



## Snowmobile Advisory Council

### Meeting Minutes

Friday, March 10th, 2023

via Zoom

**Council Members Present:** Dale Mayo – Chair, Bob Lang – Vice Chair, Lynsey Burzinski, Joel Enking, Gary Hilgendorf, Mike Holden, Andy Malecki, Don Mrotek, Sue Smedegard, Erica Volker, Leon Wolfe

**DNR staff attendance:** Jillian Steffes, Cathy Burrow, Kurt Byfield, Jeremy Holtz, Jeff Pennucci

**Public attendance:** Members of the public

#### 1. Call to order at 8:00 AM

#### 2. Agenda Repair - None

3. **Chair Comments - Dale Mayo** – December 15 snow event overwhelmed snowmobile clubs, resulting in the hiring of contractors to get the trails open. Not a declared disaster. We were asked to waive that requirement, and thus created a process for counties to submit their requests by March 1. Seven Council members volunteered to review these storm damage requests as an ad hoc committee to make recommendations to the DNR. During review, ad hoc observed charges before the storm, fixing washouts, retrieving stuck equipment, not part of the storm damage. Invoices for lump sums that didn't include any dates, trails or equipment. Recommendations made to the Dept to remove some of these expenses from the storm damage funding. The recommendations were deliberated at length, individually and unanimously approved by those on the ad hoc. Unsettling to hear complaints from some potential grant recipients that these reviews were unfair and unreasonable.

#### 4. Public Participation

- **Jake Walcisak (WCFA, and Taylor County)**

- Providing 25,000 miles of trail is no easy feat, and 200,000 snowmobilers count on us to provide high quality trails. Ask that the Council allow for storm damage expenses to be incurred and submitted after Feb 28<sup>th</sup>, and also raise the \$250/mile non-grooming supplemental cap.

- **Rebekah Luedtke (WCFA)**

- Disagree with the start and end date for storm damage expenses. Not consistent with the findings of the Feb meeting which simply stated Dec 2022 storm. Also disagree with the requests for invoice details.
- The Department should be the ones providing a detailed audit.

#### 5. DNR Report

- **Jillian Steffes (Grants)**

- The ad hoc committee recommended funding \$900,000 in storm damage requests, and deferring \$100,000 in smaller requests.
- Grants can be written as early as today, following this meeting. Counties can request an advance of 75%. Department will then need to proceed with audits which will begin immediately. Once audited, counties will pay the clubs and obtain cancelled checks and can request final reimbursement.
- Reminder – Counties who have additional work needed should apply for a trail rehab grant by April 15<sup>th</sup>, to seek additional funding for expenses not included in the submitted storm damage requests.

**Recommend that the Council accept the recommendations of the storm damage ad hoc committee, and give the Department the latitude to make a final decision on those applications that were recommended for deferral by Sue, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Dale**

**Motion Passed.**

- Discussion on the motion. Bob felt all counties should be treated equally and given approval. In practice, this motion will allow Jillian Steffes (Grants) to go ahead and write a storm damage grant if the county requests it.

## **6. Committee member items**

- Sue - I hope we can get something scheduled to train or assist trail coordinators. We have very well intentioned volunteers working with trail coordinators in a few places that just don't have all the information they need. Shortages in DNR staff have made it very difficult in some places.
- Mike Holden - AWSC meeting with Jake Holsclaw to discuss trail trespassing. Couple pieces of legislation - signage on state trails, raising the cap to 5x, fatality list is disappointing, most over 42. Wisconsinite involved in fatal accident with a groomer in Michigan. Hopefully our request to get more county enforcement will help.
- Leon - asks for Bill numbers - will forward to all council members
- Don - good process, thanks to everyone, wasn't perfect, get funding to counties and clubs in a timely manner. We should have mentioned complete invoices for everything ahead of time.
- Bob - Clarification questions, made a motion in February that applications for this process closed March 1, does that still stand. Yes. We were asked in public comments to change that. The other thing heard in public comments that people are admittedly wanting unrelated storm damage unrelated to this specific storm. Would like to see the DNR clarify whether or not that will be allowed.
  - Additional requests for expenses after March 1 can come in as a trail rehab request by April 15.
  - This was an emergency to get the trails open. Expenses that do not appear to be related to the storm can be covered by maintenance, and will be removed from the storm damage eligible expenses during the audit.
  - Application deadline of April 15 is in statute, it is the law. We have accepted storm damage outside the dates as "trail rehab" - for money management, prefer applications are in by April 15. This was an unusual case to do this without a declared disaster. To stick to proper code, statute and grant timeline, trail rehab grants need to be in by April 15 if at all possible.
- Dale thanks everyone - DNR, counties, clubs, SRC, especially the 7 members that sat through this process, it wasn't easy, but in the end it was done fairly.

