

**Washington State Parks  
SNOWMOBILE ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
Winter Meeting Minutes**

**January 27, 2024**

**Cle Elum, WA**

**ATTENDANCE**

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS:**

Tom Shields (Area 1)  
Bob Henrie (Chair, Area 2)  
Norris Boyd (Vice Chair, Area 3)  
Kurt Millard (Area 4)  
Roger Brittain (Area 5)  
Steve Riggan (Absent, Area 6)  
Justin Davis (Non-Motorized)  
John O'Brien (Non-Motorized)  
Cindy Hoover (Non-Motorized)  
Sam Hensold (DNR)  
Rob Jones (Absent, WAOC)  
Tony Leonetti (WDFW)

**Washington State Parks Staff:**

Corey Tolar (Winter Recreation Program, Manager)  
Rob Sendak (Washington State Parks)  
Travis Larson (Winter Recreation Program)  
Kari McNay (Winter Recreation Program)

**Guest Attendees:**

**Bob Seelye (Kittitas Grooming Council)**  
**Kendall Stever (Snowmobiler)**  
**Shannon Lawler (R&R Grooming)**  
**Sean Culp (WSSA)**  
**Franny Castrilli (Snomads Snowmobile Club)**  
**Mike Borman (Lake Wenatchee Rec Club)**  
**Diane James (P.M.S.)**  
**William Burgess (P.M.S.)**  
**Jason Holmes (WSSA)**  
**Wayne Mohler (WSSA)**  
**Tim Penelerick (Boulder Creek Enterprises)**  
**Max Rochester (Grooming Coordinator)**  
**Glen Wilkenson (Area 1)**  
**Randy Skillman (IMS)**  
**Ty Locke (Grooming Coordinator)**  
**Jaelle Downs (USFS)**  
**Jeremiah Brown (USFS)**  
**Nick Whitman (Landtek)**  
**Cal Anderson (Apple Country Snowmobile Club)**

**Saturday, January 27, 2024, Agenda**

<b>CALL TO ORDER</b>	Bob calls the meeting to order.	<b>No Action</b>
<b>INTRODUCTIONS</b>	Bob has the committee members introduce themselves as well as the audience.	<b>Information Only</b>
<b>AGENDA REVIEW</b>	Bob welcomes everyone then requested a review of the final agenda.  Bob calls for any additions or corrections to the agenda. No additions or corrections made.	<b>No Action</b>
<b>REVIEW/APPROVAL SUMMER 2023 MEETING MINUTES</b>	Bob moves to approving the summer meeting minutes.  Travis asks the committee if there are any proposed changes to the summer meeting minutes.  Norris motions to approve summer meeting minutes.  Justin seconds this motion.  <b>Motion passes unanimously.</b>	<b>Motion Passes Unanimously</b>
<b>PROGRAM UPDATE</b>	Corey Tolar reminds attendees that public comment will have a designated section with sign-in sheet and will occur in the afternoon.  Corey provides program updates. Notes low snow conditions and impact on registration numbers. States that registrations as of December were approximately 3,900 off from the previous year. Reminds audience that snowmobile registrations fund the program and low registrations mean a decrease in revenue for following season.  Corey states that Echo Valley and Cloverland sno-parks were closed for the 23-24 season as there was no contractor available to fulfill services in those areas. Notes that Chelan County will no longer be providing services in upcoming years.  Corey updates committee on the vandalism of the ADA lot sanikan at Crystal Springs.  Corey states that staff will be providing a recommendation for the FY25 budget at the Summer Budget Meeting.  Corey provides legislative update, noting vintage snowmobile proposal in legislature. Legislation suggests a one-time \$70 registration fee. Current	<b>Information Only</b>

