

Trails Spiked by Volunteer PAGE 11 | Lost & Found PAGE 2

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The Snowmobile Association of Massachusetts is committed to enhancing safe snowmobiling in Massachusetts.



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## ON THE COVER

*There is nothing like seeing a trail fade into infinity before you, as it does along the Indian Head trails.*

PHOTO BY DAN GOULD

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## President's Message

BY DAN GOULD

# Lost & Found

There's nothing worse than the realization that you have lost something, especially if it's expensive, has sentimental value or is vital to your well-being. It's immediately painful, the eyes bulge, followed by a loss of breath, and a twitch as you comprehend that your "thing" is missing.

Hands rifle empty pockets, you run from room to room screaming, "has anybody seen my blah-blah-blah?" In return, you get blah-looking stares from those witnessing your little piston meltdown.

There is no lost and found in the woods. If something goes missing on the trail, it's bye-bye forever. Such was the case after an all-day ride into the dark. We started early and 150 miles later caught a distant glimpse of glowing light from our hotel. I was whipped. My feet were chilled and an annoying chunk of ice had built-up under my right foot, which refused to be kicked free at 35+ MPH.

We loaded the sleds on the trailer and soon everyone changed from the bulk of snow-wear to the comfort of jeans and snowmobile-themed T-shirts. We had dinner, then headed to our room for a relaxing malt beverage before hitting the rack. I reached into my right pocket and got that sickly twitch. My trusty Leatherman super-duper tool with deluxe bottle opener was gone. I've had that knife for over 15 years, it's been everywhere I've been. We've seen the world together. (It's a guy thing.) What would I do without the incredible 17 built-in tools, the ones that saved my hide numerous times, especially the screwdrivers, pliers and those itty-bitty scissors?

Ah, this was just a game of hide-and-seek, it must be in the right-side pocket of my snowmobile bibs. Nope. Maybe the jacket? Nope. Trunk bag? Nope. Before I could run through the hotel screaming, I remembered flipping the Phillips screwdriver from the precision handle at a pit stop

**There is no lost and found in the woods. If something goes missing on the trail, it's bye-bye forever.**

■ ■ ■

during the last hour of our ride. A headlight had gone out and Mr. Leatherman saved the day, yet again. I recalled putting it down on the seat as we snacked on trail grub. What I couldn't recall, was putting it away. It was dusk, the conversation was distracting, and my fanny musta knocked it from the saddle to the bottom of the fluff.

It was tough to swallow; not the IPA, because I couldn't get it open, but the reality that my dear knife was gone forever. I tried to make myself feel better with the belief that some fortunate trail-worker might be rewarded next fall when the sparkle of that \$100 stainless steel wonder catches their eye. As miserable as it is to lose something, finding a lost treasure could make a day of brush cutting memorable.

Morning popped and we dragged our bags and ugly butts to the truck, then crawled into the trailer to tie the sleds down. That annoying chunk of ice in the running board was still there, except it wasn't annoying anymore. It was my Leatherman, stuck in a groove of the running board! To think I had repeatedly tried to kick it free. That knife was single digits cold, painful to hold, but the burning sensation of it sliding to the bottom of my jeans pocket felt so good.

Unfortunately we had a mechanical meltdown about an hour down the road that not even the mighty pocket tool could fix. Those with mastodon memories may recall the time both axles of our trailer grenaded in the Adirondacks of NY. This was that day. If you adore mechanical gore, that story lives on at sledmass.com. 🐾



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*The Berkshire Snow Seekers' crew tends to signs while grooming the trails.* PHOTO BY RANDY TOTH



## ADAMS SNO DRIFTERS

by Chrissy Satko  
and Joe Rogge

We would like to share with you some information about our annual Christmas Party (December 12th). As we discussed our annual party we had several goals in mind: 1) keep it local, 2) keep it inexpensive, and 3) have the focus be on food, friends, and charity. What we have done the past few years is to move away from a general "toys for kids" type charity to a process where we identify local individuals or families in need of support. A large portion of our October and November Club meetings was devoted to discussion surrounding charities and the need for our support. A short time ago we developed a short "Charity Form" that we use in our selection of the charity we will support. We would like to remind other clubs of the importance of being an active club in terms of community involvement and providing support for various charities. On many occasions we spend more time discussing our involvement with charities than trails. We would also invite anyone reading this to join us at one of our club meetings be a part of our discussions. <http://adamssnodrifters.webstarts.com>.



