra attention is warranted. All roadway crossings should be consistent with any applicable laws and ordinances. The optimal location for all crossings should be field determined by experienced trail designers and tested during the day and at night to ensure that they are clearly visible and as safe as possible. The following photos illustrate a number of roadway crossing considerations.



Although this crossing is well marked from both sides, it is not optimal due to the guy wire from an adjoining utility pole. During the day, riders are likely to see it, but at night it poses more of a risk. Careful attention to detail is essential at all crossings given the distractions that are inherent in these situations.



concerns: 1) it reduces the sightlines from the trail and roadway and 2) it squeezes riders into a single path just when they are about to make a crossing. On designated trails, avoid this whenever possible.



trail crossing to improve safety. The flatness and straightness of this rail conversion reduced the visual cues associated with identifying this intersection, warranting the addition of the light.

## TRAIL SIGNAGE

Consistent with the grant-in-aid program administered by DNR, signage should be provided for direction, information, and enhancing the safety of trail users. Major signing areas include trailheads, trail junctions, and areas where the safety of the user is of particular concern. The primary reference for snowmobile trail signage is the *MN DNR's Sign Manual*, which provides reference numbers and in-depth information for each type of sign used along a snowmobile trail. The instructions manual for the snowmobile grant program administered by the DNR Division of Trails and Waterways also has an extensive listing of signing recommendations. The following provides a brief overview of signage that complements these resources.

Trailhead and trail junction signs provide maps showing route designations, distances, traffic flow direction, and the location of support facilities. Safety signs are used to caution users of steep slopes, bridges, highway crossings, or other trail hazards.

Signs on trails should be kept to the minimum necessary and be well placed to serve their purpose. Signs placed along the trail should include reassuring blazes along with Caution, Do Not Enter, Stop Ahead, Stop, and other related signs.

Placement of most signs is consistent with the guidelines for natural trails as defined in Section 6 – Sustainable Natural Surface Trails. Signs should be placed on the right side of the trail and set back from the main tread, but within the clearing limits. Signs should be attached to posts offset 2 feet (minimum) to 3 feet (preferred) from the edge of the groomed treadway. The signs should be placed 3 feet (minimum) to 4 feet (maximum) above the expected snow depth. Setting the signs 4 feet above the bare ground typically ensures the sign will be the desired height. Posts may be wood or plastic, depending on location and availability.

Directional signs used along the trail should include trail junction blazes, directional blazes, and reassuring blazes. These signs should be placed in open areas or in other areas where a trail user might become confused. If uncertain about the effectiveness of signing, invite a nonlocal snowmobiler to identify deficiencies.

## TRAILHEADS AND SUPPORT FACILITIES

Trailheads typically consist of a parking area and trailhead kiosk with trail maps and related information. The parking area for trails varies considerably depending on its popularity and the number of access points. As a general guideline, parking areas should be designed to accommodate a minimum of 10 vehicles, with room for expansion. Each space should be 10 feet wide by 45 feet long. Drive lanes should be 24 feet wide with adequate turning radii. An aggregate surface is sufficient for parking areas if used primarily for snowmobile trail use. Snowbanks from plowing should also be used as the primary means to define the parking area. Posts or other barriers can also be used on the periphery of the parking area to prevent vehicles from leaving the designated area.



Given the maintenance and cost, providing portable or permanent restroom facilities should be carefully considered. If private services are available near the trailhead, providing these facilities is generally not recommended. In select locations, snowmobile trailheads take advantage of support facilities, including restrooms, at summer-use state or county trails and parks

In addition to trailheads, support facilities that should be identified on trail maps include services such as gas, repair shops, food, lodging, medical facilities, and law enforcement offices (911 or Zenith). The nearest DNR office should also be identified, along with any other helpful information. Trailheads that are in conjunction with or near gas stations and convenience stores can be especially successful.

The compatibility of snowmobile and summer-use trails following the same corridor should not be assumed and requires site-specific evaluation. This is especially the case where snowmobile trails travel through area f u b l r h d i i l h support snowmobile use when frozen conditions b Summer use of these corridors should be preclud f th d i



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ise sustainable snowmobile corridor is not well suited to summe  
the photo clearly illustrates. An ongoing occurrence of this type  
nly leads to more restrict uses, sometimes even for those the  
signed to accommodate.



Even seemingly stable soil conditions can be susceptible to erosion when a snowmobile trail corridor becomes a de facto ATV trail. The key point is that all trails must be designed for their purpose. It should never be assumed that a trail corridor for one purpose will be suitable for another until it is assessed for that purpose.

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## Appendix C: Federal Recreational Trail Program

An additional source of funding for trail improvements and easement acquisitions could be the Federal Recreational Trail Program. The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) provides for a federal program to provide financial assistance for the development and maintenance of recreational trails and trail-related projects. The Act provides funding from the Federal Highway Trust Fund in acknowledgment of off-road recreational fuel use.

Grants are awarded for nearly any trail related project that is solely located within the state of Minnesota. The priorities for each year are developed by the Minnesota Recreational Trail Users Association (MRTUA) and vary from one grant round to the next. This program is unique in that, legislatively it is specified that the funds must be expended for projects that are strictly motorized as well as projects that are strictly non-motorized, while at the same time encouraging the development of projects that provide for both. The law specifies that 30 percent of the funds must be used for motorized projects, 30 percent for non-motorized, and 40 percent for projects that can be utilized by both.