	<p>vintage snowmobiles require annual \$12 registration which provides program with gas tax revenue. Notes that staff has voiced concerns with the idea suggesting a \$5 sno-park permit for vintage snowmobiles as it would not be worth the cost of implementation. Legislation has not been approved yet.</p> <p>Corey notes Cold Creek Bridge collapse at Easton Reload.</p> <p>Bob calls for questions.</p> <p>Roger asks for clarification regarding origin of legislative bill. Corey explains that the proposed legislation mentioned did not come from Parks, staff was informed of existing bill.</p> <p>Discussion arises of possibly cutting down grooming at Easton Reload following bridge collapse. Corey states that this can be looked at in future season(s).</p>	
<p><b>GROOMING REPORTS</b></p>	<p>Bob calls for groomer reports.</p> <p><b>Tim Penelerick, Boulder Creek Enterprises</b> Reports that grooming began week before Christmas. Ran one snowcat in December due to low snow in lower elevations. Been running two snowcats since with increased snow.</p> <p><b>Randy Skillman, IMS</b> Reports that grooming began on 6<sup>th</sup> for north side of the mountain, 7<sup>th</sup> for south side. Way short on snow. Need snow soon.</p> <p><b>William Burgess, Burgess Logging</b> Reports December 2<sup>nd</sup> start date. Good snow in valley in January. Inconsistent conditions, but overall successful season in the valley.</p> <p><b>Shannon Lawler, R&amp;R Grooming</b> Reports mid-December start. Notes that R&amp;R picked up White Pass and Bumping Lake plowing. Notes issue with Yakima County plowing inconsistencies for the county road to the sno-park.</p> <p><b>Ty Locke, Grooming Coordinator (Landtek)</b> Snow came earlier than anticipated. Anticipates making it through February-early March. Need more money.</p> <p><b>Cal Anderson, Apple Country Snowmobile Club</b> Low on snow. Chelan County not plowing. Travis states that he spoke to Chelan County recently.</p> <p><b>Nick Whitman, Landtek</b> Logging at Taneum/Manastash.</p>	
<p><b>WSSA UPDATE</b></p>	<p>Wayne Mohler thanks committee for inviting WSSA to present.</p> <p>Winter Rendezvous being held in Winthrop this year.</p>	<p><b>Information Only</b></p>

	<p>WSSA elections will close on February 9th for President, VP, Membership, &amp; Publicity.</p> <p>Mentions Recreational Trails Program. Requests that Parks gets applications in on upcoming cycle (October 31<sup>st</sup> deadline). WSSA will help Parks with applications.</p> <p>Snowmobile Expo not held in 2023. WSSA committee trying to find ways to restructure and function better despite budget constraints.</p> <p>SB 5831 (Vintage Snowmobiles, submitted through Brad Hawkins, Legislative District 14). WSSA passed motion to take position against bill.</p> <p>Notes State Parks agency request to reinvest interest from carryover in snowmobile program. Provides support for this.</p> <p>Several potential land use impacts (USFS NW Forest Plan, DNR strategic plan, etc.)</p> <p>Norris asks if RTP grant was missed. Wayne states that Parks missed RTP grant. Emphasizes need for all groups to communicate and support each other.</p> <p>Norris asks if WSSA took action against legislative fee increase. Wayne states no action has been taken. Only action against SB5831.</p> <p>Brief discussion follows summarizing WSSA Summer Meeting. Discussion between Wayne and committee members regarding roles and relationship occurs.</p>	
<p><b>LEGISLATIVE DISCUSSION</b></p>	<p>Rob Sendak provides brief legislative updates.</p> <p>SB5902: Re-investing account revenue back into program States that approximately \$80k could be put back into Winter Recreation accounts. This is State Parks requested legislation.</p> <p>SB5831: Vintage Snowmobile Bill Drafted fiscal note. Implementation of proposed idea would be expensive for the program. Senator Hawkins has been approached by Owen Rowe regarding this issue.</p> <p>Rob notes need for feedback from user groups before Parks staff presents budget scenarios to Commission.</p> <p>Cindy Hoover SMAC letter drafted in support of SB5902 or in opposition to SB5831. Rob states that a short letter delivered in support of SB5902 could be helpful. Cindy states that she is willing to draft a letter with input from SMAC.</p> <p>Cindy Motions to draft a letter of support for SB 5902.</p> <p>Norris seconds.</p> <p>Sam Hensold notes rules against grassroots lobbying for state employees.</p>	<p><b>Motion Passes</b></p>

