



Snowmobile Advisory Council Law Enforcement Committee Meeting Minutes

Monday, August 29th, 2022

Rib Mountain Conference Center & Dales Weston Lanes, Weston and via Zoom

Committee Members Present: Sam Landes - Chair, Joel Enking, Mike Holden, Bob Lang, Andy Malecki, Dale Mayo, Don Mrotek, Erica Volker

Other Council Members Present: Lynsey Burzinski, Bev Dittmar, Gary Hilgendorf, Abby Haas, Sue Smedegard, Lee VanZeeland, Leon Wolfe

DNR staff attendance: Jillian Steffes, Kurt Byfield, Jeremy Holtz, Annie Loechler, Jeff Pennucci

Public attendance: Dave Newman and other members of the public

1. **Call to order at 1:00 PM after lunch break following Infrastructure**

2. **Agenda Repair - None**

3. **Acceptance of minutes of previous meeting**

- Motion not recorded, will re-visit at next meeting.

4. **Committee Chair Comments**

- **Sam Landes** – AWSC President Dave Newman & Sam met with DNR officials on how to handle signage on state properties, will be more information on that.

5. **DNR Reports and Updates – Marty Stone, LE OHV Administrator**

- Marty Stone will be retiring in October, Jacob Holsclaw of the Eau Claire area has been hired as his replacement and will be working with Marty
- Wisconsin DPSRP partners with the Association of Wisconsin Snowmobile Clubs by working together and collaborating on safety messaging, law & rule changes, emerging trends, snowmobile safety training, and expanding snowmobiling in Wisconsin.
- As of 2019 The DPSRP is fully marking all newly issued law enforcement patrol snowmobiles with “conservation warden” identification to aid in proactive and voluntary compliance of our snowmobile regulations.
- During the weekend of January 21, 2022, the DPSRP partnered with local county sheriff’s departments for the second annual *Think Smart Before You Start* snowmobile safety campaign. This combined effort takes place during International Snowmobile Safety Week in January. Wardens & local law enforcement officers patrolled approximately 2,072 miles of trails and patrolled 125 frozen lakes.
 - Over 1,600 snowmobilers were contacted by conservation wardens and local sheriff department patrols.
 - Approximately 15 snowmobilers needing assistance were aided by wardens & local sheriff department patrols.
 - 239 warnings were issued
 - Approximately 71 citations were issued
 - Wardens/officers distributed Kwik Trip free cookie/beverage coupons to reward safe behavior
- Current Off-Highway Vehicle Administrator Lt. Martin Stone is retiring Oct. 5th. Recreation Warden Jacob Holsclaw has been promoted as the new administrator and will take over the duties on October 6th. In the near-term Jake will training alongside Marty during September and will be able to step into the administrator’s position without interruption.
- Currently there are 926 active volunteer DNR snowmobile safety instructors.
- A total of 13,172 students obtained their snowmobile safety certification in 2021
 - An increase of 3,335 from 2020, where 9837 students were certified.
- Total by year in-person class students certified shows a very promising trend.
 - 2021 – 4,744
 - 2020 – 3,358
 - 2019 – 4,208
 - 2018 – 3,652
 - 2017 – 3,819

- So far during the 2022 season there has been 14 fatal snowmobile crashes in Wisconsin. Regrettably, this is one more than the 2021 season.
 - Speed & alcohol continue to be contributing factors in these crashes
 - 9 occurred on public trails
 - 3 occurred on frozen waters
 - 1 occurred on a roadway
 - 1 occurred on private property
 - 7 of the operators did not possess snowmobile safety certification, however 6 did have the certification, & 1 is unknown

Aids to Local Law Enforcement

FY Paid	# of Agencies	Total Eligible Costs	Total Cost Reimbursed	Reimburse-ent Rate
FY23	40	\$ 655,968.02	\$ 396,000.00	60.37%
FY22	43	\$ 588,110.00	\$ 396,000.00	67.33%
FY21	45	\$ 730,311.47	\$ 396,000.00	54.22%
FY20	46	\$ 589,270.46	\$ 396,000.00	67.20%
FY19	55	\$ 485,841.40	\$ 396,000.00	81.51%
FY18	58	\$ 481,801.98	\$ 396,000.00	82.19%
FY17	62	\$ 438,685.75	\$ 396,000.00	90.27%
FY16	61	\$ 413,677.78	\$ 396,000.00	95.73%
FY15	61	\$ 649,821.53	\$ 396,000.00	60.94%
FY14	34	\$ 318,382.49	\$ 396,000.00	100.00%
FY13	48	\$ 558,731.56	\$ 396,000.00	70.87%
FY11	44	\$ 527,275.88	\$ 396,000.00	75.10%

6. Snowmobile LE Issues on the Legislative Front

(1) Trespassing Issues:

(i) Ontario – Mandatory video before receiving trail pass

- At the International Snowmobile Congress, we learned that Ontario has a 90 second video that individuals must watch before they can finalize their purchase of a trail pass online. The message addresses trespassing and why it’s important to stay on the trail. Administrators feel it has been very beneficial to reduction trespass issues. Jillian has approached Customer Service & Licensing regarding doing something similar, but it would require a programming change to GoWild that there was some reluctance to embrace. Discussion about AWSC creating a generic version that could be used by other states. Council and AWSC can make a recommendation to the DNR Secretary that we pursue this. AWSC would also require users to view that message when purchasing a trail pass through them.

Motion to recommend to the full Council supporting a change to GoWild to add a required viewing video, once it is available. Motion by Mike and 2nd by Dale. MOTION PASSED

(2) Snowmobile Safety Course Discussion

(a) Virtual Uses (Zoom, Go To Meeting)

- Virtual classes are still popular with some, but testing is an issue. Mike Holden looking for input on testing issues.

(3) Instructor Updates, Online Experiences - Misunderstanding of the new 40’ rule and the updated Stationary Sound Test

- Instructors have had some confusion over signing and how it pertains to the 40' rule. Also some confusion that the sound test is a brand new system – it's not. More education needed of the INSTRUCTERS to make sure they understand these topics. AWSC has sent out accurate info, but continued communication benefited as well as updating the safety course test.

(4) Aid to Local Law Enforcement

- AWSC and Council agreed to increase from \$396,000 to \$800,000. Dave Newman (AWSC) and Sam Landes will work with legislators.

(5) Updates on Sugar River Trail Extension (New Glarus Woods State Park Extension) and Blue Mound State Park

- Friends group filed a re-motion after all were dismissed. Will be an issue again this year.

(6) Failing Structures on DNR Managed Properties (400 State Trail, Buffalo River ST)

- 400 State Trail - working with Monroe County Alliance, Jason Guthrie, Department reversed the decision and snowmobiles will be allowed to cross that bridge. Needs matting on the bridge on private so the groomer can get across.
- Buffalo River State trail has more than one bridge in need of repair.

(7) Update on Safety Concerns around Signing Issues on DNR Properties

- Brainstorming and discussions with DNR Parks ongoing, no resolution yet.

(8) Recommendation from DNR LE on a Portable Decibel Reader for the updated Stationary Sound Test.

- DNR LE is looking for portable decibel readers for the updated stationary sound test? Counties considering donating.

7. Public Comment

- None

8. Committee member reports, comments and items

- None

9. Items for next meeting

- None

10. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn by Joel, 2nd by Leon. MOTION PASSED