

**MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
SNOWMOBILE ADVISORY WORKGROUP**

**DRAFT MINUTES**

**February 27, 2014**

**10:00 a.m.**

**Kewadin Casino**

**2186 Shunk Road**

**Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan 49783**

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Lee Murray, Chairman, At-Large Representative  
Bill Manson, MSA, Region III Representative, Grand Rapids  
Jim Duke, MSA, Region I Representative, Munising  
Don Britton, At-Large Representative

**DNR STAFF PRESENT**

Jason Fleming, Parks and Recreation Division (PRD), Lansing  
Jacklin Blodgett, PRD, Lansing  
Cpl. John Morey, Law Enforcement Division (LED), Gaylord  
William Doan, PRD, Western UP  
Tom Paquin, PRD, Eastern UP  
Wayne Burnett, PRD, Straits State Park  
Mike Sutton, PRD, Straits State Park  
Dan Moore, PRD, Newberry  
Loretta Cwalinski, Finance and Operations Division, Gaylord

**PUBLIC ATTENDEES**

Karyn Hautamaki, MSA – Region 1  
Bill Lucas, Cadillac Winter Warriors  
Maryann Noah, MSA - Region 1  
Paul Hammens, Drummond Island  
Jay Wright, Chippewa Snow Chasers (CSC)  
Edwin O. Carlson, CSC  
Grant Dewitt, CSC  
Dale Clark, Jordan Valley Trails Council  
Tom Adgate, Munising  
Mark Dubie, Dubie Groomer  
David Dubie, Dubie Groomers  
John Houk, Presque Isle Sno-Trails  
Lorene Hanson, Track, Inc.  
Bob Leidlein, Track, Inc.  
Mike Beard, Bader & Sons  
Bill Taylor, Lewiston Fun Ones  
Jim Dickie, MSA, Chesaning  
Ron Corbett, President MSA

Don Reed, MSA Past President/Seney  
Karen Middendorp, MSA Staff  
Rick Brown, MSA  
David Low, Western Michigan Snowmobile Council  
Robert Stein, Munising, MUB  
Stan Gerou III, Gerou Excavating/MAUB  
Tom Luckey, Gerou Excavating/MAUB  
Scott Lacombe, Hiawatha Trails  
Stu Volkers, Region I, EUP Council, Les Cheneaux  
Rodney Altman

## WELCOME

**Chairman Murray** called the SAW meeting to order at 10:02 a.m., February 27, 2014, in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan. He welcomed everyone, introduced himself, as did the Workgroup and attendees.

Bruce Wood, Al Green, and Rich Filley were unable to attend.

**Chairman Murray** would like to add discussion items to the February 27, 2014 agenda:

Old Business:

- Director's Order regarding wheeled vehicles on trails
- ORVs – Jeeps on snowmobile trails on Drummond Island
- Soucy Tracks
- Grooming complaints
- Harbor Springs use of equipment – addendum language

New Business:

- Budget

**Motion was made by Mr. Duke, seconded by Mr. Britton, to adopt the revised agenda for the February 27, 2014 SAW meeting. Motion for adoption unanimously carried.**

**Motion was made by Mr. Manson, seconded by Mr. Britton, to approve the minutes from the October 15, 2013 SAW meeting that were tabled at the December 5, 2013 meeting pending appropriate review. Motion for adoption unanimously carried.**

A correction was brought by **Mr. Manson** for Mr. Wood regarding the December 5, 2013 SAW meeting minutes; Page 3, 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph – should read “that all equipment have an estimate of its value made *after* making any decision to replace....”

Motion was made by Mr. Duke, seconded by Mr. Britton, to approve the December 5, 2013 SAW meeting minutes as amended. Motion for adoption unanimously carried.

## OLD BUSINESS

**Director's Order Regarding Wheeled Vehicles on Trails** – Mr. Manson said they continued to reiterate the concerns to legislators during their most recent group ride and how dangerous it is for snowmobilers. All 'wheeled' vehicles should be disallowed on the trails during the legal open trail season.

Mr. Fleming explained one of the problems with that is that some of the trails go through private and forest service lands. A Land Use Order would not cover those sections. Also, some portions are multi-use as well. Fat-tire biking groups need to be educated where they can ride – we need to do a better job at getting that information out. He added that it is a huge safety issue and more so with deeper snow. Mr. Duke added that road commissions should be contacted about street legal vehicles as well.

