



Memo on Snowmobile GIA Funding and Best Practices

Date: September 18, 2019

To: All GIA Club Administrators and GIA Sponsors

From: Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Division of Parks and Trails and
Minnesota United Snowmobilers Association

FY20 Funding Summary

A good snow year last season as well as the recent increase in snowmobile registration fees has helped stabilize the state's snowmobile account. As a result, the planned one-time funding increase in FY19 of \$1.2 million is able to be extended another year into FY20.

In order to best allocate this funding to the GIA Program, the DNR has gathered input from the Minnesota United Snowmobilers Association (MnUSA) and the Minnesota Snowmobile Advisory Committee (MSAC). We have heard that there is both a need for funding for maintenance and grooming as well as for a back log of larger projects, such as bridges and major repairs on snowmobile trails. There used to be a capital improvement grant program for snowmobile trails, but since 2013 the DNR has not solicited grants due to limited funding.

As a result of the additional \$1.2 million from FY19 that is extended into FY20:

- **\$700,000 will continue to go to support maintenance and grooming grants; and**
- **\$500,000 will be set aside for special supplemental funding for major repairs and improvements on GIA snowmobile trails, similar to previous capital improvement grants; and**

The \$500,000 set aside funding for capital/trail improvement grants means FY20 total maintenance and grooming benchmark contracts will be about 6% less than last year at \$7.9 million statewide. Maintenance and grooming funding in FY20 is still about 10% more than what was allocated in FY18.

Information on how to apply for the supplemental capital/trail improvement grants will be communicated later in the fall or early winter. DNR is working with MnUSA and MSAC on implementing these grants.

We also want to advise clubs and sponsors that longer-term funding in the years following FY20 remains uncertain, and may be significantly lower, and they should manage and plan their finances accordingly. Even though the additional \$1.2 million was able to be extended an additional year, the snowmobile account cannot sustain this level of funding in the long-term. We want to make sure clubs and sponsors are extra prudent with their spending.

For questions or comments regarding club and trail management, always feel free to contact your local DNR Parks and Trails Area Supervisor or your MnUSA Regional Director network. They are a valuable resource that can help make your club and trails the best they can be. The snowmobile GIA Program webpage below also has more information on the program and funding, including a best practices letter from MnUSA and DNR in 2016.

https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/grants/recreation/gia_snowmobile.html