*Bernardston-Gill-Leyden members gather round the fire pit during a festive outdoor BBQ. Something about a snow squall makes the burgers taste better.* PHOTO BY DAN GOULD



## BERKSHIRE SNOW SEEKERS

by Randy Toth

Come experience the excitement of snowmobiling in the Berkshires. Our first class groomer fleet consists of 3 Tucker Sno-Cats, a Thiokol and 2 snowmobile-based groomers. Dues are only \$60 for each snowmobile and they include a club membership, a SAM membership and a trail permit. Join via snail-mail: PO Box

1102, Pittsfield, MA 01202, via our website [berkshiresnowseekers.com](http://berkshiresnowseekers.com), via a club meeting (7pm on the 1st & 3rd Tuesday of the month from September thru mid-April at the Skyline Country Club on Route 7 in Lanesboro, MA) or via one of our conveniently located trail permit outlets at a participating local business: - Pittsfield Lawn & Tractor (Pittsfield), Ronnie's (Pittsfield), Friendly Fred's (Windsor), Sangar's General Store (Windsor), Hinsdale Trading

Company (Hinsdale) and Lanesboro BP Gas Station (Lanesboro).

Please visit the SAM website to see our club's scheduled events and our grooming reports covering the October Mountain State Forest Area, the Pittsfield State Forest Area and the Windsor Area. Grooming reports are promptly posted in the SAM Forums by our trail coordinators within hours of grooming. We hope to see you out on the trails this winter.



## **BERNARDSTON-GILL-LEYDEN**

**By Brad Stafford,  
club president**

The snow season is here and we can only hope it will be filled with great snow, open trails and great adventures. Are you ready? Have you gone thru your snow season bucket list? Has your sled been prepped? Do you have your registrations and trail passes? Have you checked with your local club to see if they need any help? That's right... you should, because without trails I imagine your front lawn will get boring real fast. Our club has been busy with its 14th annual swapmeet in November, with the first remote-site destination to get your vintage machine inspected, which is part of the new vintage sled registration process. Our club, as all of them are, is stretched thin to get all trails cleared, inspected and landowners contacted before we get them opened. Be part of the reason our trails are open and ready, not the part that if we lose them wish they had done more. Keep up with all BGL snowmobile club news and trail updates on our facebook page or email me at [nvrplay2ty@yahoo.com](mailto:nvrplay2ty@yahoo.com). Until then, "Rubber Side Down."



## **BUCKLAND RIDERS** **by Steven Howland**

Winter is finally setting in for real and the fall trail work is behind us. As always, thanks to all those dedicated to making sure trails are in top condition before the riding begins. That doesn't mean the work ends, though. Please join us at our monthly meetings, second Mondays of the month, 7pm at the Buckland Fire Station, to help us plan future events, club rides, and more. Looking for something new to do in the winter? Why not get checked out on a groomer. Contact one

of our club officers to find out how to do this. More information is on our web page at [BucklandRiders.com](http://BucklandRiders.com).



## **CHESTERFIELD FOUR SEASONS**

**by Bill Golaski, president**

As I write this in late October the weather is just starting to get chilly. The club has been very busy this fall with hall rentals. Keep us in mind if you need a hall for an event. Also, a big thanks to the members who helped keep the club open and ready for the rentals this summer and fall.

A small group of members have been very busy clearing the trails and prepping the groomers. Trail clearing will continue till the end of the year as needed, but most will be done in November. Please come and lend a hand. Always need more help.

Trail passes have been in for a long time so please don't wait till the last minute. Hoping to have club house open every Friday pm, Saturday day & pm, and Sunday day, but always best to call before just to make sure, 413-296-4048. We may try to sell gas this winter, so keep that in mind.

Events: Black Powder Raffle on December 8. Game Supper on January 30. Groomer Benefit Dinner February 20.



*Chris Patterson asks, "Hey, has anybody seen my sled?"* PHOTO BY BILL GOLASKI

Trailer Raffle is the same night as Groomer Dinner. Club meetings: 2nd and last Tuesday of the month at 7pm. Look us up on the SAM website for more info on events. Thanks to all our members and volunteers, let it snow!