Mr. Murray asked if there could be a Director's Order done right away, and work the legislative route for remaining property? Mr. Manson said the process could begin, and hopefully be in place for next season. County roads could be a 'roadblock' though, and legislators will question all angles too.

Mr. Manson made a motion, seconded by Mr. Duke, that the SAW recommends that Director Keith Creagh should issue a Director's Order that from December 1 through March 31, a person shall not operate a wheeled vehicle on a State designated groomed snowmobile trail with four inches or more of snow unless the vehicle is a snowmobile, an emergency vehicle, or a vehicle used to maintain the snowmobile trail. Motion for adoption unanimously carried.

Mr. Fleming will invite road commission members for pre-season meetings in the fall.

**Soucy Tracks** – Mr. Reed advised that there will be someone from Soucy speaking at the upcoming workshop. Equipment will have issues no matter what type you have. Lack of operator maintenance is going to accelerate wear, and region is a factor as well. In addition, they will be having a maintenance instructional session. He would like to see SAW a part of the discussion as well.

Mr. Murray added the roundtable discussion on maintenance is 3 p.m.-5 p.m. Saturday. He encouraged everyone in the room to attend.

Mr. Beard explained the history behind the comparisons that Litchfield had made regarding the Soucy tracks. He also agreed that maintenance is very important.

**Mr. Taylor** said that, overall, they have been pleased with their Soucy that they've had for several years. He added that sheltering a groomer is important, and so is maintenance.

**Mr. Reed** wanted to clarify that his intent is not to criticize a manufacturer, but wants to stress the importance of maintenance.

**Grooming complaints** – There have been continuous complaints received about four clubs throughout the season. Gaylord's equipment was down temporarily, which generated complaints. Munising has had continuous complaints, but with huge drifts it's made it impossible to get through. It was mentioned that bulldozers work wonders on clearing out drifts.

**Mr. Paquin** said that at West Shore they're working on busting the drifts open.

**Mr. Manson** said the club in Munising declined to have the drift broken open. **Mr. Brown** added it is a matter of 'politics' in refusing the help from others. Unfortunately, it's been three weeks, and that's unacceptable to most trail riders.

**Mr. Manson** will address the field contact and pursue a solution. He added that the MSA takes a fair amount of complaints, and they do their best to get the complainants name and full details of location and problem, so they can forward it and figure it out.

**Mr. Fleming** clarified that if there's a failure to perform letter sent out, it's been investigated to do so. They do their best to provide assistance, and he is continuously working on communication improvements. He knows that looking at all sides of the story is critical. He would like to see stronger language for operations. **Mr. Murray** is requesting a report back to SAW of refusal of report on Musketawa Trail.

**Mr. Gerou** with Gerou Excavating was not aware of any complaints immediately. He explained the problem they were left with was having a considerable amount of trail to be groomed, but with only one older tractor available while one was waiting repairs. He said that basically three weeks with one tractor and continuous grooming, they did their best.

**Mr. Duke** said that sometimes the complaints come in, and have appeared that a group of riders get together and use the same form letter, and only change a few things complaining about one trail. He would like to think that of those several letters, in all fairness, was probably one complaint.

**Mr. Moore** wanted to correct one item Mr. Gerou mentioned – Bay De Noc was left out; they helped them on the west side. He had a field PRD person (avid snowmobiler) go check out the trails in question - they were not great, but considering the usage, etc., the condition was expected. Another field contact

made visits as well, and none of them were unacceptable, considering. Details from complaints of date and times of bad trails will be shared with Mr. Drew.

**Harbor Springs Use of Equipment** – Mr. Manson said that in the addendum of Section 9, page 18, Special Provisions – the SAW had issue with grooming equipment being used for anything other than snowmobile trails. There are concerns now that grant sponsors are being told the field contact must sign off first before certain grooming activities. Before the 2015 manual comes out – this needs to be revised and clarified. Mr. Fleming said this will be added as an agenda item to discuss at the next meeting.

**Mr. Manson made a motion, seconded by Mr. Duke, that SAW recommends to the Department that there be a review and rewrite of Section 9, page 18, in the Grant Handbook. Motion for adoption unanimously carried.**

**Department Review of Equipment Trade-ins with new or general purchases**  
Mr. Fleming said that the contacts need to be updated on trade-ins, and any trades within clubs. They will be re-emphasizing the need to understand any equipment changes happening, and field contacts advised.

