

**MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
SNOWMOBILE ADVISORY WORKGROUP (SAW)**

DRAFT

**December 6, 2012
9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.**

**Foggy's Steakhouse
E7876 W. State Highway M28
Christmas, Michigan 49862**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Lee Murray, Chairman, At-Large Representative
Al Green, Michigan Snowmobile Association (MSA), Region II Rep., Cadillac
Bruce Wood, Trail Sponsors Representative
Jim Duke, MSA, Region I Representative, Munising
Bill Manson, MSA, Region II Representative, Grand Rapids
Don Britton, At-Large Representative

DNR STAFF PRESENT

Jackie Blodgett, Parks and Recreation Division (PRD), Lansing
Jason Fleming, PRD, Lansing
Ron Yesney, PRD, Marquette
John Morey, Law Enforcement Division (LED), Gaylord
Tom Paquin, PRD, Marquette

WELCOME

Chairman Murray called the SAW meeting to order at 9:30 a.m., December 6, 2012 in Christmas, Michigan. He welcomed everyone and introduced himself, followed by introductions of the workgroup members, and all other attendees.

AGENDA

Iosco County-grooming on ATV Trail, Bader Proposal will be looked at for further review, and Maintenance schedules on 100% owned state machines-behind permanent easement will be added to the agenda under Old Business.

Motion was made by Mr. Britton, seconded by Mr. Green, to adopt the revised agenda for the December 6, 2012 agenda. Motion for adoption unanimously carried.

MINUTES

Motion was made by Mr. Duke, seconded by Mr. Britton, to adopt the minutes from the October 16, 2012 meeting. Motion for adoption unanimously carried.

OLD BUSINESS

Weekly Grooming Report Form

Form was finalized, grooming entities contacted and accepted doing the work this year. Copies were sent to Gogebic, Seney, Sault St. Marie, Cadillac, Jordon Valley Trails, Harbor Springs, Trail Riders, Snow Stompers. Can do electronically or print and fill out. MSA created an electronic document. Copies were shared at the meeting. There was further discussion on forms.

Initial Grooming Outlay Formula

Mr. Fleming explained the amount for the 2013 grooming reimbursement. Changing the outlay formula requires a review of the data to see if it is necessary before finalizing any rate changes (2013 rates are \$5.13 per mile, \$2.15 labor, \$.52 routine maintenance, \$2.46 fuel).

Munising RR Update

Still no crossing. Canadian National proposed changing statutes to clean up the language and increase liability requirements. Need to open up for discussion and consider supplementing insurance through the program. Change in language is not in the best interest of the program. **Mr. Wood** asked if a different insurance carrier would be necessary. Carrier could write a separate supplemental policy.

Snowmobile Event Permits

Mr. Fleming discussed the issues with fees and permits. Process needs to be reviewed. Where permits are coming through, look for standard permit, low cost fee and consistency. Need information from permittee and could cross market for the event. Compare to other PRD events and the successes in the event permits. Discussion on permits on public trails versus private trails. **Mr. Manson** explained MSA Hot Chocolate staging area in process. Found property, not owned by state and doesn't require a permit. **Mr. Fleming** described use permit guidelines and wants to continue on with guidelines to help the field. **Mr. Manson** will volunteer to help, and Lewis Schuller will help from the ORV group.

Iosco County Issue

Mr. Manson – email from snowmobiler wanted snowmobile to pay for tractor repair (needs a new engine.) **Mr. Wood** says we need to have an agreement in writing on how we are going to process payments on ORV/Snowmobile shared equipment. Seven groups have shared equipment. They should have documented use of equipment and would know how much they should contribute to the purchase of a piece of equipment. **Mr. Manson** – need rules on how we

are going to handle shared equipment. **Mr. Fleming** – record how we are going to cost share equipment. ORV generally doesn't provide equipment, generally donated and made by group. Build a policy to remedy this. **Chairman Murray** – put something together for the March agenda to be implemented in summer 2013. Iosco County use over the last four years - \$10,752. Want everything to be fair so should start with this now.

NEW BUSINESS

Budget Update

Ms. Blodgett presented why there were additional funds and how this will not happen again regarding equipment. A handout was provided. Groomers and drags – **Mr. Britton** asked why drags were purchased. **Mr. Fleming** stated drags were purchased as part of the grooming package. Will assess requests differently in the future.

Sign Updates

Mr. Fleming said signs have been distributed. Old signs are stock piled. Baraga field office–recycling – unit contacts going to collect at the offices. PRD work to let snowmobile and community know what is happening, e-blasts, twitter, facebook, are going out and more is coming. Discovered new cards handed out. 10,000 cards coming to office. Where to ship them? **Mr. Wood** – quality seems to be good, have to see – concerns about how they were delivered. This year's signs came wrapped in cling wrap in cardboard box as opposed to having separators. Need to look into handling the shipping of signs differently.

Grant Manual

Reviewing the manual – can do things differently. Culverts and engineering, looking for members to be involved in manual. **Mr. Green** and **Mr. Britton** volunteered to help.

Permanent Easement Update

Mr. Fleming – office of legal services – no request made after checking. Process laid out in January, working with MSA, have a draft for the grant application...need to get it moving. **Mr. Manson**-needs to move faster, trail #8, is on 500 acres purchased for development. 200 acres have trails on it and the owner will not give permission for the trail to use this season. **Mr. Britton**-can't wait until January. **Mr. Manson** willing to come down and talk to people in Lansing to get this resolved. **Mr. Britton**-how long to get an appraisal. **Mr. Manson** can hire appraiser through Snow Country. **Mr. Fleming**-rerouting trail can be pushed forward because most of the new route is on PRD lands. Concerns about length of time to work through the process. **Mr. Fleming** will expedite the process in Lansing.