## **CONWAY**

**by Ed Skorupski**

As we approach the end of the year the days just seem to fly by. We are still working on the trails every Sunday and have crews that go out during the week also. I want to emphasize that there is always room for more volunteers. You don't need any special equipment or tools, just your willingness to come out and lend a hand. This is a great opportunity to meet your fellow club members. The Henhawk project has been completed as is the re-route of Corridor 93. Thank you to all the people that helped with these projects.

If you haven't bought a trail pass yet, there is still time to take advantage of the Early Bird pricing. Purchase your pass online at [sledconway.com](http://sledconway.com), or at one of our retail partners listed on our site. We also have a new shipment of CSC shirts and sweatshirts in stock. These make great Christmas presents.

We are hoping for another snowy year, the groomers are ready, the trails are getting into shape, and we are all ready to ride. Our volunteers will keep working in an effort to provide all of the riders that visit our trail system the best possible experience. Find us on Facebook for the latest trail updates during the season.



## **EASY RIDERS**

**by Steven Conti,  
vice president**

The Easy Riders Snowmobile Club of Marlboro would like to wish all of you and your families a very happy and healthy holiday season. The Easy Riders' annual Christmas party will be held on December 8 at 7pm. This year's party will feature a pot luck supper and our usual Yankee Swap. It's been a tradition that's been carried on for years and it never fails to produce laughs. All are welcome to attend any of our club meetings held at the Marlboro Moose, 67 Fitchburg Street in Marlboro on the 2nd Tuesday of the month 7pm. Think snow!





## GREATER WHATELY

by Robert Sabola

Just a few reminders to help make this season go as smoothly as the last season. Please be aware that the Great Swamp Trail in Whately is closed. When traveling along the river in Whately please follow the signs and stay on the trail at Herlihy Park and Nourse Farms. There may be other sensitive areas, so please ride smart and ride safe! No complaints last season so let's make it two in a row.

We added two more places to buy trail passes. Fishtales Bar and Grill and Muffins General Store. Don't forget Valley Motor Sports and Acme Auto Body Collision and Repair. Carl Brooks sell them, too.

Regular Meetings: Second Monday of every month except June and July. Meetings are held at the Whately Town Hall located across the street from the Whately Inn. Meetings start at 7pm. Email us at: [greaterwhatelysnowmobileclub@aol.com](mailto:greaterwhatelysnowmobileclub@aol.com). Visit us at [sledmass.com/club/greater-whately-snowmobile-club/](http://sledmass.com/club/greater-whately-snowmobile-club/)

Mark your calendar: February 13 for the fundraiser for the David L Scott Scholarship. As the date approaches and for more details, go to [sledmass.com](http://sledmass.com), click on "Clubs" and then scroll down to Greater Whately Snowmobile Club. Also watch the SAM Calendar of Events for more details. Happy Holidays!



## HADLEY

by Todd Bristol,  
secretary/delegate

Well, October has put us all in the spirit with a few cold nights and even a few flurries in the air. The Sled Expo was a great turn out for us and we had a great weekend. We would like to thank Dan Regish for his time spent bringing down the booth decorations, vintage sleds, and the hundred or so pumpkins he painted that made our booth, other vendor's booths, and a lot of other people smiling throughout the Expo. Also big thanks to Mark B., Todd B. and other members who gave a helping hand during that weekend. A few members have been picking away at trail work on their free time making sure there is no major tree damage and that trails are clear for the upcoming season. We have gathered a good amount of lumber and steel



*The Savoy Kanary Kats do what they do best: Groom a trail to perfection!*

PHOTO BY JIM LAFRANCE

to repair bridges and build new grooming drags to help make things a little nicer this year. We are very happy to have been picked for this year's RTP grant which will help us purchase a new Ski Doo Scan-dic to help work the trails more reliably this winter. A few members have been working on their own grooming projects with their own cash and time and we can't thank them enough for their dedication to this club. Until next month, we still have a lot of work to do!