	<p>Sam abstains from vote.</p> <p><b>Motion passes, with Sam abstaining.</b></p>	
<b>CLE ELUM RD UPDATES</b>	<p>Jaelle reports to the committee the struggles the Cle Elum RD is facing this season, including being understaffed, having only one staff member capable of writing tickets, and lack of grooming equipment.</p>	<b>Information Only</b>
<b>BREAK</b>	<p>Committee breaks for 20 minutes</p>	<b>No Action</b>
<b>SNOWMOBILE REGISTRATIONS &amp; BUDGET UPDATE &amp; DISCUSSION</b>	<p>Committee reconvenes.</p> <p>Corey begins presentation regarding registrations. Outlines challenges that face snowmobile program, shows data with decreased snowmobile registration numbers. Presents slides with budgetary data and projections. Mentions various possible solutions such as a daily snowmobile permit, not providing a free sno-park permit with registrations, etc. States need for feedback from the snowmobile community regarding these types of decisions. Welcomes feedback from SMAC &amp; WSSA.</p> <p>Norris notes unregistered out-of-state snowmobilers. States he would like to see “removing trails” taken out of conversation (favors reducing hours instead). Corey notes that if certain trails go without grooming, this would not necessarily mean a full removal of trails. Corey states understanding for difficulty in reinstating removed trails.</p> <p>Committee discusses timeline for possible solutions. Corey states that the timeline will be dependent on various factors and is not set in stone at this point. Rob mentions that Winter Rec staff will present in front of the Parks Commission in March.</p> <p>Norris asks who sponsors/presents legislation. Rob explains that if there is overwhelming support from the community, we would draft something in collaborative effort.</p> <p>Sam suggests outreach to other states for their best practices as part of Winter Rec’s upcoming outreach plan.</p> <p>Justin states need for short-term and long-term funding plans.</p> <p>Corey bring up slide with registration numbers from DOL before passing presentation over to Justin.</p> <p>Justin discusses that late season (January to June) registrations. Projects possible revenue loss options based on previous years’ last season registration numbers with projected decline. Notes possible losses under these models ranging from \$228.5k to \$442.5k depending on model used.</p> <p>Corey reminds committee that we will not know the next season’s funds exactly until after the fiscal year closes. States that staff will be looking into potential closures as well as other options well before July. Suggests holding virtual meetings with SMAC in the meantime to work through these issues before summer budget meeting. States that at current levels, the motorized program is too big.</p>	<b>Information &amp; Discussion Only</b>

	<p>Roger mentions that staff needs to inform local grooming councils so they can provide input on what to close or leave open. Corey agrees and states that land managers will be contacted as well.</p> <p>Justin suggests that difficult conversations about short-term solutions need to happen simultaneously with long-term solution discussion as well.</p> <p>Randy Skillman suggests first-in, last-out model for removal.</p> <p>Tim Penelerick asks Tony how to support enforcement. Corey asks Tony if tickets are not the main focus for WDFW. Tony states that different areas having different focuses and that they are restricted not just by resources but by public safety, noting that sno-park enforcement has to fall lower on the priority list for WDFW than natural resources do.</p> <p>John O'Brien emphasizes need for feedback not just from groomers but from users. What do the users want? Hopes this is part of the upcoming snowmobile survey.</p> <p>Rob reiterates need for user-driven assessment. What sno-parks are used how and when? Roger suggests setting money aside for survey.</p> <p>Shannon asks for clarification as she thought there were already surveys out. Corey notes that there is a way to submit feedback for individual sno-parks but the program is looking for more comprehensive data. Shannon suggests that the grooming councils and coordinators should be reached out to as they are on the trails.</p> <p>Justin suggests SMAC Reps commit to going to grooming council meetings.</p> <p>Audience claims that the individuals in grooming meetings would be the ones who comply with registration and permit rules. How do we reach those who are noncompliant?</p>	
<b>LUNCH</b>	Committee breaks for lunch.	<b>No Action</b>
<b>EQUIPMENT REPAIR</b>	<p>Travis updates the committee on the current states of the equipment repair budget.</p> <p>Roughly \$35k spent so far.  Cle Elum: just under \$10k, but will likely be higher by end of season  Okanogan: \$12.5k  Pomeroy: \$12.4k, but will likely be higher by end of season</p>	<b>Information Only</b>
<b>WEBSITE UPDATE</b>	Travis walks committee through the new Parks website that went live in November. Shows committee and audience how to navigate to the various Winter Rec pages.	<b>Information Only</b>
<b>ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORTS</b>	<p><b>Tom Shields, Area 1</b>  Grooming started late (first week of January).</p> <p><b>Bob Henrie, Area 2</b>  Grooming started after the first of the year. Minimal depth to groom in most areas. Problems with fat tire bikes on snowmobile trails in Methow area, leads to issue of</p>	<b>Information Only</b>

