

DATE: 6/11/2013 DRAFT

TO: [Click **here** and type recipient's name]

FROM: [Click **here** and type sender's name]

SUBJECT: Communication Process between DNR and County Snowmobile Coordinators for Projects Affecting Snowmobile Trails

Purpose

This memo is intended to describe a process that will facilitate communication between Department of Natural Resources (DNR) property managers (or their designee) and snowmobilers (via county snowmobile coordinators¹) regarding construction projects (hereafter "development projects") impacting snowmobile trails on DNR-managed lands.²

The purpose of the process described in this memo is to ensure that snowmobilers have an opportunity to provide input on development projects taking place on snowmobile trails located on DNR lands. It is important to include snowmobilers in project planning and execution for several reasons, largely because snowmobile trails on DNR lands connect to longer trail systems which need overall coordination to ensure safe and legal trail use. Conversely, local snowmobile managers and volunteers may have new information or ideas for additional projects that may impact DNR development project planning.

It is the intention of the DNR to provide safe recreational opportunities to all authorized trail users. In some cases, it may be necessary to execute a trail development project that negatively impacts one or more trail user groups. It is the responsibility of the DNR to take every opportunity to minimize those negative impacts.

DNR property managers will, at a minimum, commit to the communication process described below.³ Property managers may choose to exceed the level of communication outlined in this memo.

The county snowmobile coordinators shall be the point of contact for property managers, unless the property manager has an already established communication network with local snowmobile clubs that he wishes to continue to use.

¹ The list of county snowmobile coordinators will be kept up to date by **the snowmobile community**. The county-by-county list of coordinators used to be available at this URL

<http://dnr.wi.gov/org/caer/cfa/LR/Snowmobile/trails.html>. Need current location.

² The development project process on county operated State Trails is not managed by the DNR.

³ NOTE: The DNR is moving toward a system of integrated property management planning into which this communication process may assimilate in the future.

Process

There will be three “check-in” points throughout the life of a DNR development project affecting snowmobile trails.

The time it takes a project to make it through the DNR’s development project process greatly depends on a multitude of factors including size and complexity of the project, and funding availability. The process could take as little as a few weeks to as long as a few years to complete.

Phase 1: Project Planning

- **Planning Trail Development Projects:**

- March-April

CHECK-IN 1

- Property manager provides list of all newly proposed snowmobile trail projects to county snowmobile coordinators for comment. County contacts should respond back to district trail managers no later than June 15. Responses should be in writing and could include information that could affect any of the listed projects. Coordinators may also suggest new snowmobile projects on state lands. (New projects may be suggested to property managers outside of this process as well.) This process usually occurs in odd years only and may not happen every year if a property manager chooses to only submit projects as part of the DNR’s formal budgeting process.

Phase 2: Project Execution

- **Completing Approved Trail Development Projects:** This process includes projects that were previously planned and approved for funding and included in the biennial capital development budget.

- When the project has received all necessary approvals and funding is available.

CHECK-IN 2

- Property manager notifies county snowmobile coordinator.
 - Potential impacts on snowmobiling.
 - Discuss optimal project construction time.
 - Discuss potential trail closures and reroutes.
 - Other issues that may require consideration in project execution.
- Property manager notifies district and central office staff of discussions/conclusions.

- Project is approved with funding codes.

- DNR project representative (usually a state engineer) begins work on project planning, design and bidding.

CHECK-IN 3

- Property manager notifies county snowmobile coordinator.
 - Discuss and finalize reroutes, trail closures, signage.

- Discuss public communication process that will be used as the project moves forward (level and type of communication – for example hotline recordings. With a larger project that will close a major connection, this may include DNR press releases).