



SnoBlazers, Inc. Grooming Policy



County: Washington

Date Reviewed/Approved: May 23, 2018

Purpose:

The purpose of this Grooming Policy is to organize resources, establish goals, and set strategies to accomplish a safe grooming policy.

This policy will apply to: **The SnoBlazers, Inc. Snowmobile Club**

Responsibilities:

This plan will be dynamic in nature, which will give it the flexibility to change to meet the club's needs. The Board of Directors (BOD's) will be the governing body in order to ensure credibility and continuity and to provide assistance to the Trail Coordinator(s) as needed.

1. The trail system will be divided into sections. Each section may have a Trail Coordinator assigned.
2. Each Trail Coordinator will coordinate any activity required in maintaining their section of trail, with the members, to include proper signing as specified by New York State Snowmobile Trail Signing Handbook (<http://www.nysparks.state.ny.us/recreation/snowmobiles/documents/NYSSnowmobileTrailSigningHandbook.pdf>) to identify trail problems, hazards, and any other safety concerns. Establish a grooming schedule for their sector and assign operators accordingly. (This schedule will be flexible based on changes in weather conditions)
3. Groomer Operators will deem a new groomer operator approved based on meeting all the required criteria.
4. It is highly recommended that every groomer operate with a passenger whenever possible.

Groomer Operator Training Program:

Safe and proficient grooming practices require a great deal of planning and a comprehensive training program. Some components of the program are;

1. Operators must be current club member and in good standings with a minimum of 20 hours of passenger seat time in a groomer
2. All operators must be deemed by a current groomer to operate grooming equipment.
3. Before operating any groomer equipment, the operator must be trained by a club groomer.
4. The use of alcohol and drugs will not be permitted or tolerated when operating, or using club equipment.
5. The BOD will be involved in approving Groomer Operators.
6. Training time will be established on an individual basis, using the approved training program. Established guidelines and proper training will ensure the club's resources are utilized in a safe and professional manner. Personal experience and qualifications will be used as indicators as to how much training will be required. All individuals will receive initial training irrespective of their experience level. As a guideline, each trainee should receive familiarization training on each machine and a reasonable amount of hands-on training per machine.
7. The BOD will maintain a list of operators and operator trainers and update it as needed.
8. Operator training will include, but will not be limited to; instruction and testing on all operating and preventative maintenance features of the grooming equipment, grooming practices and procedures, maintenance schedules, record keeping, signing guidelines, and safe operating procedures.
9. The resource guide <http://www.nysparks.state.ny.us/recreation/snowmobiles/documents/SnowmobileTrailGroomerOperatorTraining.pdf>

Records Keeping:

Good and accurate record keeping is an important management tool in any grooming program. All personnel involved in the club's grooming program will take part in the record keeping process. Various forms will be developed and used to maintain a safe and well-groomed trail system.

Preventive Maintenance Program:

A comprehensive preventative maintenance program will be established to insure the club's equipment will perform as required. This program will include five elements;

1. Inspection
2. Lubrication
3. Adjustments
4. Repairs
5. Records (Maintenance records will be established and maintained on all groomer equipment).

Groomer Operator Responsibilities (Operator tasks each time a groomer goes onto the trail)

Each groomer operator is responsible for following the procedures listed in each category below each and every time a machine is taken onto the trails.

1. Pre-Grooming Checklist
2. Groomer trail operation procedures
3. Depth of blades
4. Amount of snow in drag
5. Road crossings
6. Bridge crossings
7. Post-Grooming Checklist

Meeting Oncoming Traffic (What to do when meeting oncoming snowmobile traffic while grooming on a narrow trail)

Meeting oncoming traffic on a narrow trail: the groomer should be prepared to stop to allow safe passage of oncoming traffic. If needed, maneuver the groomer to make room for traffic. Grooming equipment should NOT be moving when a snowmobile passes you on a narrow trail.

Equipment (What should the groomer operator have in the groomer before leaving on a grooming trip?)

Equipment List:

1. Cell Phone or 2 Way Radio
2. Caution Tape or Surveyor's Tape for marking trail hazards
3. Basic Tool Box
4. First Aid Kit
5. Oil, Grease, Coolant, etc..
6. Flashlight and Spare Batteries
7. Pen / Paper
8. Shovel
9. Disposable camera or cell phone camera
10. List of club members and emergency numbers.
11. Safety Orange cones.
12. Fire Extinguisher

Optional Equipment

1. Foil Blanket
2. Spare Clothing, Water, Snacks
3. Rags or Towels
4. Sledge hammer
5. Water Proof Matches
6. Snow Scraper

7. Extra Fuel
8. Orange Spray Paint
9. Tree Strap
10. Chains
12. Stakes
13. Extra Signs
14. Screw Gun and Screws
15. Butane or Propane Torch/Heater (and some way to light it)
16. GPS

Repairs (What are the procedures the operator needs to follow when repairs to grooming equipment is needed?)