## **7. Adjourn**

**Motion to adjourn by Andy, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mike. MOTION PASSED**

## 2022-23 SNOWMOBILE STORM DAMAGE REQUESTS

App #	Region	County	Component	Costs	Total	Ad Hoc...	Approved	Comments
	NOR-S	Rusk	Expenses	\$158,279	\$158,279	\$158,279		Ad hoc recommends
	WCR	Marathon	Expenses	\$113,507	\$113,507	\$113,507		Ad hoc recommends
	WCR	Chippewa	Expenses	\$79,920	\$79,920	\$79,920		Ad hoc recommends
	NOR-S	Sawyer	Expenses	\$74,628	\$74,628	\$74,628		Ad hoc recommends
	NOR-R	Price	Expenses	\$59,997	\$59,997	\$59,997		Ad hoc recommends
	NOR-R	Taylor	Expenses	\$75,676	\$55,450	\$55,450		Ad hoc recommends
	NOR-S	Washburn	Expenses	\$47,327	\$0	\$0	\$0	WITHDRAWN
	WCR	Jackson	Expenses	\$45,396	\$45,396	\$45,396		Ad hoc recommends
	WCR	Monroe	Expenses	\$46,165	\$46,165	\$46,165		Ad hoc recommends
	NOR-S	Douglas	Invoices	\$37,029	\$37,029	\$37,029		Ad hoc recommends
	NOR-S	Burnett	Snowmo-Only	\$19,939	\$36,137	\$36,137		Ad hoc recommends
	NOR-R	Langlade	Expenses	\$31,845	\$31,845	\$31,845		Ad hoc recommends
	WCR	Clark	Expenses	\$33,622	\$33,622	\$33,622		Ad hoc recommends
	NOR-S	Bayfield	Expenses	\$31,164	\$31,164	\$0		Defer, per ad hoc
	NOR-R	Lincoln	Expenses	\$30,505	\$20,338	\$20,338		Ad hoc recommends
	NOR-R	Forest	Expenses	\$22,237	\$22,237	\$22,237		Ad hoc recommends
	NER	Oconto	Expenses	\$21,768	\$21,768	\$21,768		Ad hoc recommends
	WCR	Wood	Expenses	\$18,916	\$18,916	\$18,916		Ad hoc recommends
	WCR	Adams	Expenses	\$17,149	\$17,149	\$0		Defer, per ad hoc
	NOR-R	Oneida	Expenses	\$16,980	\$16,980	\$16,980		Ad hoc recommends
	WCR	Juneau	Expenses	\$12,685	\$12,685	\$0		Defer, per ad hoc
	SCR	Sauk	Expenses	\$9,891	\$9,891	\$0		Defer, per ad hoc

	WCR	Pepin	Expenses	\$7,598	\$7,288	\$0		Defer, per ad hoc
			Deductions	-\$311				
	WCR	La Crosse	Expenses	\$7,111	\$7,111	\$0		Defer, per ad hoc
	WCR	St. Croix	Expenses	\$6,555	\$6,555	\$0		Defer, per ad hoc
	WCR	Portage	Expenses	\$6,419	\$6,419	\$0		Defer, per ad hoc
	NER	Waushara	Expenses	\$5,666	\$5,666	\$0		Defer, per ad hoc
			Deductions	TBD				
	NOR-S	Ashland	Expenses	\$1,665	\$1,665	\$0		Defer, per ad hoc
			Deductions	TBD				
			Expenses		\$0			
TOTAL					\$977,806	\$872,213	\$0	