## HARVARD

by Joe Gibbons,  
board of directors

We are off and running with trail work with two bridge rebuilds on the Dunkin Donut Trail. An awesome mowing job was done on Dean's Hill by Mark Adams. There is lots of excitement about the reopening of a trail that has been closed for four years. This trail brings you down off of Dean's Hill and lends easy access to the trails off Turner Lane and Bear Hill Pond. A big thank you to the new landowner. Please remember riding the trails is a privilege, respect the landowners and stay on the trail. I am looking forward to the first big

cookout, with lobsters(?) on Dean's Hill, the site of many great cook-outs. Hoping to see 50 sleds on the hill! Remember we are the most easterly club in the state, come ride with us. We want your membership and your friendship. Our Kubota groomer now has a great heating system, we encourage all to spend a few hours on the groomer with trail master Mark Shaw, he appreciates assistance and welcomes you to join him for a night time ride through our forests and fields. Read the trail signs, they are there for good reason! Be safe.



## KNOX TRAIL SNO-RIDERS

by James Richard,  
media director

The board of directors wishes you and your family a happy Holiday Season with lots of joy and lots of snow! I am writing this in late October, long before the season even begins. The trail crews are busy with new and old bridge projects, new trails, trail maintenance, and re-routes. Hopefully by now the season is in full swing with cold weather, a firm base, and of course, snow. If there are enough volunteers, 11, yes 11, groomers will be working overtime! If you





PHOTO BY RENA SUMNER

## Massachusetts Environmental Police Colonel James McGinn

Colonel James McGinn of the Massachusetts Environmental Police (MEP) takes a seat on one of the agency's patrol sleds as he visited with SAM Vice President Jeff Miller, President Dan Gould and Legislative Committee Chair Randy Toth at the the Sled Expo.

Colonel McGinn has been instrumental in developing key policies as the new vintage snowmobile registration legislation is implemented. He has also been proactive in making snowmobile registration locations more accessible to users. In November the MEP Boating & Recreational Vehicles registration office had the MEP remote command center at the BGL swap meet in Bernardston. Snowmobilers could register and renew snowmobiles right there. This was in addition to the service being offered at the Sled Expo.

SAM applauds Colonel McGinn, the Environmental Police and the registry for their leadership and thoughtfulness in working with the snowmobile community. 🐾

haven't got your raffle tickets yet, you may be too late. The drawing is January 9. Stay tuned to the [knoxtrail.com](http://knoxtrail.com) website and the 413-269-0243 Sno-Phone for the raffle result and announcements for the annual Poker Run and other club events. Remember, if you have a Knox Trail Sno-Rider trail pass, you are a member. Please attend a meeting. You have a vote! Meetings are on the second and fourth Sunday at 9am thru December and Wednesday at 6pm starting in January. Meetings are at the Tannery Road clubhouse in Otis. Lastly, thank you to all who visited the club at the October Sled Expo. It was a record setter! See you on the trails!



### SAVOY KANARY KATS by Doug Decoigne

Fall is almost over! Our season is about to begin... finally! Many of us have had a busy autumn (and some a busy summer, as well) doing club work. SKK has been utilizing our grant financed equipment to cut brush along many of our trails as well as clearing and repairing trails. We have been awarded another grant that will allow us to purchase a new set of rubber tracks for one of our LMC 1800 groomers, a much needed brake system for another 1800 groomer and also provide four more gates. Speaking of gates, we have

had several occurrences of jeepers cutting their way around our gates, ripping up our trails, wrecking two of our bridges and even ripping one gate apart and leaving it in the middle of the trail this summer! We are not happy! Whoever is doing this, next time smile for the camera! We had a very successful Sled Expo. Sold raffle tickets and had an awesome time hanging with fellow sledders! Kudos to SAM!

Our Christmas party is December 5 at the hilltop in Plainfield. We are raffling off the 2016 Ski Doo MXZ Sport on January 30. Tickets are \$20 and we are selling only 750 tickets. Tickets are available at LP Adams in Dalton, Savoy Store or by email. 🐾



# Work and Play: Suzuki Groomer

Story and photos by Steve Howland

Last fall I set up a 4-wheel-drive Suzuki Carry Mini Truck with tracks (also known as the Snowzuki) for grooming the trails that are taken care of by the Buckland Riders. It's been a fun project and has worked out well so far. I have certainly enjoyed grooming in a heated cab on some cold blustery nights. Though small, these little Suzuki trucks make great grooming rigs.