Mr. Manson also raised the question for Mr. Green about reimbursements from ORV program back to snowmobile program – Mr. Fleming said that a Class C gets the funding back to the Department, but Mr. Manson clarified the question is that the funding should go back to the clubs that do that grooming. Mr. Fleming said there is no process for remuneration at this point for that activity. He doesn't understand how to capture those dollars. Discussion continued looking at different scenarios of usage and reimbursement. He suggested a joint ORV meeting to have that conversation.

**Lewiston Storm Damage** – Mr. Fleming said that he, Richard Kennedy, Rob Pelton, and Bill Taylor recently met to talk about the storm damage in Mr. Taylor's area. He said that there should be more of a partnership with these grants to make it work properly. Mr. Taylor read his 'synopsis' of history of their storm damage and struggles, to be seen and heard, and provided that packet of information in writing to the SAW. He feels his points were missed during that ride because separate vehicles were taken and the difficulty to show the damage and need for additional funding. He added that he is primarily unhappy with his field contact at this point.

Mr. Fleming added and further explained the disconnect when the field contact and groomer are not out there at the same time to communicate needs and partner to fix any concerns. He wants to move forward and improve that communication, but being in compliance with standards is critical.

Mr. Murray wanted to know exactly what else needed to be done. Mr. Manson said he sees that Mr. Taylor's trail is still not properly brushed and is hoping the program will come through with the additional funding. Mr. Fleming feels that in

order to get that trail up and running, it should not cost as much as originally thought - working in partnership will solve it.

**Mr. Duke** asked why Jennifer Nemeth was writing those letters of non-compliance; **Mr. Fleming** said that will be discussed and resolved as well. In addition, **Mr. Fleming** wanted to clarify that the 2013 letter from Ms. Nemeth is not considered a non-compliance letter.

**Black River Snowmobile Bridge** – **Mr. Moore** said he will talk with Mr. Fleming after the meeting. **Mr. Murray** asked that anyone participating in the meetings should be given the minutes to follow up, if needed. **Mr. Fleming** said those meetings are posted on the internet. **Mr. Moore** will report at the next meeting, and will be added to agenda for the next meeting.

**Special Maintenance Review** – **Mr. Fleming** said he needs to look at these areas in advance of the season; sometimes things cannot be foreseen – some projects carry over to the next year as well. They don't review these requests and omit or include special maintenance that is area specific. **Mr. Manson** clarified the question; was the request even received – yes it was received, it just didn't totally meet the criteria.

**Rogers City Railroad Grade** – **Mr. Houk** mentioned a positive meeting he was able to attend with several interested parties, at Carmeuse. There was hope to have the signed agreement that day on the trail proposal, but at that meeting, they were only very close to finalizing it. There needs to be fencing installed in the quarry area, but at minimal cost. **Mr. Manson** added that the quarry officials are also looking at a twenty year plan as well, and does not want to see unexpected changes in the future. Snowmobile trail should be ready by next season.

**Whiskey Bridge Update** – **Mr. Moore** said this may be a dead issue; the intent was to put a new bridge in place of the old bridge. Utilities and ownership concerns have been the issue, in particular, fiber optics. Other viable options were discussed, but very limited. PRD is asking the engineering consultant to complete their review and move forward. Questions remain on ownership at the end of the railroad grade. If MDOT tells landowners to remove all the wires and ribbons off the right of way, then there could possibly be a trail since there is approval from the one landowner affected.

**Trail Proposal Update** – **Mr. Fleming** said the information is being updated, but sometimes the "time stamp" does not reflect it. If there are any updates not there, please send them to Mr. Fleming.

**Trail 47 Joint Grooming** – **Mr. Fleming** summarized the shared trail portion between Grayling and Gaylord and the difficulty of that shared concept. **Mr. Taylor** added that sometimes that portion of trail was double groomed, but the field contact for Gaylord refused to add that portion to Gaylord's grant. He feels

that if both clubs could groom it, it would be ideal, and is hoping that it can be changed for next year. **Mr. Fleming** will have it looked at to put back in.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

**Budget Review** – Ms. Blodgett provided good news for the program. She included handouts and a PowerPoint presentation as well.

**Equipment Maintenance Standards** – **Mr. Britton** advised that they have not had that meeting yet. After the SAW meeting today they will have their subcommittee meeting. Mr. Reed was also asked to attend. Ron Yesney is not available, but Bill Lucas will attend.