Invariably when using equipment that is under the stress and strain of trail grooming, repairs will be required. Repairs are not the normal routine maintenance activities that every groomer operator needs to know and follow.

Repairs result from breakdowns; **repairs need immediate attention.**

Repairs are the responsibility of the entire grooming team, not just the Trail Coordinator. Each groomer operator is expected to assist whenever possible to complete repairs.

If a breakdown occurs that does not disable the groomer, report the breakdown as soon as possible to the Trail Coordinator so that repairs can be done quickly.

Disabling Breakdowns (What should the groomer operator do if the grooming machine breaks down and cannot be moved?)

If a breakdown disables the groomer so that it cannot be moved back to its place of storage, the groomer operator needs to follow these guidelines:

Secure the area around the machine so that snowmobile traffic does not hit the disabled machine. Use orange cones, caution tape provided in the groomer to mark the presence of the disabled machine. Be sure these markings carry far enough in each direction approaching the groomer so that snowmobile operators will be able to react to safely get around the machine.

Optional - Use the camera (if available) to document the condition of the disabling breakdown scene.

Contact the Trail Coordinator and/or designated club members. Provide them with information on location, your condition, obstructions to snowmobile traffic flow on the trail around the groomer, and advice on whether repairs can be made at the current location or if the machine needs to be moved to a location to either be repaired or transported.

Stops (Basically all stops are either planned or unplanned.)

A **planned stop** is one to make checks on the exterior of the groomer or to inspect the trail to determine if drag settings are being effective. Planned stops need to be made in locations where snowmobile traffic can easily see the machine and its drag, and can easily pass the groomer while it is stopped. Mark all 4 corners with an orange safety cone when stopped for any reason.

An **unplanned stop** is one that is unexpected, and results from either a disabling breakdown or an accident. The operator needs to do all it can to maneuver the groomer as far off the trail as possible and follow the procedures listed above.

Groomer involved in an accident (What should the operator do if the groomer is involved in an accident?)

First responsibility is to the condition of the other parties. Use the cell phone to contact emergency response personnel (including law enforcement) and the Trail Coordinator. Give accurate information of the location and an assessment of the condition of the other parties.

Once the accident has been resolved, use the camera to document the accident scene. Get information such as name, address, phone number, registration and insurance information from all parties involved in the accident.

Record any other information that may be pertinent to the accident while fresh in your memory. All information must be reported to the Club President or highest available ranking club officer as soon as possible.

Groomer comes upon an accident scene (What should the groomer operator do if the operator comes upon an accident scene?)

First responsibility is to the condition of those involved in the accident. Be ready to provide whatever assistance as necessary. When the accident scene has been secured or your services are no longer needed, use the camera and pen and paper to document the accident scene. It's very important to ensure pictures of the trail signs in place as close to the accident time as possible since sabotage is a common occurs within 24 hours of and accident.

Observations of trail conditions (What should the groomer operator do when a trail condition deficiency occurs?)

As the groomer operator, you could be the first person to identify areas in the trail that need the club's attention. Examples are missing signs and blown down trees. It is up to the groomer operator to take the first mitigating action. Each groomer carries extra signs (as appropriate) and a saw to be used when necessary. If the condition is one that cannot be taken care of by the groomer operator, then contact the Trail Coordinator as soon as possible.

Groomer Operator Dismissal / Suspended Policy (How does the club dismiss a groomer operator?)

1. Temporary Suspension can be done by the Board of Directors.
2. Final Suspensions or Dismissals will be by the Board of Directors.

Grooming (Who makes the decision of when it is safe and snow conditions are safe to groom?)

1. Groomer Operators are to use their best judgement when conditions are safe or opportune for grooming. Things to take into consideration are temperatures, depth/consistency of the snow and rider traffic.
2. If at anytime any Club Officer feels conditions are unsafe for grooming equipment, operators or riders a 2/3rds vote by the club officers will occur to cease grooming operations for any period of time determined. This vote can be done by special meeting, email or texting. Any operators who fail to abide by this decision will face suspension or dismissal.

Updates can occur to this policy at anytime approved by the Board of Directors based on future funding, equipment needs, trail work, large project requirements and future requirements the club will need to accomplish specific goals.