The Suzuki is also proving its worth beyond the trails. In mid-February I got the chance to put the Suzuki to the test for some paying work. One Sunday the power went down on Mt. Tom at the old ski area. There are several companies up there with communication antenna farms. These locations lost power and switched over to their backup generators, but the PVTA (Pioneer Valley Transit Authority) generator kept quitting and they had to roll their communications over to backup towers that didn't cover their area as well. Their tech support person made a couple of trips up by snowmobile to reset the gener-

ator, but they couldn't figure out why the generator would start fine, but then shut down after several hours of operation. The first thought was that the propane tanks were low, but how to get the empty tanks down and the new tanks up?

PVTA uses Palmeri Electric for their electric service contractor, so Matt Palmeri did some asking around. Tammy Lowell, a Buckland Riders' member, does bookkeeping for Palmeri. She mentioned that I had the Suzuki. She called and asked if I'd be able to help. I was all in, happy to take a day off from sitting at my desk, earn some money to help with the costs of setting up the truck, and most importantly, find out if the truck was up to the climb. I love this local networking system.

So on a Tuesday morning I trailered the Suzuki to the base of Mt. Tom. My one worry was that no one had packed a trail to the top yet, as the Suzuki is not really a deep powder machine. Even with a locking rear differential it can dig a hole that it can't get out of if the terrain is steep enough (not unlike several sleds I have known). To that end Matt had a couple





of friends bring their sleds to help pack a trail to the top if needed, but as it turned out, both AT&T and the Mass. State Police were already there and had been up and down the mountain a few times with a Pisten Bully and an old Tucker Sno-Cat. So as soon as Matt showed up we made a run up the mountain with the Mini Truck.

The first run up was taken at a crawl to test the terrain, but was no problem at all. On another run taken with the tech support guy, Jim Bagley, sitting in the back, we unhooked the empty tanks and brought them down. We loaded up four filled one-hundred pounders and headed

back up.

After unloading those I decided to take a different route down. This was my only mistake of the day. There was a trail that dropped over a steep part that a Pisten Bully had gone down, but after we went over the drop we could see that a stream cut across the trail below and the other driver had turned around and come back up the hill. It was steep and not well packed and after I got turned around the Suzuki could not climb this section. We got out to look over the situation. The guys on the snowmobiles were having a good time exploring the mountain, but

came looking for us when they didn't see us come down the main trail. I didn't want to walk too far off the trail as I was sinking up to my waist.

I asked them to find a downhill route around the stream that didn't need too much room between the trees (the Suzuki is only 5'6" wide with the tracks). They quickly found a route that would work, so I spun the truck around and followed them down without any problem. The Suzuki does float well if it isn't clawing uphill, so after that I stuck to the packed trails.

Once we were done with the tasks at hand there was a discussion among the techs that the generator problem was probably caused by too few tanks not allowing enough vaporizing surface area. They asked if I could come back the next day to haul up more tanks? Hmm, sit in front of a computer or drive around Mt. Tom in the snow? I said I'd be happy to do it. So Matt and Jim left for the day with plans to regroup at the base on Wednesday.

While at the base of the mountain I chatted briefly with three power company technicians who were there to find



out why there wasn't any power at the top. They'd been waiting around all day trying to figure out a way up the mountain. I am still curious why they had not rounded up a ride in the two days since power was out, but in any case, I offered to help, to which they gladly agreed. So with three techs and their equipment, we headed back up the mountain and worked down from the top to find where the break in power was. They eventually found a bad cutoff on a pole about half-way down the mountain. That was it for their day, they would come back the next to fix the issue.

Wednesday was a spectacular sunny winter day. I shuttled the new propane tanks up, then had to wait several hours for the gas fitter to show up to connect them. I kept busy while waiting, shuttling a skier to the top whom had already hiked up several times, then had my lunch overlooking Westover Air Force Base and the Connecticut River.

The power company technicians had rented an old Sno-Cat that threw a track



on its first trip up the hill, but the state police were there and ran them up to fix the power problem. One technician came walking down to get more tools and I gave him a ride back up. They were finished by late afternoon with the gas fitter. Power was back on to the mountain when we

left and the PVTA system was tested and ready of the next power outage.