**Sponsors Grooming Practices** – **Mr. Lucas** reviewed the history of a potential bypass trail around Cadillac. His thoughts were to build a trail along the expressway (to be used as a hiking and biking trail as well). Federal Highway Administration advised they could not build a trail along the expressway, but that has since changed. Progress was stalled briefly, but meetings have continued. During a promotional weekend in Cadillac, representatives and MDOT Director came on their ride. Local representative advised it could be possible, but a reasonable cost estimate would be needed. They are still hoping on a connector from several areas to get to Cadillac.

**Mr. Duke made a motion, seconded by Mr. Britton for SAW to recommend that DNR study and assist, as a high priority, in getting a route around Cadillac, and the trails connected, whereas, the Governor would like us to be the trails state, and for SAW to look into whatever would be required for the clubs in the area to move this trail forward. Motion for adoption unanimously carried.**

Discussion continued on the Mesick to Thompsonville area – and control of grade from Yuma to Viaduct Road. Mesick would like to see the connector, and Thompsonville also, a positive move for the economy. Bridge over Manistee River could be a concern though.

**Mr. Moore** asked Mr. Fleming about the status on the trail fund - it is still testing pretty well. It will be coming this spring. He also asked Mr. Manson about buying a piece of property that has a deeded easement – what happens to the money made in addition gained from the sale of the property? **Mr. Manson** said that is still in discussion. Any additional funds made will go back into the trail fund.

**Grooming Practices** – **Mr. Fleming** said there has been some discussion on the quality and frequency of grooming. We need to do a better job about communicating in getting trails groomed. Grooming miles this season has been tremendous. It's been a great snow year, but there needs to be better grooming

practices. He wants to make sure everyone is aware that there will not be any trails closed – but when certain issues arrive, there needs to be a dialogue about getting things resolved.

**Mr. Manson** said that the template for all grooming is not viable – “setting up trails” and then grooming can ruin it. Grooming in the evenings can ‘set up’ the trails. Daytime grooming can be a safety issue as well. Wind and drifting snow have caused issues this year as well. **Mr. Murray** added that looking at ways to make the program better is important.

**Marketing Efforts for Education of Program and Recruitment** – **Mr. Fleming** pointed out that the average user does not know what it takes to run a successful snowmobile program. He feels recruitment is important. Promote efforts for trail improvement activities. In particular the businesses that benefit from the trail system – have they thought about volunteering in efforts and membership? The Marketing & Outreach Division has offered a person to assist and support.

**Mr. Britton** asked about education and when trail permits are sold, can there be an add-on with information when selling permits? **Mr. Manson** said that has been attempted, but not very successfully.

**LEAN Process** – **Mr. Fleming** explained the process of positions and examinations of activities – various groups get together to discuss and see what can be done to improve those processes. He has asked that the grant process be looked at closely, and will also be included in that group. This is ongoing this year, and, hopefully, the following year there will be significant changes to improve things.

**Mr. Manson** asked how long FRD will still have the contact field person versus PRD staff – **Mr. Fleming’s** best guess is that they will still be there Fiscal Year 2015 (October 1, 2014). There has been a conversation with the Chiefs of the two divisions to make that happen. **Mr. Manson** added that some field contacts are very difficult to work with, and they would love to see improvement.

**Mr. Brown** asked why there can’t be general funds used for the program and infrastructure? **Mr. Manson** agreed – funding is there for Pure Michigan. Brief discussion continued.

## **STAFF REPORTS**

**Mr. Fleming** said they will recommend again to FRD and USFS to have staff attend these meetings.

## LAW ENFORCEMENT

**Cpl. Morey** reported he was asked recently to respond to a complaint letter of enforcement on the Saginaw River – snowmobilers that were riding too close to an ice shanty (he often hears complaints from fishermen about that issue) – also a newspaper reporter captured photos of snowmobilers running over and killing waterfowl, and fleeing. They are pursuing enforcement action out of the Bay City office. Forty-plus citations were issued that particular weekend to control some of that activity.

In addition, snowmobile fatalities can be found on the DNR website, but he stated there are 12, perhaps 13; however, the website is currently reporting ten. He will see that that gets updated. Some accidents are awaiting toxicology reports and other details of the accident investigations

## PUBLIC APPEARANCE

**Mr. Houk** wanted to comment about payment practices, as it took three weeks for their field contact to respond to their December payment request. Is that unusual, or are they that busy? **Mr. Fleming** responded that no, it is not common, and it's been noted that some have taken longer. The LEAN process will hopefully correct that.

