



## **INFORMATION AND GUIDELINES**

### **MUNICIPAL/COUNTY GRANT-IN-AID PROGRAM**

**2008-2009**

RE: Administration of Grants-In-Aid to Municipalities & Counties for Snowmobile Trails and Facilities, M.R.S.A., Title 12, Chapter 220, Subchapter 8, §1893-3.

#### **PLEASE READ!!!!**

Enclosed is a packet that explains the Bureau of Parks & Lands Municipal and County Grants-In-Aid Program for snowmobile trail development and maintenance. Under the terms of the municipal grant, the State can cost share up to, but not exceed, 50% when the trail system is solely within the municipal or town boundaries. In the event that two or more municipalities or counties work together in developing and administering a trail system, or when a municipality or county assumes responsibility for a trail system that extends beyond its boundaries and the trail system is determined by the director of the ORV Division to be of regional significance and contributes to the overall objective of developing a high quality main artery trail connecting one community with another, the project may be considered for up to 70% State assistance if adequate funds are available. All trail project descriptions will require approval by the Bureau which will determine the appropriate State share. The approved percentage may change annually, depending on funds available to the Bureau.

All applications for winter trail grooming assistance during the 2008-2009 snowmobile season must be submitted to the Bureau of Parks & Lands no later than **December 1, 2008**. In the event that an application is being submitted for trail development, it must be submitted prior to November 1, 2008. Trail development consists of major new trail development or creating **NEW** bridges, that never existed in the past.

The enclosed package includes a sample Project Certification, Project Description, worksheets, proof of payment, and Reimbursement Request forms. This packet also includes a land use permit form, which may be used to obtain authorization to cross public or private property. This form will meet the Bureau's requirements when requesting assistance.

## **I. PROCEDURES FOR APPLYING FOR A GRANT**

The following materials must be submitted when requesting assistance for a municipal snowmobile trail project. All materials must be originals, with original signatures, except the map showing the project location.

- A. **Project Certification** - This must be typed on municipal letterhead, using the enclosed sample as a guide. Insert the proper wording that applies to your community wherever indicated by **BOLD PRINT IN PARENTHESIS** on the sample. The certification must be signed by the appropriate municipal or county officers (Example: selectmen, town or city council member, etc.). This will demonstrate that the Legislative body of the municipality/county approves the proposed project and the request for financial assistance. A snowmobile club is not that body.
- B. **Project Description** - A detailed description of the proposed project must be submitted before project funding can be considered. The description must include **ALL** work to be funded, including the type and cost of necessary equipment, the personnel required and resources available for the project. It must also include a breakdown of the material costs, estimated number of hours for labor and equipment and the hourly rate to be paid. If the winter grooming phase of the project is to be contracted, the contract should specify the responsibilities of the contractor, the method of payment including the maximum amount and a copy forwarded to this office. We recommend an hourly rate for contracts and services. The construction of bridges and other work adjacent to waterways require written permits from or notification to the Land Use Regulation Commission or the Department of Environmental Protection depending on the location and the landowner. Copies of these notices or permits are required, if state-funding assistance is sought.
- C. **Map** - A detailed map of the proposed snowmobile trail project must be submitted. The map should be a topographical map or copy of equal quality. The map must show the proposed trail, water crossings, available parking lots, the relationship with existing trails in surrounding areas and the number of miles in the project. If the map on file with the state in last year's project is used, authorization to transfer the map to this year's project must be clearly stated IN WRITING on the Project Description (see sample). Club and Municipal trail on the same map is ok, but they must be different colors or type.
  1. **Landowner Permission** - If the request for financial assistance is strictly for winter grooming, a written statement must accompany the request for assistance certifying that all landowners over whose land the trail passes have been contacted and have granted permission (**this may be a part of the Project Description - see sample**). In the event that the application is requesting financial assistance for development, or use of heavy equipment, such as bulldozers/escavators, landowner permission must be in writing for the entire area to be developed or repaired.
  2. **Application** - The application must be completely filled out and signed by the person given the authority to sign it in the first paragraph of the Project Certification.
    - a. The estimated costs specified on the application may include administrative costs incurred in obtaining land use permits, but cannot include a "land use fee", if one is paid or lobster dinners for landowners.

b. The cost may include the actual development of new trail such as clearing a new trail and construction of new bridges. Most new development today is unlikely, with over 13,000 miles of trail, we have enough.

c. The maintenance of facilities such as plowing parking lots open to the public for snowmobile trail access may be an eligible expense.

d. Cost of maintenance of existing trail including winter grooming of the trail, erection of trail signs and cutting brush is also eligible for state aid.

3. **Agreement** - The original, signed Agreement should be sent with the application, but may be held until notification of approval of the application by the Bureau. It saves time to submit the signed agreement with the application. One fully executed copy of the agreement will be returned to the Project Director.