It was a real treat to help out and put the Snowzuki through its paces. Who knows, I might be getting more calls to transport people and support equipment into hard to reach places. We'll be ready. 🐾



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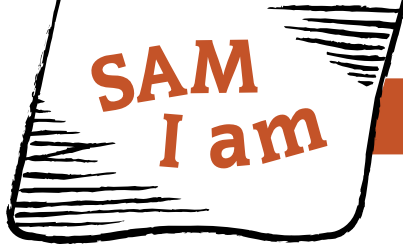
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# Spike Wheeler

**Club:** Colrian Sno-Drifters

**Years snowmobiling:** 45

**Current snowmobile:** 2012 Ski-Doo MXZ TNT 600 ACE

**Sled mods:** Just a bigger windscreen

**Club position:** Trail worker and groomer, SAM delegate.



**FAVORITE RIDING AREA:** I like it all, from Conway, MA to Vermont, and BGL to Greylock. We are lucky to have so many real good clubs in our area.

## TELL US SOMETHING ABOUT YOURSELF:

I like building drags with my friend Maloney (Catamount Man) on the other side of the river. My hobbies include boating and waterskiing, old David Brown tractors, model trains, and, oh yeah, snowmobiling. 🐾

## SOUND OFF:

S.O.S. Save Our Snow.  
Don't spin your track!  
Make a groomer happy!





PHOTO OF BALANCE ROCK BY JIM LAFRANCE, SAVOY KANARY KATS

# SAM – Behind the Scenes in 2014-2015

By Randy Toth

**S**AM is the recognized leader in the promotion and protection of organized recreational snowmobiling in Massachusetts. SAM's activities in preserving trail access while supporting land conservation and environmental protection are well recognized by state and local municipalities. The following is a brief summary of SAM's major initiatives to preserve, protect and enhance your snowmobiling experiences:





## 1 LEGISLATION

- **SAM Sponsored Legislation Status**  
Our "Vintage Snowmobile Registration" legislation was passed into law this past January and will take effect after the mandatory waiting period. Unfortunately, however, our "Mandatory Snowmobile Safety Education" legislation failed to make it through the legislature. It was refiled in both the House and Senate for the upcoming legislative session.

### Vintage Snowmobile Registration Legislation - PASSED

This legislation establishes a special state registration for vintage snowmobiles - 25 years old or older. It gives collectors a break on the registration cost and exempts vintage snowmobiles from today's emission and noise limits.

### Snowmobile Safety Education Legislation - REFILED

This mandatory safety education legislation would also include sections clarifying operator age limits, establishing a snowmobile trail land acquisition fund, expanding the trail maintenance assessment permit, establishing a seat on the Department of Conservation & Recreation Stewardship Council, and establishing the legal means to prosecute individuals operating wheeled vehicles who damage snowmobile trails.

#### ■ State Legislators

SAM continues to work closely with its Legislative Director to maintain and strengthen legislative contacts with snowmobile-friendly legislators and to establish contact with and educate new legislators via attendance at receptions, community meetings and private meetings. Individual campaign donations and other offers of supported are encouraged from the SAM membership.

## 2 STATE AND LOCAL AGENCY INTERACTIONS

#### ■ Division of Fish and Game (DF&G) Land Access and Trails

In response to meeting with the DF&G commissioner and the reaffirmation of the ground rules for dealing with snowmobile trails on DF&G lands, most problems in dealing with regional DF&W managers have been successfully resolved.

#### ■ Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR)

##### DCR State Forest Resource Management Planning

DCR reactivated its team to develop Resource Management Plans (RMPs)

for state forest lands and began a series of public hearings on the Pittsfield State Forest and October Mountain State Forest RMPs. SAM and local club members attended the meetings and supplied written comments to the planning committee. The next step is for the state to publish draft documents for another round of public comments.

#### DCR Volunteer Policy

DCR formally instituted its State Volunteer Policy and SAM proposed a streamlined implementation plan for SAM and its clubs for dealing with the state. Despite considerable early progress on forging an amicable agreement, new DCR folks appeared on the scene and complicated the process considerably. More meetings will need to be scheduled.