Second issue is regarding the Rogers City connector; **Mr. Houk** said he would like to know as soon as possible when all parties have approved. **Mr. Fleming** will see that communication improves as well.

**Mr. Volkens** addressed maintenance issues, referring to Mr. Fleming's e-mail of February 7, 2014; he sees one difference with newer equipment - some older replacement parts were inexpensive, but current high tech equipment parts are potentially hundreds to thousands of dollars. He said they can usually do the labor if the program pays for the parts.

He also had a comment about Snow Grooming Magazine ([www.snowgroomingmag.com](http://www.snowgroomingmag.com)). He would like to see a section on some simple fix-its with common hidden solutions. A comment from the audience was that Facebook has things like that. **Mr. Murray** would like Mr. Volkens to make himself known to the editor of the magazine.

**Mr. Taylor** wanted to quickly say they have a five to seven year process – he would like to thank Jennifer Nemeth for turning around their payments quickly. He also wanted to thank everyone for their help.

**Mr. Altman** asked Mr. Fleming about the Millersburg Bridge project and who was going to pay for it? That was a couple years ago, and Mr. Fleming will check into it. Mr. Altman said that the group who engineered the bridge/trail should pay for it.

**Mr. Dubie** has a letter from Don Klingler, FRD, Gaylord Fire Officer Supervisor that he would like assistance on. He will meet with Mr. Fleming. There seems to be confusion on approval of signing and brushing.

**Mr. Corbett** stated he feels we are blessed to have Michigan, we should be promoting ourselves. A very small portion of snowmobilers are MSA members. Also, retention is critical. As reported from the last meeting, Mr. Taylor wrote a letter to the gentleman who complained about signage, to ride along with him while grooming. The gentleman did go along, and now sees more of what is involved. He added a thank you to Mr. Taylor for that.

**Mr. Dewitt** said that he's made comments to snowmobilers in the past, trying to tell them about bumpy trails where a groomer stops to pick up downed branches or trees, and wonders how many of those snowmobilers who complain would pick up stray branches. When he does make a point, the snowmobilers in general have no idea what's involved with trail maintenance. **Mr. Murray** said he'd like to have an article in the magazine, "The Groomer Says."

Three letters were presented to SAW from Brett Lindgren, Joe Kuchniki, and Mike Cook that will be a part of the record along with the minutes.

**Mr. Stein** asked about Munising Canadian National Railroad issue concerning insurance - no new or good news received as of yet.

**Mr. Doan** said that Mr. Fleming has been overloaded with e-mails, and if anyone would like to also contact a PRD employee, get with him for direction. He is at the Baraga Operations Service Center. He agreed there should be an alternate PRD contact as well – that will be updated and shared. He also added that some club issues can be resolved with a public meeting to clear up any misunderstandings. They have had two such meetings that seemed pretty successful – primarily explaining the program, and resolving complaints. He wanted to reiterate to try the current field contact first but that they would be more than willing to assist when necessary to move things forward.

**Mr. Moore** said he has the entire list of FRD and PRD contacts, so he will forward it to Mr. Doan, and they can forward.

**Mr. Manson** made a motion, seconded by Mr. Duke to end the meeting. Motion for adoption unanimously carried. Meeting adjourned at 3:34 p.m.

2 25 14

To: SAW committee

From: Joe Kuchnicki – Grant Sponsor 2159 Harbor Springs

Topic: 100% funded equipment addendum conflict

Dear Workgroup members,

Our club has been grooming trails since mid 70's and as grant sponsors since early 80's.

We have 102 miles of designated trail segments.

We maintain 3 groomers in heated barns and have 3 designated routes, each averaging 53 miles.

- We do not agree with some of the restrictions on 100% funded equipment in addendum to handbook that was added for 2014 season.
- We request permission to use 100% funded equipment for grooming routes that are visibly open to snowmobiling at no cost to program.

The handbook and addendum allow cost shared equipment to groom up to 25% over grant mileage on routes open to snowmobiling. 100% equipment should be considered cost shared to some degree.

Please consider the following:

- 100% equipment should be considered "cost shared" since maintenance is still being done by sponsors at no cost to program on equipment we will never own.
- 100% equipment should be considered "cost shared" when sponsors maintain and store equipment inside heated barns at no cost to program.
- Should program pay storage or rent to keep equipment serviced, safe, and out of weather? It was a non issue when they were cost shared.
- Snowmobile funded equipment should not be used for ORV trails without proper funding.
- Snowmobile funded equipment should only be used for routes that are visibly open to public snowmobiling. No private use should be allowed.