100% state-owned equipment maintenance – **Mr. Britton** needs to be properly maintained..check equipment records to make sure it is maintained.

Discussion from Equipment Subgroup

Met to discuss how we are looking at it going forward. Look at options and what could be done a little differently, bring Richard Kennedy into the fold. Meet on a regular basis, bring back by March. Three SAW members, Ms. Blodgett, Mr. Fleming, and Mr. Kennedy to set up meeting. **Chairman Murray** wants to continue to meet.

Equipment Maintenance Program Proposal

Keith Litchfield introduction. As part of a post-career with Bader, Mr. Litchfield would like to set up program-check equipment for a flat fee, save lots of money for the program. Help do whatever needs to be done to help program three times a year, January, February/March and May. Wants to help Mr. Kennedy with equipment replacement. Can save us money. Concerns about connections with one tractor company or type of product – **Mr. Green** – Mr. Litchfield no favoritism...looking at the total picture all groups. \$250 per grant sponsor, doesn't matter how many machines. **Chairman Murray** says idea has merit and understands proposal. **Mr. Britton** doesn't know anyone else who has the experience Mr. Litchfield has. **Mr. Fleming**-try out on a smaller scale before going forward with one contract. **Mr. Manson**- grant sponsors- get to all of them? Mr. Litchfield says two visits a day. What if grant sponsor contracted with Mr. Litchfield? Receptive to the idea and wants DNR to explore-recommendation from advisory work group, communicate with the clubs, **Chairman Murray's** recommendation - why not preventative maintenance.

Motion was made by Mr. Manson, seconded by Mr. Duke to pursue additional information seeking a way to fund possible payment to individual for preventative maintenance and inventory of equipment. Motion for adoption unanimously carried.

Motion was made by Mr. Britton, seconded by Mr. Manson to have a physical inventory of all equipment for the 2013 year, including inventory percentages of ownership. Motion for adoption unanimously carried.

Meeting Dates for 2013

February 28 – UP Newberry

June 18 - location to be determined

October 15 – location to be determined

December 5 – location to be determined

Motion was made by Mr. Green, seconded by Mr. Wood to accept meeting dates for 2013. Motion for adoption unanimously carried.

Staff Reports (by exception)

Parks and Recreation Division

Mr. Yesney said logging on trail #14, working on a reroute...has to go through the process...rerouting 10.2 miles of plowed County Road 510. Cannot put up signs on the county road – **Mr. Yesney** is working on it. **Mr. Manson** says agreements about rerouting trails and working with the club, loggers just going in. Corporate land is the problem, can't go through their property. Keep the trail open even with that much plowed road? **Chairman Murray** stated to work it out locally, maintain a safe route to Big Bay but not going to get as much traffic. **Mr. Manson**-what does club want to do, run the road, put markers up or caution notices, reroute trail for 10.2 miles?

Military Hill, fencing it up, sign has been completed and signs are out there. Consider having other group groom the last 8 miles? Groups need to work it out.

Motion was made by Mr. Manson, seconded by Mr. Wood to put warning signs on reroute on county road sign put on each end for the next 10.2 miles and snow may be limited on reroute. Motion for adoption unanimously carried.

Law Enforcement Division

Corporal Morey-ORV and Snowmobile need a totaled vehicle for socking displays, so if anyone knows of a totaled machine, contact Corporal Morey. Tahquamenon Area Snowmobile Association has put a wrecked snowmobile out and they should be contacted.

U.S. Forest Service

No report. **Mr. Manson** asks if they are getting meeting dates as they used to come regularly.

PUBLIC APPEARANCE

John Houk-Presque Isle-Iosco-are they being compensated for grooming trails. Yes, they are being compensated Northeast State Trail (NEST). Bridge in Millersberg damaged. Said they were going to repair but no repairs have been made. Is it in the works to be repaired? 992 bridge Roger City Railroad Spur – been 8-9 years, does the DNR need help? Roger Storm is working on resolution.

Stu – Cedarville – bridge collapsed and replacement coming along nicely. Everything going smooth, working and going well. Permitting and everything going well.

Dave – Munising - funds for ORV for grading shared trails..trails are being used for dual purposes but not being funded. Unofficial shared use. In UP legally to ride. ORV only pay if designated trail. If on corporate or private land...legal

use...can gate it or sign it. Make law enforcement issue. Looking at expansion and connection for UP. No additional funding for now but maybe in the future. **Mr. Yesney**-data of users. ORV a greater user-more ORV users than snowmobile. More use in the winter than in the summer. ORV is about a third of what is seen in the winter time. Shared use funds are using ORV money for shared use grading.

Gail Scott – Gogebic – 2013 reimbursement per mile needs adjusting. Concur and it is not fair according to Gail. Manual orientation for paperwork needed. Need “How to Manual”. Manual could be better. Some clubs are not participating in kick-off meeting but still need their help.

Round robin-issues:

Mr. Green publicly thanked Badger on Saucy Tracks and discount; disappointment in manufacturer. Put money into newer units. Going to cost more. Consumer should not have to bear costs of reengineering. **Mr. Manson** disappointed from other clubs on the way the trail inspections have worked for pre-season...too busy. Not getting enough arrows signs at this time. Claim not to inspect trail until 100% signed. FRD couldn't come because of fire training. **Chairman Murray** typical example of the cause of contention in the past...all noble intentions but animosity between sponsors and DNR, hard to overcome issues. **Mr. Fleming**-said he was disappointed but this was the first he had heard of it from **Mr. Wood**. **Mr. Britton**-fire officer is on vacation, can't get to it, need it later, needs someone above him to make him work. Kudos to **Mr. Wood** and **Mr. Paquin** on providing assistance-numbers to do report, have something they can work with. ORV trail-200,000 sold.

Meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.