#### ■ Office of Law Enforcement (OLE) Commonwealth of Massachusetts Regulations (CMRs)

SAM continued working with OLE personnel to clarify the language concerning All-Terrain Vehicle, Dirt Bike, and Snowmobile age restrictions due to somewhat "fuzzy wording" in the chapter 90B legislation which found its way into the current CMRs affecting Off Highway Vehicle operator age restrictions. SAM continues its practice of hiring additional OLE personnel to patrol problem areas.

#### ■ Regional, State and Local Recreational Trail Planning and Management

SAM continues to monitor the activities of the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission and the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission as they conduct a feasibility study of community trails along the Route 20 and Route 112 Scenic Byways linking communities and businesses.

#### ■ Massachusetts Trails Conference

SAM has been active in this state-sponsored annual trails conference since its inception, by making presentations and sponsoring delegates' attendance. This day-long event brings together hundreds of trail managers, volunteers and enthusiasts

from many diverse outdoor groups in the Commonwealth.

#### ■ **Land Trusts**

SAM is actively initiating, pursuing and responding to partnership requests from private land trusts and helps to facilitate land acquisition and/or recreational trail easements to protect and expand the Statewide Snowmobile Trail System (SSTS).

### 3 **NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION INTERACTION**

#### ■ **American Council of Snowmobile Associations (ACSA)**

Due to the inability of ACSA to function as a responsible business entity, Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine, California/Nevada and Alaska continue to remain unaffiliated with ACSA and did not attend any ACSA-sponsored events. Although SAM did not participate in the ACSA Washington DC Fly-In, SAM continues to follow national snowmobile-related issues through the Blue Ribbon Coalition (BRC) which is a national coalition for the protection of responsible public access to public lands through education, partnerships, legislation and legal action where necessary.

#### ■ **International Snowmobile Council (ISC)**

A SAM delegation attended the ISC in New York this year and stayed involved with the Northeast Chapter of ISC. Massachusetts along with Vermont and New Hampshire continue to maintain membership in the Northeast Chapter of ISC to stay abreast of snowmobile developments throughout the organized snowmobile world (United States, Canada, Russia, Sweden).

### 4 **TRAIL DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE**

#### ■ **National Recreational Trails Program (RTP)**

SAM and its member clubs continued



PHOTO BY JIM RICHARD, KNOX TRAIL SNO-RIDERS

their highly successful efforts to submit, win and execute RTP grant proposals as well as to help to fend off congressional efforts to eliminate or drastically alter this worthwhile program.

#### ■ **Land Acquisition Fund Establishment**

SAM has established its own dedicated trail acquisition fund to protect its trail system via outright land acquisition and/or recreational trail easement acquisition and is continuing to make yearly deposits into this fund.

### 5 **STATE COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIPS**

#### ■ **Off Highway Vehicle Advisory Committee (OHV-AC) Membership**

By Massachusetts law, SAM has a seat on the 13-member Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EOEEA) OHV-AC which meets at least quarterly to make recommendations to the state concerning OHV safety, law enforcement, trail maintenance/development and OHV fund expenditures.

#### ■ **Massachusetts Recreational Trails Advisory Board (MARTAB)**

SAM has a seat on the 12-member DCR sponsored MARTAB board which reviews and recommends candidate projects for Federal Recreational Trail Program Funding. MARTAB also sponsors a statewide trail workshop and the annual Massachusetts Trails Conference in which SAM participates.

### 6 **SAM OPERATIONS**

#### ■ **SAM Trail Permits**

SAM obtains, distributes and tracks all Trail Permits.

#### ■ **SAM Trail Grooming**

SAM is responsible for the development of the Statewide Snowmobile Trail System (SSTS) map (paper and electronic), the development and maintenance of grooming guidelines and the administration of the



grooming reimbursement fund. The new electronic trail map is available as a smart phone app and via a GPS navigation receiver memory chip.

#### ■ **SAM Annual Sled-Expo**

SAM hosts the huge annual Sled-Expo at the Big-E Fairgrounds in West Springfield, MA where dealers and prospective buyers kick off the upcoming snowmobiling season by selling and buying snowmobiling-related goods and services.

#### ■ **SAM Board of Directors Meetings**

SAM hosts the monthly directors' meetings and the annual meeting.

#### ■ **SAM Website**

SAM hosts a state-of-the-art Website and mobile web app (including news, articles, trail condition forums, classified ads, etc.), along with Facebook and Twitter accounts to keep our members informed and up-to-date about snowmobile issues that may affect them.