Thank You for your consideration

Bill,

Here are some of the issues I hope will be addressed at the groomer workshop meetings, including SAW.

1. Fuel costs coverage due to major increase in fuel costs in relationship to our per mileage reimbursement -- I want to make sure the DNR will be modifying our reimbursement per mile
2. Would like to see an internet based or phone based trail sponsor -- trail issue update system. Example: Indian River had been receiving complaints about the Gaylord trails, but didn't know there was a funding issue with the private contractor. These trail issues affect not only us, but all the other trail systems that connected with Gaylord.
3. Better communication with Trail Sponsors-- Didn't know about the legislative ride until the day before; utilize the internet or cell phones for communication and didn't receive info regarding the workshop until I asked for it.
4. The MSA and DNR need to have more control over what the trail sponsors are purchasing to help distribute the money allocated for grooming equipment to more clubs instead of just a few. This would perhaps allow for more tractors and groomer drags to be bought. Maybe look at grooming equipment that is more versatile and can be used not only during the winter, but during the spring, summer and fall for trail maintenance and brushing. There seems to be a lot of money spent on equipment (\$150-\$250,000.00) that just grooms the trails then sits for 8 months, while something other than a Piston Bully, Tucker, etc... can be used 12 months a year and has a larger market for resale when it is re-sold. These types of equipment can range from \$80,000-\$120,000(ex: Kubota Powercrawler --\$80,000 with loader and 5 year warranty)
5. Clubs need to be more responsible for the maintenance of their equipment. I hear too many times that the state paid for it, so we don't need to do anything with the equipment, it's the state's problem.

These are just some issues that our club feels need to be addressed, especially #4 and #5, otherwise there is no way the trail grooming program is going to be around in the year 2020.

**Brett Lindgren**

**Indian River Snowmobile Grooming Club**

From: Joanne Cook <[nicasy ltd@jamadots.com](mailto:nicasy ltd@jamadots.com)>  
Sent: Wednesday, February 26, 2014 2:08 PM  
To: Costa, Peter (DNR)  
Cc: Moore, Dan (DNR)  
Subject:

Hi. I am not going to make it to the SAW meeting this week and wanted to touch base on some of my thoughts concerning equipment.

I got involved with grooming in 1995 we had to tuckers doing roughly 130 miles and had 15,000 dollar a year payments. in 1999 we bought our first BR180 and by 2001 we were tucker free but still had the payment and were not payment free untill about 2003. things were tight but we managed especially after we got rid of the tucker money plts. From 1999 till 2008 the BR180's came along way mainly because they listend to the people using them.

In 2012 we purchased a Prinoth Trooper and have had good luck with it; we have some issues but the company came thru and took care of us and it(the trooper) will do everything the BR's can do even though it has a smaller engine. So, for the last 18 seasons we have made all our payments and coverd all maintenance, repair and any loan payments and paid our drivers \$1.25 per mile for grooming and had money left over.

Even though we like the 100% funded equipment, we would like to see a cost share program reinstated with a cap and they could use the piston bully or husky as the base model, seeing how they can go thru anything we encounter, wet areas, hills, and massive drift areas. I see clubs with New Holland tractors that have make shift trin tracks that are eating up tires and falling apart, tractors with saucey tracks that are falling apart and hearing about Tuckers that have been junk ever since I have been involved in grooming.

Tractors are better made for pulling if treated right and I know some clubs down in the Lower Peninsula that run with tires that have good luck but the ones with saucy tracks have no suspension and the bearings and axles along with the rest have to absorb all the impact and do not hold up. Tuckers are { that should be enough said about them}.

The clubs should be held to hiring local repair people instead of paying for transportation which would be cheaper and possibly get machines back on trails sooner. The clubs and operators need to be held more accountable for their choices and caring of equipment. With a cost share program that has a cap, maybe clubs will take more care of equipment and make better choices on what they buy. Maybe we can also look at reconditioning equipment to help save money instead of replacing a 160 thousand dollar machine that only needs maybe 20 or 30 thousand dollars to bring it up to good condition. Our 08 BR's are pushing 5000hrs, but we only need an injector pump and track belts, otherwise they are in good condition. I can go on but this I think hits the topic pretty good. If this could be passed on to the appropriate people I would appreciate it.

Thank You,

Mike Cook

PARADISE AREA NIGHT RIDERS