## **II. REIMBURSEMENT**

A request for reimbursement may be submitted on a monthly basis or at the end of the season, whichever suits the municipality. It may be advantageous to the municipality if the requests are submitted monthly, because they will not need to have funding for the entire approved project. (This is a reimbursement for expenditures made, for example, the Bureau funds a \$5,000 project up to \$3,500). Bills submitted monthly for \$1,000 will, for example, keep reimbursement funds flowing back to the municipality each month. **THE FINAL TRAIL MAINTENANCE REIMBURSEMENT REQUEST MUST BE SUBMITTED NO LATER THAN MAY 30TH** of the year in which the project was carried out. Reimbursement requests that are POSTMARKED after May 30th will not be accepted. Items not approved by the Bureau on the Project Description or by an amendment will not be reimbursed. The method of filing for reimbursement is as follows:

- A. Submit one completed copy of the Request for Reimbursement form. The reimbursement request must be signed by the person the town gave the authority to submit the application requesting financial assistance (See Project Certification/ Paragraph 1). (A sample is provided in the packet for your reference.)
- B. Submit copies of all receipts substantiating payment of expenditures reported, or a copy of the town warrant on which the payment was made, or an invoice marked "paid." (See enclosed sample). Worksheets are not considered invoices or receipts.
- C. The worksheets provided by the Bureau must be used by the project director and trail crews as work is performed or purchases made. A copy of the worksheet must be completely filled out and forwarded to the Bureau with the reimbursement request. The worksheet briefly describes where the work was done by site location or trail number, date of work, and the number of hours the work was performed per day. Do not lump time on one line for the month or season.
- D. Upon receipt of the reimbursement request, the Director of the Snowmobile Program, Bureau of Parks & Lands, will review the request to ensure compliance with the terms of the approved project description. Reimbursement will be made on the basis of the previously approved cost share percentage for the work performed between the dates covered by the reimbursement request. All expenses incurred during the period covered should be included on the appropriate request for reimbursement and not carried over to a later request.

### **III. SNOWMOBILE TRAIL DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION GUIDELINES**

#### **A. Recommended Trail Guidelines**

1. Snowmobile Trails:
  - a. If "one-way" trail designation, the minimum trail width should be 6 feet, unless where specifically restricted by landowners or authorized by the Bureau.
  - b. If "two-way" trail designation, the minimum trail width should be 8 feet, unless specifically restricted by landowners or authorized by the Bureau.
  - c. Brush should be cleared from an area 1 foot beyond the edge of the trail.
  - d. The minimum turning radius for a one-way trail is 20 feet; for a two-way trail, 30 feet.
  - e. Branches, limbs and brush should be cleared to a height of 8 feet above the trail.
  - f. Sustained grades and slopes should not exceed 20%.
  - g. All signs should be those provided by the Bureau or of the same design as those provided by the Bureau of Parks & Lands. Since we provide signs at no charge, reimbursements for sign purchases are not allowed.
2. Snow banks at road crossings should be cut back to provide adequate visibility in both directions. Snowbanks should be kept low at trail crossing points to permit easy exit and entrance to the trail. Warning signs should be installed on the trail at a sufficient distance from the road crossing to allow snowmobilers to stop. Maine Department of Transportation warning signs should be installed on controlled access highways and major interstate highways to warn motorists of the snowmobile trail crossing. Requests for crossing signs along the highway will follow the policy established by the Department of Transportation. The applications are available at the Bureau's Snowmobile Program office.
3. When approaching or leaving a slope or grade, the trail should be straight for a sufficient distance to permit a safe transition.
4. The topography and characteristics of the trail should be of a varied nature to hold the user's interest and to create a reasonable degree of challenge.
5. It is extremely important to maintain the trail for the use and enjoyment of the user. Periodic grooming is needed to eliminate moguls. It is recommended that heavily used trails be groomed as soon as possible after each new snowfall. It is of the utmost importance that a snow base be established as early as possible in the season. Once a base is established, it is much easier to maintain a smooth trail. It may be impossible to have a regular maintenance schedule and abide by it. The frequency of grooming will depend on the amount of snowfall and snowmobile traffic on each particular trail each day. During the peak of the use season (mid January to mid March), nighttime grooming is much more effective because of the reduced traffic and air temperatures at night.
6. Snowmobile trails should not be routed over lakes, streams or other bodies of frozen water. If stream or river crossings are necessary, provide bridges at least 5 feet wide

or wider if large grooming equipment is to be used. Permits or notifications may be required by LURC (287-2631) or DEP (287-2111) to build bridges on navigable streams.

7. Trails should not be routed along steep side slopes.
8. Trails should be laid out so they avoid conflicting uses or any areas of potential conflict such as tree plantations, nurseries, conflicting uses or other areas where trail development or use might cause damage. If you have further questions, please contact:

Department of Conservation  
Parks & Lands, ORV Division  
22 State House Station  
Augusta, Maine 04333-0022

Tel: 287-4956 or  
1-800-462-1019