	<p>nonmotorized users recreating in motorized sno-parks. How does the budget adjust for this?</p> <p>Committee and audience discuss percent allocation of funds with sno-parks. Bob and Corey explain current processes for non-motorized programs covering this and what to look into moving forward. Groomers are advised to put percentages on funding applications.</p> <p><b>Area 3, Norris Boyd</b> Late start on snow in area. Had to work around logging this season.</p> <p><b>Area 4, Kurt Millard</b> Late start to season. Went from zero feet of snow to eight or nine feet very quickly. Some plowing contracts are running out quickly. Dealing with wind storms, ice storms, downed trees. Working on getting caught up following these issues.</p> <p><b>Area 5, Roger Brittain</b> Late snow, but good snow. Groomers trying to pace their grooming without running out of funds. Would rather have a short season with good trails than a long one with mediocre trails.</p> <p><b>Non-Motorized Representative, Cindy Hoover</b> Landtek did a great job at Cabin Creek and Crystal Springs this season.</p> <p><b>Non-Motorized Representative, Justin Davis</b> Not much to update committee on but discussed upcoming forecast.</p> <p><b>Non-Motorized Representative, John O'Brien</b> States that at future SMAC winter meetings, he would like to see education regarding sno-parks and trails in the areas visited, not just snowmobile rides. Bob suggests involving local clubs and emphasizing education in future trips.</p> <p><b>DNR, Sam Hensold</b> Notes DNR focus on maintaining presence at sno-parks, such as Ahtanum. Jeremy Valasquez from DNR focusing on “the why” for registration non-compliance. Notes correction notices have had high compliance. Mentions Outdoor Access and Responsible Recreation Plan, the new strategic plan which makes it easier to engage agency and legislature and is engaged with tribes. Notes that DNR has two bills in legislature.</p>	
<p><b>PUBLIC COMMENT</b></p>	<p>Floor opens to public comment.</p> <p><b>Bob Seelye, WSSA</b> Shares success with Kittitas County enforcement. Parking tickets went from \$25 to \$200. Deputies are writing roughly two hundred tickets per weekend. Suggests getting other entities to follow suit. Also suggests agencies should need to report successes with E&amp;E in order to receive funding. Bob also notes possible upcoming USFS closure of Gold Creek. States that users may want to shift to Easton Reload.</p> <p><b>Franny Castrilli, Snomads Snowmobile Club</b> States that the Easton Reload bridge has been out of commission for a while now and was not a sudden collapse. Asks how groups can work together to address this.</p>	<p><b>Information &amp; Discussion Only</b></p>

	<p>Jason suggests that USFS should cover the bridge repair and claims.</p> <p>Audience is informed that Winter Rec unfortunately cannot make this repair as it is not State Parks/Winter Rec exclusive.</p>	
<b>ELECTION/TERMS</b>	<p><math>\frac{3}{4}</math> of the committee are overdue for replacement.</p> <p>Justin inquires about the role of committee members. Discussion follows, in which it is noted that the committee serves an advisory role, but that staff and the committee work collaboratively to maintain the program and program budget. The importance of the committee’s role is noted.</p> <p>Travis opens nominations for committee chair.</p> <p>Norris nominates Bob Henrie.</p> <p>Nomination seconded.</p> <p>Sam notes that he would nominate Justin if he was interested in being chair. Justin accepts the nomination.</p> <p>Vote is called.</p> <p>Five votes cast for Bob.</p> <p>Vote is recast.</p> <p><b>Six votes cast for Bob.</b></p> <p><b>Bob is re-elected committee chair.</b></p> <p>Travis opens nominations for committee vice chair.</p> <p>Roger nominates Norris.</p> <p>Norris accepts nomination.</p> <p>Vote is called.</p> <p><b>Norris unanimously approved as vice chair.</b></p> <p>Elections conclude.</p>	<p><b>Bob Henrie re-elected as Chair of the SMAC.</b></p> <p><b>Norris Boyd re-elected as Vice Chair of the SMAC.</b></p>
<b>SUMMER BUDGET MEETING DATE AND LOCATION</b>	<p>Wenatchee is proposed as the location for the summer budget meeting. No objections.</p> <p><b>Summer Budget Meeting set for August 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> in Wenatchee (later changed to August 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> due to scheduling conflicts).</b></p>	<p><b>Summer Budget Meeting set for August 16<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> in Wenatchee (later changed to August 2<sup>nd</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup>)</b></p>
<b>MEETING ADJOURNED</b>	<p>Norris moves to adjourn the meeting.</p> <p>Meeting adjourned.</p>	