

Infrastructure Committee of the Snowmobile Recreation Council
Black Bear Lodge
St. Germain, WI
February 2, 2006

Present: Andy Malecki, chair, Larry Erickson, Sam Landes, Donna White Mike, Cerny, Bev Dittmar

Others: Tom Chwala, Dale Mayo, John Bilogan, Larry Freidig and other interested Snowmobilers

Meeting called to order at 8:30 AM

Motion by Donna White, second by Bev Dittmar to accept the minutes of the previous meeting. Motion Carried

Equipment Review

Committee members shared their observations of the groomer show:

- Tractors are having problems in the recent wet, ungroomed snow in the grooming area
- The show is an excellent place to look at different pieces of equipment, but the snow gets chewed up so bad it does limit the observations of drag effectiveness
- Larry Erickson shared his personal observations and experiences with the Nor Tec procession. He indicated that it is a vast improvement over the Harley trail surfacer concept, noting its speed at 10-12 mph. While there is still some concern over the shortness of the unit its compactness and price may prove to be an economical way to enter the grooming market

Bridge Specifications/Design Weight

Larry indicated that originally Sanjay Olson was planning on attending the meeting but was forced to cancel because of a family medical situation. Larry distributed Sanjay's handouts but did not attempt to discuss them.

Sam Landes suggested that for the longer, larger bridge projects that soliciting bridge engineering services early may reduce some of the cost overruns encountered..

Mike Cerny also suggested that a ranking for bridge projects might be a step in the right direction.

Andy Malecki indicated that in his conversations with several bridge manufacturers that some will install the structures while others will not. He also noted that the list of contractors in the bridge guidelines needs to be updated. He also discussed some of the manufacturers' comments regarding securing bids versus quotes by the April 15 deadline.

Quotes versus Bids

There was a general discussion on the advance planning and costs associated with going to bid, including any bridge design modifications that may come about as a result of ch. 30 permits.

Larry noted the importance of bridge abutment design and indicated that faulty or no abutment design is a contributor to a number of cost overruns.

Discussion continued on the existing bridge permitting and bridge grant approval process.

Andy asked John Bilogan, Oneida County and Dale Mayo, Vilas County to share their perceptions on the issue. Points they pointed to included:

- Impact of newer laws and the resulting in additional hydrologic analysis and typically longer bridge structures
- John described the problems involved in a project approved several years ago between initial bridge estimates versus the final bridge specifications gained as part of a through engineering analysis. John offered that changing the review/approval process based on the size of the bridge might be a possible aide in remedying the timing and scoping issues encountered in these large projects.
- Discussion also returned to design weights as Oneida County is now targeting structures with a 14,000 pound design weight. John also pointed out the need for the bridge guidelines to include specifications for bridge approach slopes and specifications for abutments.

There was again a brief discussion on establishing a ranking system for bridges. He asked that committee members forward their suggestions for a criteria to Larry.

Highway 64 Bridge

Andy reported that DOT has completed preliminary plans and is working on final bride plans. He indicated that they will develop a better cost estimate when the final plans are completed.

Bridge Easement Form

Andy distributed a copy of the Jackson County bridge easement form that among other things grants the county the ability to access the bride for repair or removal of the bridge. This was followed by a general discussion on the use of written easements by counties on lands that serve as abutments.

Update on Deer Season

Andy briefly reviewed the actions of the Senate and Natural Resources joint committee returning the rule back to the Natural Resources Board for additional consideration. Andy reported at the recent Natural Resources Board conference call resulted in the following changes – moved the youth earlier in October; kept the December hunt north of Highway 8, but limited to herd reduction zones; and removed the 2-year sunset provisions. Sam indicated that DNR staff will provide the NRB with information on how many management units north of highway 8 would become herd management units.

Committee members expressed frustration on this action based on experiences that they have encountered in their counties, particularly in light of the early snow conditions throughout the state this winter.

Andy highlighted the good conduct of snowmobilers at the joint committee hearing.

Committee members recognized that this issue will return to the Legislature for additional action.

Member Items

There was a consensus to hold another committee meeting in the near future to involve Sanjay Olson in the bridge design discussions.

Andy expressed the committee's appreciation of the input from the audience members in the discussions.

Motion by Bev Dittmar, second by Donna White to adjourn the meeting at 10:50 AM...

Motion Carried