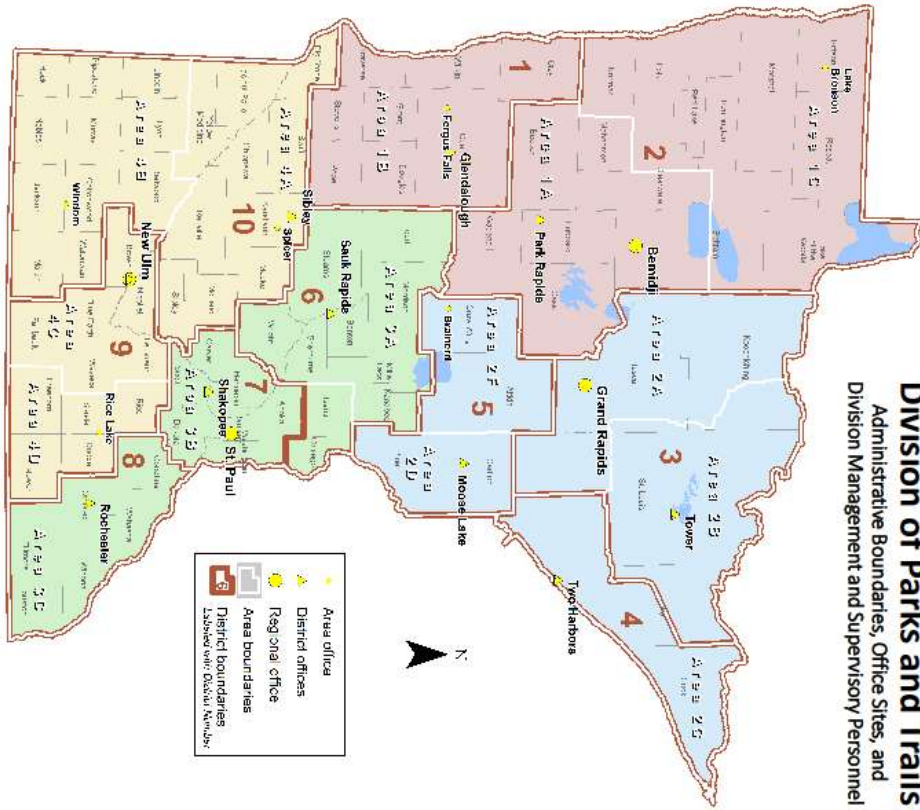
Private non-profits and other trail organizations are encouraged to work with Federal, State, and local government agencies to develop applications. The goal of the State and MRTUA is to foster cooperative efforts between these groups for long-term development, enhancement and management of recreational trails in Minnesota.

For more information on this program and needed applications, please visit the DNR's website at: [http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/grants/recreation/trails\\_federal.html](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/grants/recreation/trails_federal.html)

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## **Appendix D: DNR Parks and Trails Area Supervisor Contacts**

## Division of Parks and Trails Administrative Boundaries, Office Sites, and Division Management and Supervisory Personnel



NORTHWEST REGION — REGION 1			
POSITION	NAME	PHONE	LOCATION
Regional Manager	Ben Bergey	218-308-2652	Bemidji
Assistant Regional Manager	Melody Webb	218-671-7962	Fergus Falls
District 1 Supervisor	Shawn Donais	218-261-6903	Glendolough SP
Area 1B Supervisor	Jeff Fjested	218-671-7964	Fergus Falls
District 2 Supervisor	Lance Crandall	218-732-9452	Park Rapids
Area 1A Supervisor	Dave Schotko	218-308-2957	Bemidji
Area 1C Supervisor	Allen Larsen	218-425-7504	Hayes Lake SP

NORTHEAST REGION — REGION 2			
POSITION	NAME	PHONE	LOCATION
Regional Manager	Scott Kelling	218-328-8396	Grand Rapids
Assistant Regional Manager	John Vopes	218-328-8391	Grand Rapids
District 3 Supervisor	Jordan Schaefer	218-328-8790	Tower
Area 2A Supervisor	Kacie Stanek	218-328-8394	Grand Rapids
Area 2B Supervisor	Joe Majerus	218-300-7842	Tower
District 4 Supervisor	Christa Maxwell	218-834-1429	Two Harbors
Area 2C Supervisor	Kevin Johnson	218-834-1431	Two Harbors
District 5 Supervisor	Joe Alberto	218-460-7090	Moose Lake
Area 2D Supervisor	Mary Straka	218-460-7024	Moose Lake
Area 2F Supervisor	Wade Miller	218-203-4447	Brainerd

CENTRAL REGION — REGION 3			
POSITION	NAME	PHONE	LOCATION
Regional Manager	Kelli Bruns	651-259-5747	St. Paul
Assistant Regional Manager	Dave Rickert	651-259-5741	St. Paul
District 6 Supervisor	Paul Kurvers	651-585-2125	Wild River SP
Area 3A Supervisor	Tim Edgeton	320-225-7861	Sault Rapids
District 7 Supervisor	Martha Reger	952-235-5180	Shakopee
Area 3B Supervisor	Rachel Herten	651-259-5875	St. Paul
District 8 Supervisor	Gretchen Miller	507-206-2841	Rochester
Area 3C Supervisor	Jess Althoff	507-206-2845	Rochester

SOUTHERN REGION — REGION 4			
POSITION	NAME	PHONE	LOCATION
Regional Manager	Chuck Carpenter	507-233-1222	New Ulm
Assistant Regional Manager	Jeremy Loginski	507-233-1223	New Ulm
District 9 Supervisor	Paul Hansen	507-233-1224	New Ulm
Area 4C Supervisor	Craig Beckman	507-386-3913	Minneapolis
Area 4D Supervisor	Joel Wagar	507-455-5871	Rice Lake SP
District 10 Supervisor	Gregg Soupir	320-354-0322	Sibley SP
Area 4A Supervisor	Colin Wright	320-796-2161	Spicer
Area 4B Supervisor	Phil Nasty	507-831-2900	Winnom

Last updated: 10/13/2020