#### ■ **SAM Magazine**

The editor, staff writers and proof-readers all contribute to make this magazine a first class publication which helps keep all SAM members informed.

#### ■ **SAM Charity Sponsorship**

Camp Sno-Mo (Easter Seals) and Toys for Tots are the two major charity events sponsored by SAM.

#### ■ **SAM Youth Group Sponsorship**

The future of SAM headed off to college resulting in a significant decrease in youth group activities this past year.

#### ■ **SAM Snowmobile Trail**

##### **Liability Insurance**

SAM continues to ensure that its clubs, members and landowners have access to quality liability insurance.

Finally; SAM must remain extremely vigilant because there are anti-access and anti-motorized groups that pose a threat, not only to snowmobiles, but even to

**SAM must remain extremely vigilant because there are anti-access and anti-motorized groups that pose a threat, not only to snowmobiles.**

■ ■ ■

those that like to bicycle, hunt, camp or hike in the forests of the Massachusetts. These formidable adversaries are generally full-time paid professionals, whom along with many volunteers, continue to advocate against all forms of motorized recreation, and some non-motorized recreation, on both private and state lands in Massachusetts. Although SAM has considerable recognition as a political force and good team player, we must still maintain a constant presence at all statewide forums to protect the future of snowmobiling in Massachusetts. 🐾

**Online at sledmass.com**



- Poll: How many studs do you run on your sled?
- How To Register Your Vintage Snowmobile
- SAM Trail Map for iPhone & Android FAQ
- SAM College Scholarship Applications
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# It's Much More Than a Map



PHOTO BY DAN GOULD

By Larry Tucker

**T**he very hot weather that we experienced this summer coupled with the fact that the squirrels are happy that the acorns are dropped a little early is good news. It is an indication that a very long, snowy and cold winter is in store for us. To get ready, I've been building a new grooming drag.

This is the time of year when the clubs, in addition to maintaining existing trails, are also building new trails. The new trails are more local in nature and come from a need to access a nearby business or connect to a longer trail. Recently, I happened to be reviewing the Snowmobile Association of Massachusetts Trail Map and envisioned the potential the map offers beyond its purpose as a directional tool,

but as a tool for planning the future of our trail system.

On the surface, the SAM map can tell us how to get from point A to point B. It does an excellent job, and thanks to president Dan Gould, the technology has been expanded to the iPhone, Android and Garmin GPS units, and who knows what else in the future. This roadmap aspect is certainly one way that our trail map helps, but let's look at two other powerful ways it can help our sport.

A second way the map helps is that it offers clues to create a vision of our future trail system. In examining the map, we see the big picture of the overall system and can rather quickly pinpoint where and how the building of new trails would greatly help the clubs and improve the



system as a whole. Indeed, some clubs are currently working to connect with another club or to a main-trail. There have been discussions of a main North-South and East-West trail, and the map quickly tells us where sections need to be built to complete such a corridor trail project.

Three good examples of possible new major corridor trails are: 1) getting from October Mountain State Forest through Hinsdale on up to Windsor area; 2) getting from Erving State Forest over to Otter River State Forest; and 3) getting from Shutesbury to Whately. A good exercise might be to have the clubs put together a list of locations for new trails. When brought together, this list can form a vision and provide goals for the future of our trail system. And, remember, we don't have to build these new trails all by ourselves. If, for example, we were to present and discuss with the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) our vision and our goals, I am sure they would be receptive to incorporate them into the Massachusetts Commonwealth Connections Program, a program that allows the DCR to be aware of all manner of user groups seeking to create long distance trails. Further discussions with all levels of the DCR could lead to a stronger working partnership between the clubs, SAM and DCR to put these sections in place.

A third way that the map has proved invaluable is relative to grooming. At the Trails Committee meeting this past April the map was set out on a table and the clubs were asked to highlight where their clubs groom. The visual that the map revealed was amazing. It showed that the clubs have taken responsibility for grooming virtually 100% of our trail system.

Again, I offer special thanks to all of you that help work on the SAM trail system in any way. Please keep in touch with your local conservation commissions, DCR property managers and private landowners, and remember, snowmobilers are all members of the trails and grooming team. 🐾

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